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More Shoppers Demand Sourcing Info



Consumers have moved past ingredient lists and are now focused on seeking out non-genetically modified and sustainable “farm to table” products that can be traced back to local and regional farmers and producers, according to a survey released by Market Dynamics LOHAS and Laz PR.

The [2013 MamboTrack Annual Natural and Organic Product Survey](#) of 1,003 consumers found that shoppers are increasing their spending on organic foods and emphasizing the traceability of the foods they buy, to non-GMO, local/regional and fair trade sources. Third-party certifications and heightened media coverage are helping to drive interest in sustainable meat, poultry and seafood.

The survey found that eco-seafood labels, Wild Seafood certifications and sustainability guides influenced consumers’ seafood purchases.

According to the study, about seven in 10 shoppers used package labels or in-store signage to learn about the brands they were buying, while six in 10 visited brand and product websites.

Taste, ingredients and nutritional factors are the leading drivers of consumer’s brand choices, although price remains important, according to the survey. Some 80 percent of shoppers who were surveyed plan to continue or increase their use of coupons as well as buy retail store-brand natural and organic products in an effort to save money.

Safeway announced in December that it has become the first major national retailer to require all of its [organic and cage-free egg suppliers](#) be “certified humane” by the nonprofit third-party label organization Humane Farm Animal Care. Safeway also has surpassed its goals for increasing sales of cage-free eggs from 6 percent to 12 percent by 2012. More than 15 percent of Safeway’s overall egg sales are cage-free eggs.

The cage-free egg sourcing goals came on the heels of Safeway’s announcement in May that it would only carry crate-free pork. [McDonald’s](#), [Burger King](#), Kroger, Wendy’s, Denny’s, Cracker Barrel, Sonic, Carl’s Jr., Hardee’s, Baja Fresh, Compass Group and Sodexo have also announced that they will eliminate gestation crates from their supply chains. Kraft Foods announced in July it will [eliminate gestation crates](#) from Oscar Mayer’s pork supply chain by 2022.

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