

DINNER PLANNING AND THE USE OF THE NUTRITION FACTS LABEL

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BACKGROUND

Food packaging represents a convenient and consistent delivery mechanism to deliver food information. The Nutrition Facts Label (NFL) was developed to help consumers, among other things, plan meals to construct a healthy diet. Yet, little research has explored what consumers actually do when it comes to planning dinners and the extent to which the NFL plays a role in these dinner preparation decisions.

OBJECTIVES

- Segment and describe different types of consumers based on their dinner planning tendencies
- Explore the underlying drivers of these dinner planning tendencies
- Examine the extent to which consumers use the NFL to help plan dinner

METHODS

Analyses were conducted using Porter Novelli's 2013 Styles® database. The spring Styles® survey was fielded among GfK's Knowledge Panel® which is randomly recruited using probability-based sampling to reach respondents regardless of whether or not they have landline telephones or Internet access. A total of 6,717 adults completed the survey, yielding a cooperation rate of 60.0%.

All results are among respondents who have primary responsibility for grocery shopping and cooking in their households (n=3180).

PLANNING TYPES



29% ADVANCED PLANNERS



They plan "in advance" and shop ahead of time for the specific dinners they will prepare in the future. They are 76% female and more likely than average to have a college degree (44% vs. 35%). They are somewhat younger than Dinner-time Planners (42% vs. 32% under age 45). Most (71%) rate their current diet as "healthy" and they are the most likely of the groups to have a normal Body Mass Index (38%).



55% DINNER-TIME PLANNERS



They buy a variety of foods, then pick what to prepare at dinnertime. They are 77% female and two-thirds (67%) claim to eat a healthy diet. They are less likely than Advanced Planners to enjoy cooking (69% vs. 76%). Both Dinner-time and Advanced Planners are more likely than Non-planners to wait for products to go on sale before they buy them.



5% OTHER PLANNERS



They say they use other dinner planning methods. They are 66% female. They tend to have lower incomes (54% under \$50K) and are more likely than other planners to be single. In fact, many of their opinions appear closer to those of Non-Planners than Planners, especially when it comes to things like sticking to a schedule.



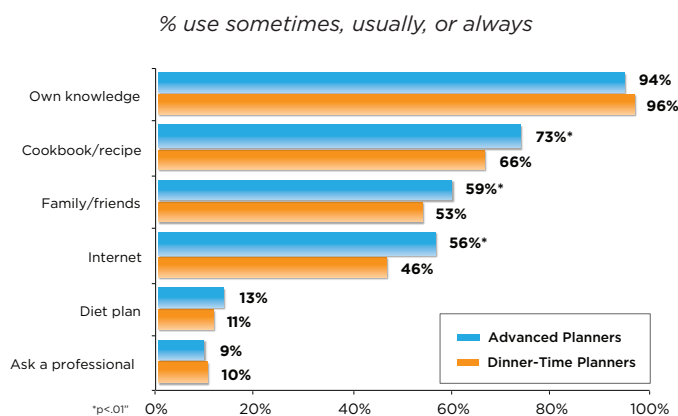
11% NON-PLANNERS



They say they do not plan dinner at all. They are 38% male and less likely than Planners to have a college degree (28% vs. 39%). Many (44%) prefer food they can eat on the go and they are almost five times more likely than Planners to spend less than 15 minutes a night making dinner (24% vs. 5%). Non-Planners are more likely than the general population to be obese (38% vs. 32%). Their lack of planning is evident in other areas of their lives as well; they are less likely than Planners to comparison shop or be saving for retirement.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

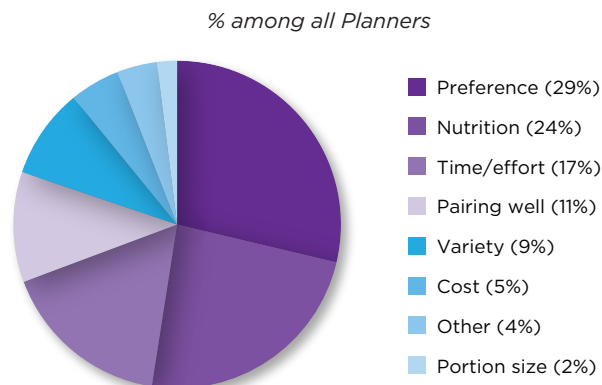
Advanced Planners are more likely than Dinner-Time Planners to look to friends/family, cookbooks, and the Internet to help them select dinner options.



PLANNING DRIVERS

Planners do not differ in what drives their choices: Individual/family preference and nutrition top the list.

Which of the following is typically most important to you when planning dinner?

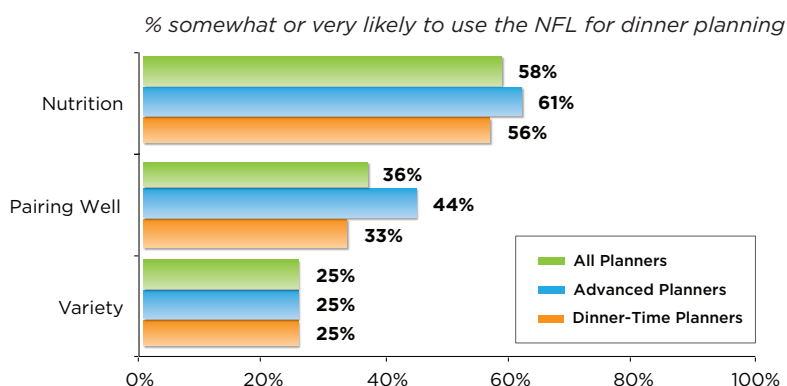


NUTRITION FACTS LABEL USE

Depending on what they found to be most important when planning dinners, respondents were asked how likely they are to use the NFL to help them with those specific planning decisions.

More than half of Planners who emphasize nutrition (58%) said they are somewhat or very likely to use the NFL to help their decisions. Significantly smaller percentages of Planners who value the pairing of foods and variety look to the NFL as a resource in these areas.

Among those who use the NFL, calorie information is used more often than serving size, % Daily Value, or amount of nutrients.



KEY FINDINGS & IMPLICATIONS

Understanding consumers' varying approaches to shopping and meal preparation reveals potential opportunities to communicate nutrition information. Dissecting planning tendencies uncovers the segment more prone to researching information (i.e., the Advanced Planners) versus those who are less likely to do so. It also opens the door to exploring the need to communicate nutrition information from a meal planning/consumption perspective, in addition to an individual consumption or product-based perspective.

Meal planning tendencies appear related to Body Mass Index, with Advanced Planners being the least

likely to be overweight or obese. Thus, encouraging planning may help curb less healthy impulse purchases.

Across all planning groups, nutrition is an important aspect of dinner preparation, but individual/family preferences and time to prepare meals are relevant factors as well. Additional research is needed to determine if efforts such as front of package nutrition icons and/or other cues at point-of-preparation help consumers on this latter point by communicating nutrition information in a convenient way.