

GRAIN FOODS IN FOCUS: NEW 2025 CONSUMER INSIGHTS FOR INDUSTRY GROWTH

In a new nationwide study of 5,000 U.S. consumers, Grain Foods Foundation (GFF), in partnership with NielsenIQ, reveals the forces shaping how Americans eat grain foods today.

From satiety and nutrition to comfort and versatility, the findings show both enduring strengths and emerging opportunities for the industry. This latest research extends GFF's commitment to advancing the grain foods category through science-based insights and equipping investors with resources that strengthen industry impact.



SIX CONSUMER NEEDS DRIVING HOW CONSUMERS SEE GRAIN FOODS

1

CHOICE & VARIETY

Consumers want variety and familiarity in their diets and grain foods deliver breadth, showing up in multiple forms across nearly every household.

Half of consumers report eating sandwich bread, cereal, pasta, crackers, or rice in the past month.

On average, consumers **eat 8 different grain categories monthly**, with consumption patterns shaped by gender, age, and region.

2

ESSENTIAL NEEDS

Consumers look to grains as the foundation of balanced, affordable meals – meeting everyday needs for value, nutrition, and convenience.

46% buy grains because they pair well with other foods like protein and vegetables.

Leading reasons why people purchase grain foods include: pairing well with other foods, nutritional value, and convenience.

3

WELLNESS EVOLUTION

Consumers link grains to everyday wellness – from satiety and energy to fiber and protein – while new diet trends and medications (like GLP-1s) shape choices.

Satiety is the leading health reason for eating grains, followed by fiber, protein, and energy.

Consumers are more **motivated to purchase grains for added benefits** like protein and fiber than for exclusion claims such as low-carb or sugar-free.

4

TRANSPARENCY

Consumers scrutinize labels, with ingredient lists and nutrition facts guiding decisions, but limited knowledge of UPFs shows room for education.

9 out of 10 consumers read ingredient lists when considering new grain foods.

Only about a third (34%) say they know a moderate amount or more about ultra-processed foods.

5

VERSATILITY

Grain foods show up across mealtimes – from sandwiches and sides to snacks – and pair easily with other foods to create complete, balanced meals.

More than half of consumers pair bakery breads and side dishes with proteins and dairy.

Bread and side dishes are most common at lunch and dinner, while niche varieties like sourdough and quinoa are expanding into snacking.

6

COMFORT & SELF-CARE

Grain foods provide more than nutrition. They deliver comfort, satisfaction, and familiarity that support emotional wellness.

Nearly half of consumers associate grain foods with comfort or self-care.

More than 40% view pre-packaged/sliced bread as healthy or nourishing self-care.



For the industry, the takeaway is clear: highlight nutrition and transparency, adapt to evolving health priorities, and reinforce the essential role of grains in balanced, modern eating to ensure consumer relevance.

Full findings, including more detailed insights and strategic opportunities, are available to GFF Investors upon request.

Visit grainfoodsfoundation.org for more information.

