

Crunching the Numbers: What Today's Consumers Look for in Snacks

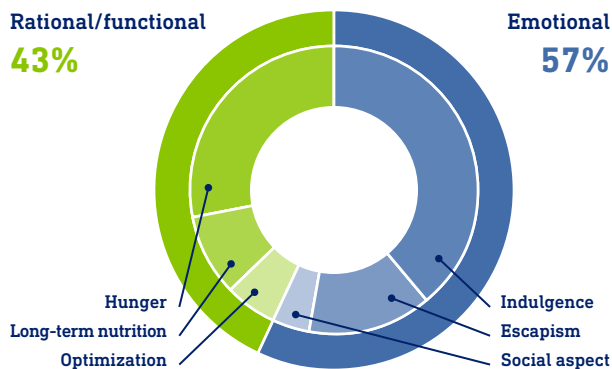
What snackers want is getting more sophisticated. We're well past the days of defining the category simply as "sweet or salty." While those two flavor preferences remain dominant, a range of factors now influence what consumers reach for in the snack aisle.

What follows are six drivers affecting global snacking decisions. These findings reveal a confluence of converging, and sometimes conflicting, forces shaping the snacking landscape.



Snacking is Emotional and Functional

Today's snacking occasions reflect both emotional and functional needs, which often overlap. Indulgence plays a key role across hunger and escapism occasions, while nutrition-focused occasions are also driven by optimization goals.



Sweet & Savory are Just the Beginning

Sweet or savory? While flavor preferences are often framed as an either/or choice, consumer behavior is more nuanced.

Snackers are increasingly open to products that blend sweet and savory flavors, draw on global inspirations and deliver distinctive sensory experiences, such as spicy, cooling and tingling sensations.



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Gen Z Looks For Snacks That Do More

Gen Z is reshaping snacking with a varied, anytime-anywhere approach, often combining multiple snacks in a single occasion.

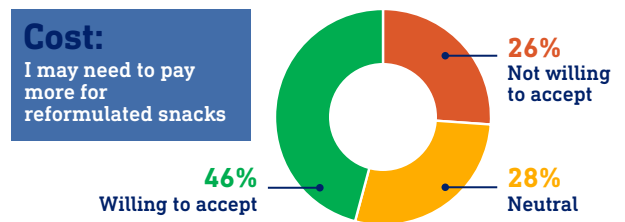
They favor protein-rich, grab-and-go options, along with sweet and dairy snacks, meat and meat-alternative offerings, and seek benefits related to mood, sleep, stress, sustainability, optimization, escapism and social connection.



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Finding a Winning (Re)Formulation

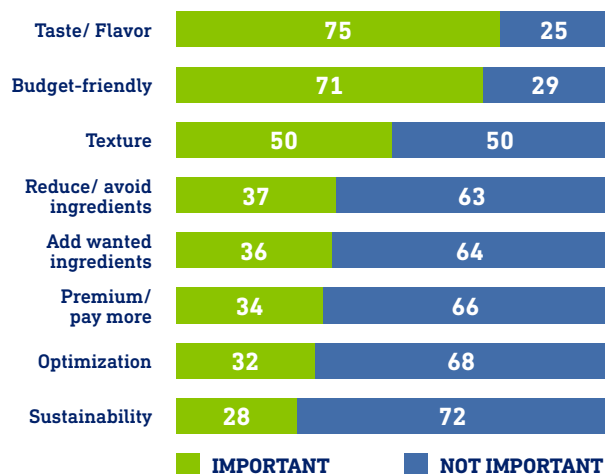
Over two-thirds of consumers are interested or very interested in reformulated snacks, prioritizing added fiber and clean-label attributes like removing artificial colors. Nearly half are willing to accept a higher cost for these snacks.



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Affordability Surpasses Texture

After taste, affordability remains the most important factor with 71% of U.S. consumers rating it as important. It beats texture, ingredients used and sustainability.



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GLP-1 Users Shop With More Than Weight Loss in Mind

Consumers taking anti-obesity medications (AOMs), including GLP-1 receptor agonists, are willing to pay more for snacks that align with their goals.

With many snacks already offering built-in portion control, there is innovation opportunity to support GLP-1 users with tailored nutrition through ingredients like protein, prebiotic fiber, probiotics, postbiotics and omega-3s.