



Consumer Perspectives on **Bread**



America's Bread Basket Is Evolving

New consumer research from the Grain Foods Foundation® (GFF) shows that bread remains a staple in American households, but consumer expectations are evolving **fast**.

Shoppers are diversifying their pantry, leaning harder on nutrition and ingredient cues, and moving toward artisan and sourdough formats. For the grain foods industry, this shift is an opportunity as much as a challenge: the products and messages that win shelf space are changing, and so is what it takes to earn a place in the pantry.

The Pantry Is Diversifying

Traditional sliced bread remains the household anchor, but buyers are branching out.

Of traditional bread buyers, **71% also bought tortillas or wraps** in the past three months, and **57% bought rolls**.

Parents are driving much of that variety: households with kids over-index on tortillas and rolls and are more likely to be a two-loaf household to cater to adult and kid preferences.

Nutrition Still Drives the Decision, Even Amid Carb Anxiety

Despite ongoing carb and weight concerns, most consumers still see bread as an affordable way to eat nutritiously. But how they judge “healthy” is shifting toward perception over proof.

Before they even check the label, **62% of consumers equate visible grains and seeds with better health**, while **53% associate sourdough with better gut health**.

Processing is part of that same instinct: consumers cite worries about unrecognizable ingredients as a reason they're eating less traditional bread and describe artisan formats as feeling “less processed.”

A Generational Divide Is Reshaping the Category

Millennials are the most fatigued with tradition: 55% call traditional sliced bread “boring,” and 47%, the highest share of any generation, say they’re actively looking for a new everyday staple.

Gen Z is already there, over-indexing on sourdough as its pick as an everyday staple for the next five years.

How consumers find their next favorite bread is also undergoing a massive generational shift. Nearly half of Gen Z and a third of Millennials discover new bread through social media, while Boomers and Gen X still rely on in-store displays and taste alone.

Artisan and Sourdough Are Becoming the New Everyday Staple

While **41% of consumers say they’re eating fewer sandwiches than a year ago**, sourdough and artisan bread consumption is on the rise, driven mainly by taste, texture and a perceived health halo.

One in five now name sourdough their bread of choice for the ultimate sandwich. For many, artisan bread feels like a premium treat rather than an everyday basic.



What This Means for the Industry

The bread category isn’t disappearing, it’s evolving.

Bread’s story is being shaped as much by media, dietary guidance and policy conversations as by what’s on the shelf. Independent, credible research has never mattered more, ensuring the information reaching consumers is grounded in evidence rather than assumption. It’s also essential on the shelf itself: consumers are asking for simpler ingredients without giving up the taste and texture they already love, a demand that real food science needs to meet.

This is exactly the role GFF plays: providing the grain foods industry with trusted, science-based research and translating it for the audiences who shape consumer perception long before a shopper ever reaches the bread aisle. This work keeps the industry’s story accurate, credible and grounded, a foundation as the conversation around bread, carbs and processing keeps evolving.

Access the Full Research

Current GFF investors receive exclusive access to the complete research report, detailed findings, resources and strategic implications. If you’re not an investor, contact GFF at info@grainsfoundation.org to learn how investing provides access to proprietary research, science-based insights and resources shaping the future of grain foods.



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Source: Ipsos, Understanding Consumer Bread Consumption Habits, nationwide online survey of 1,043 adults (June 2026), commissioned by the Grain Foods Foundation.

