

'Natural' Claims Fading; Brand Trust Surges: MamboTrack 2016 LOHAS shopper survey reveals latest 'healthy' trends



March 11, 2016, 09:38 am

Health- and eco-minded consumers are looking beyond natural product labels to organic, non-GMO and grass-fed claims, according to the 2016 Market LOHAS MamboTrack consumer research survey. The annual study, now in its 10th year, found that eight in 10 health-conscious consumers want to see a natural product certification similar to the USDA

organic seal. This year, only about one in three said "all natural" was a key purchase factor while "brand that I trust" attributes (46%) are on the rise.

"Savvy health-aware consumers are skeptical about the natural label and are looking for known ingredient certifications like USDA organic and non-GMO," notes Karen Herther, principal of Market LOHAS (Lifestyle Of Health And Sustainability), which spearheads the **MamboTrack Research** [2]. Adds fellow principal Bethany Stanley, "They're also relying on trusted brands."

The study found that shoppers are reading ingredient labels, seeking non-GMO and organic certifications along with other health and nutrition indicators. Products free from antibiotics, pesticides, and added sweeteners topped the list of shopper concerns for 2016, along with food safety and contamination.

Among other findings:

- Healthy consumers are eating more vegetarian/plant-based food products, with half planning to buy more in 2016. More than seven in 10 are aware of the Meatless Monday health campaign.
- Three in four are buying grass-fed meat or dairy products.
- Only one in four believe that local sourcing is more important than organic.
- Most regularly buy both natural/organic and conventional health & beauty items.
- A majority of health and eco consumers report taking "green actions" with three in four or more using reusable water bottles, utilizing fewer plastic H2O disposables, and buying eco cleaning products.
- Six in 10 eco-conscious consumers were already avoiding products with microbeads, prior to the FDA ban.

Healthy consumers are shopping for natural and organic foods at both natural and mainstream retailers from supermarkets to local health food stores, including Whole Foods, Target, and online retailers. About three in four value-minded consumers reported steady or increasing coupon usage. Other special 2016 Market LOHAS MamboTrack Report topics include: grass-fed products; natural/organic and conventional retail shopping patterns; HBC buying; gluten-free; healthy dietary practices from plant-based, vegetarian and Paleo; natural sweeteners; and grocery coupon usage, among others. The survey also probed the impact of B Benefit Corp Certification, charitable giving patterns, and additional eco-friendly actions – from reducing food waste to composting and alternative renewable energy.

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