



# A “Booming” Generation: Beliefs, Barriers, and Behaviors



# Background and Methodology

- This special report presents the results of the 2016 Food and Health Survey, focusing on the responses of the 326 Boomers who participated.
- For this report, Boomers are defined as those between the ages of 52 and 70. In addition, this report also highlights subgroup differences within the Boomer generation. These subgroups include:
  - Age groups (52-57, 58-64, 65-70)
  - Male vs. Female
  - Education (College grad vs. less than college)
  - Race/Ethnicity (White vs. minority)
  - Those married (or living with a partner) vs. those who are not
  - Higher (Overweight/Obese) vs. Lower (Normal/Low) BMI
  - Household Income (Less than \$50K, \$50K-\$100K, \$100K or more)
  - Those with Non-Communicable diseases (Cancer, Diabetes, High cholesterol, Heart Disease, and/or High blood pressure) vs. those without
  - Political leaning (Very/somewhat liberal, moderate, very/somewhat conservative)
  - Region (Northeast, South, West, Midwest)
- This report also focuses on differences between generations: Boomers vs. Millennials (age 18-36) and Boomers vs. the General Population (Silent, Gen X, and Millennials).
- The survey was conducted by Greenwald & Associates, using ResearchNow's consumer panel. Fielding took place from March 17 to March 24, 2016. The duration of the survey was 29 minutes, on average.
- The results were weighted to ensure that they are reflective of the American population ages 18 to 80, as seen in the 2015 Current Population Survey. Specifically, they were weighted by age, education, gender, race/ethnicity, and region.
- Key:
  - B = Boomer
  - M = Millennial
  - GP = General Population
  - > = more likely
  - < = less likely

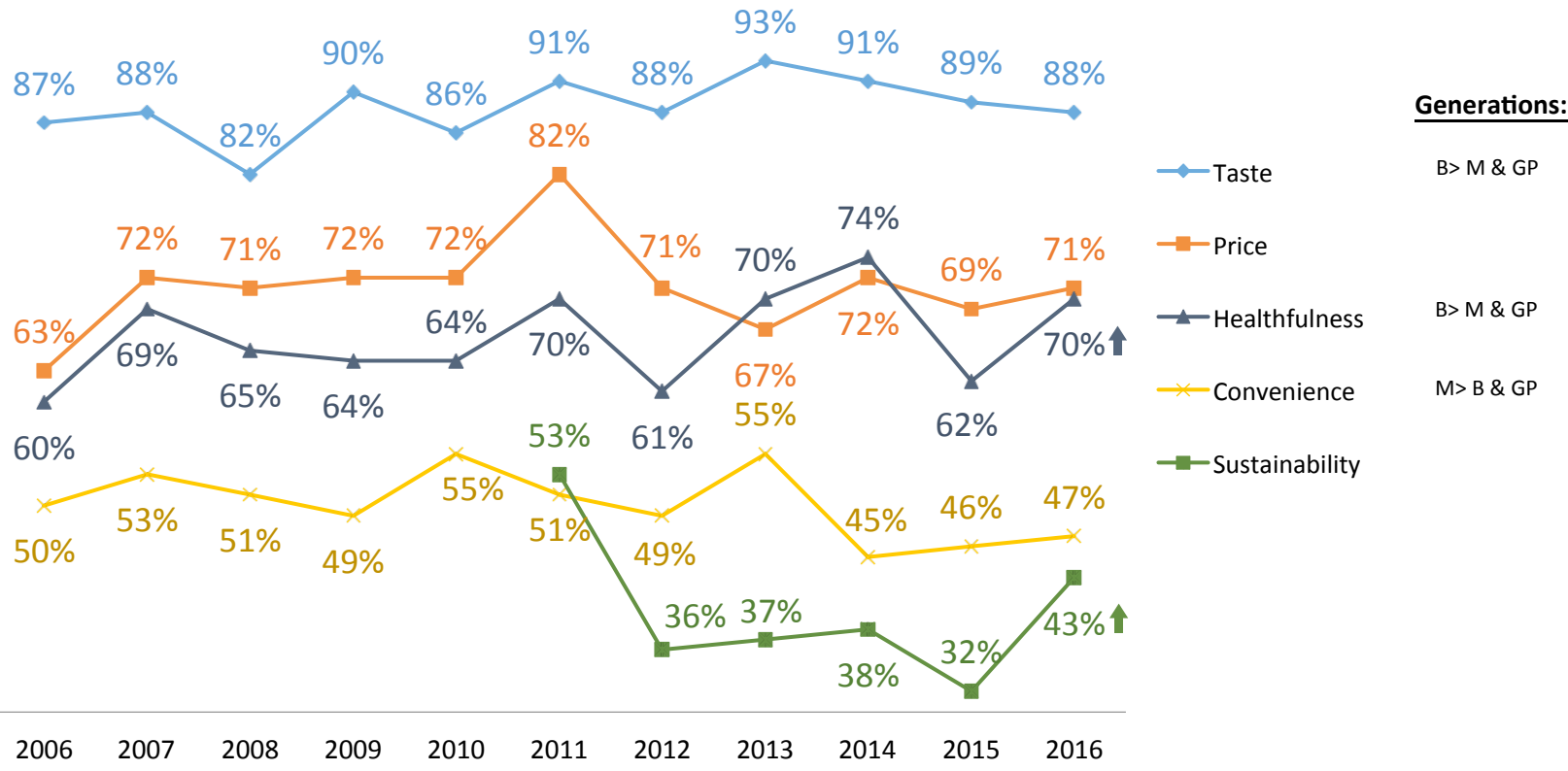


FOOD  
INFORMATION  
LANDSCAPE

[foodinsight.org](http://foodinsight.org)

# Boomers are more likely than other generations to make purchases based on taste and healthfulness; however, sustainability and healthfulness are rising among Boomers.

How much of an impact do the following have on your decision to buy foods and beverages?  
 (% Rating 4 to 5 on 5-point scale, from No Impact to A Great Impact)



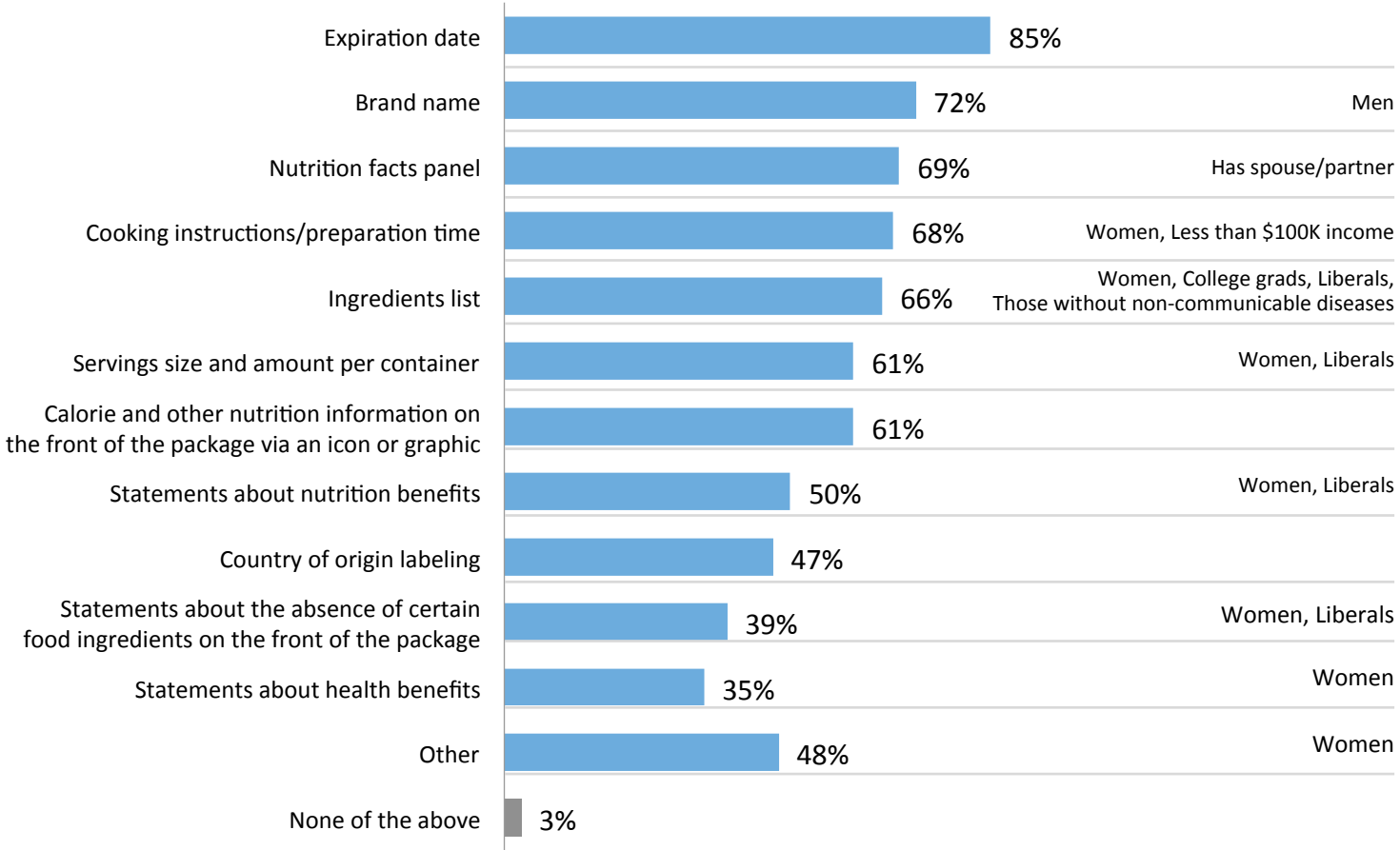
2016 Boomers n=326  
 Arrows indicate significant (.95 level) differences vs. 2015.

# Expiration date and brand name are the most commonly looked at information for Boomers when deciding to purchase or eat a food or beverage.

What information do you look at on the food or beverage package when deciding to purchase or eat a food or beverage?

Percent Yes

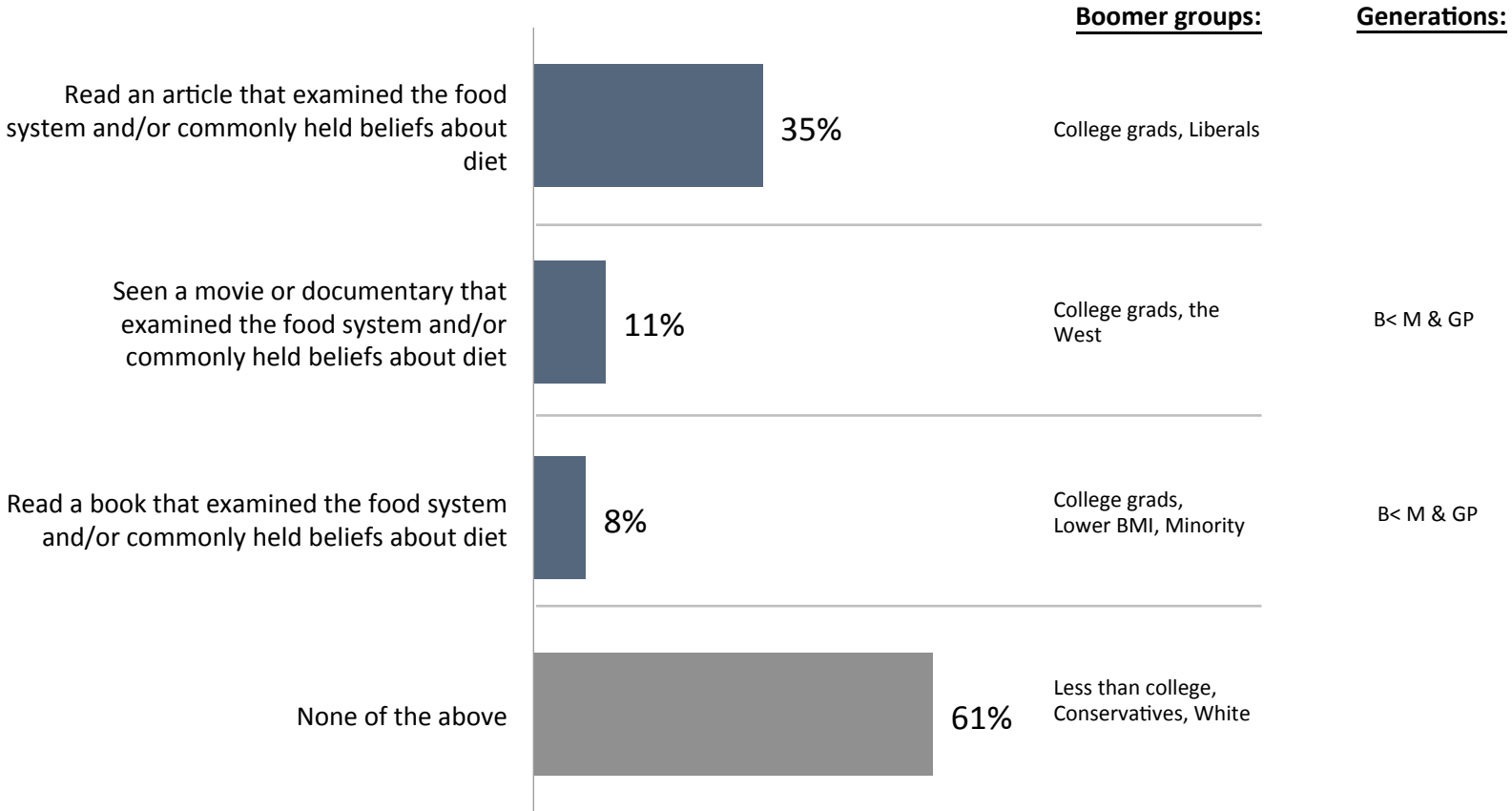
**Boomer groups:**



2016 Boomers Sample B n=154

# Boomers are less likely to have seen a movie/documentary or read a book on the food system compared to other generations.

Have you done any of the following in the past year? *(Select all that apply.)*

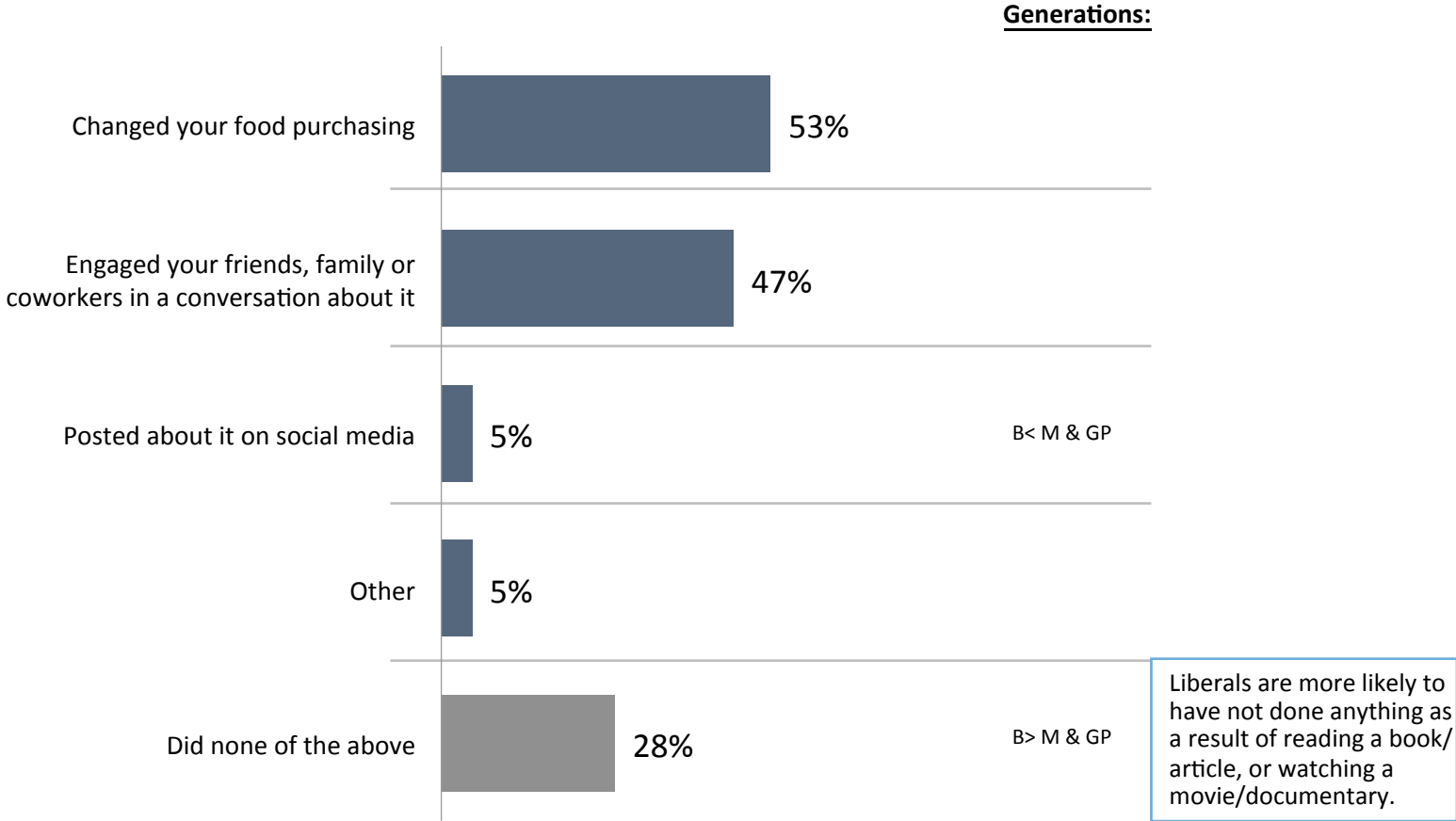


2016 Boomers n=326



Even though half of Boomers have changed their food purchasing as a result, they are less likely than other generations to take action in general, especially on social media.

Have you done any of the following as a result of reading that book or article, or watching that movie or documentary? *(Select all that apply.)*



2016 Boomers if read or saw something in the past year n=128

# Boomers are more likely to trust healthcare professionals for information on the types of food to eat, compared to other generations.

Who would you trust more to provide you with accurate information about the types of food you should be eating?  
(Select up to 3.)

			<u>Boomer groups:</u>	<u>Generations:</u>
Registered Dietitian/ Nutritionist	75%		Higher BMI	B > M & GP
Your personal healthcare professional	73%		Conservatives	B > M & GP
US government agencies	39%	Those with non-communicable diseases, Liberals, Moderates		
Health-focused Website, such as WebMD	30%		Minority	
A friend or family member	26%		Lower BMI, White	
Fitness professional	16%	Those without non-communicable diseases		B < M & GP
A food expert on TV	13%			
Farmer	11%			B < M & GP
Health, food and nutrition bloggers	8%	Those without non-communicable diseases		B < M & GP
Food company or manufacturer	8%			

2016 Boomers n=326



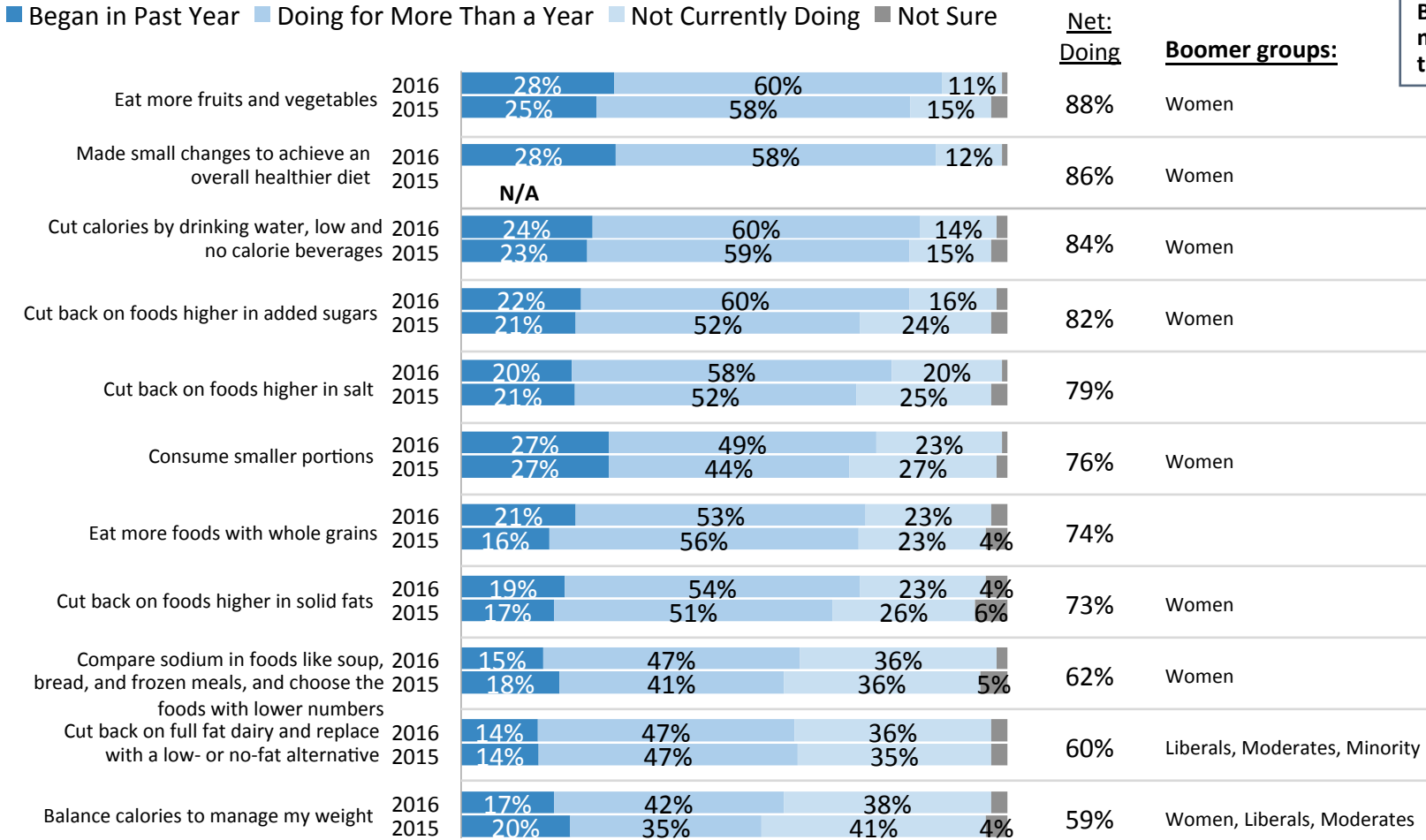


HEALTHY  
EATING  
STYLES

[foodinsight.org](http://foodinsight.org)

# One-quarter of Boomers, especially women, have changed their diet in the past year; most notably making small changes and eating more fruits and vegetables.

Over the past year, which of the following, if any, have you made an effort to do?



**B> M & GP to be making any changes to their diet.**

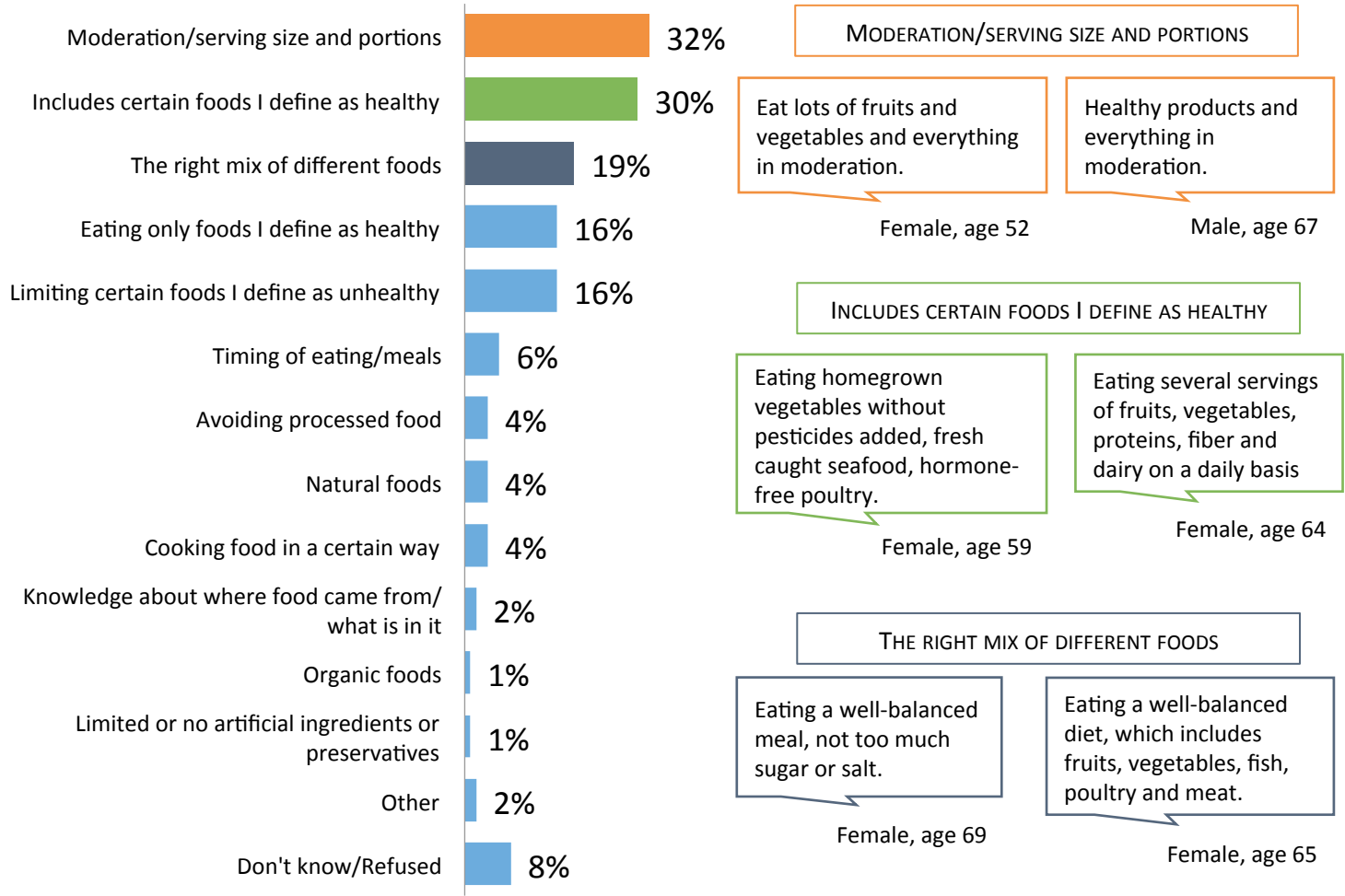
2016 Boomers n=326; 2015 Boomers n=333  
There were no significant (.95 level) differences vs. 2015

# Boomers are more likely to define a healthy eating style by moderation and including certain healthy foods, compared to other generations.

**Generations:**

B > GP  
B > M

How do you define a healthy eating style? (Open-ended response)

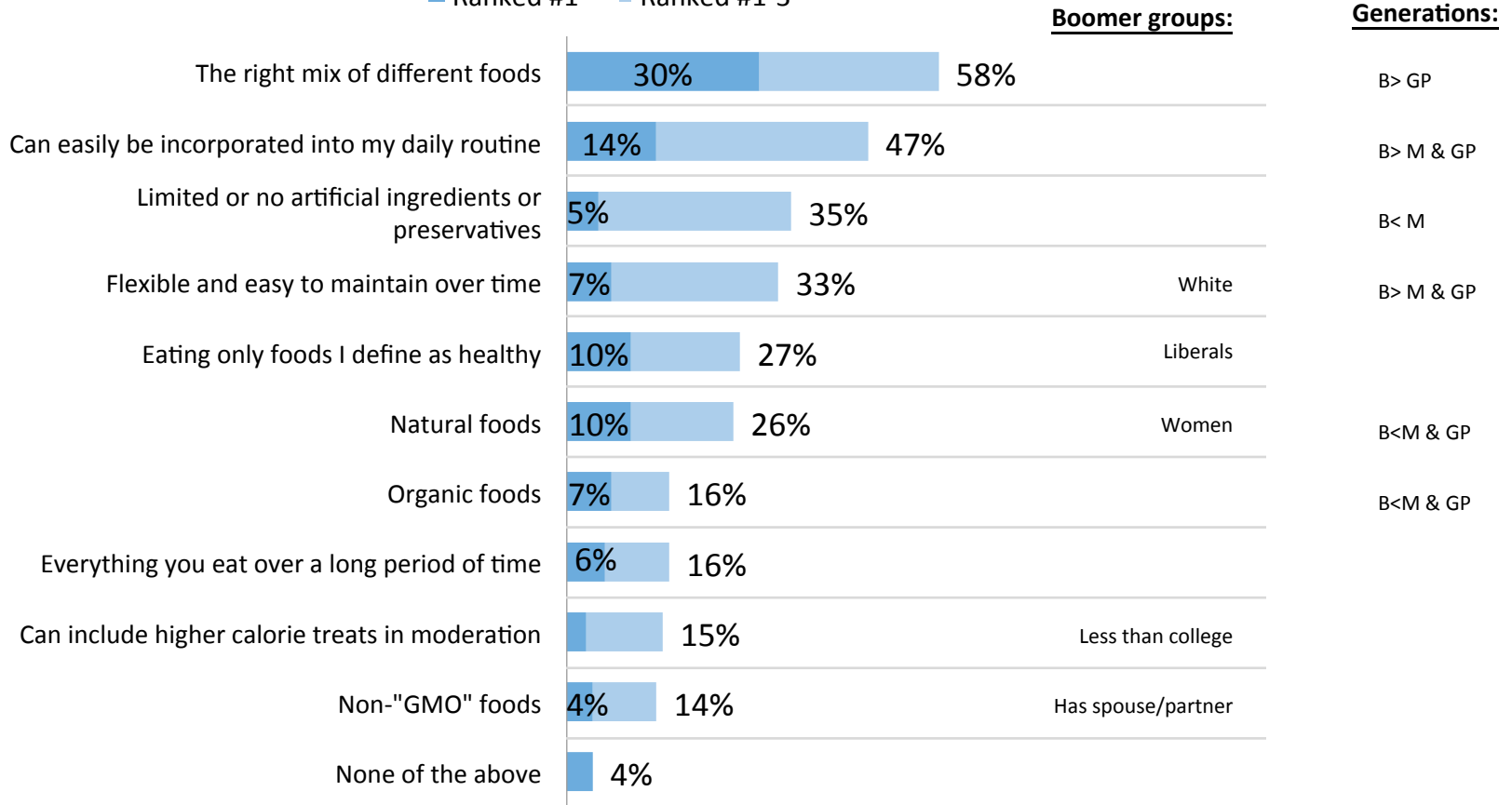


2016 Boomers Sample B n=164  
Coded for multiple responses

When given definitions to choose from, Boomers are more likely to define a healthy eating style as having the right mix of different foods and can fit into a daily routine.

How do you define a healthy eating style?  
 (Please rank the top 3 attributes that best fit your definition, with 1=Top Choice.)

■ Ranked #1   ■ Ranked #1-3



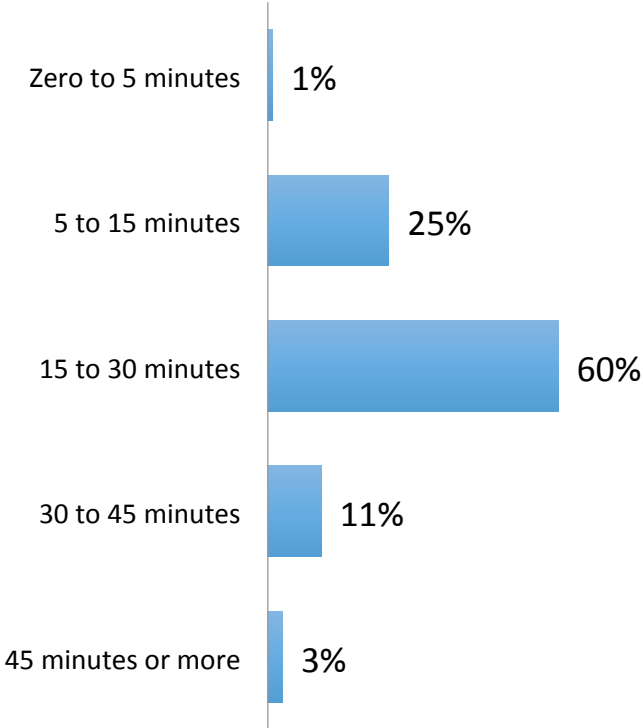
2016 Boomers Sample A n=162

# Compared to other generations, Boomers are more likely to spend more than 15 minutes eating dinner.

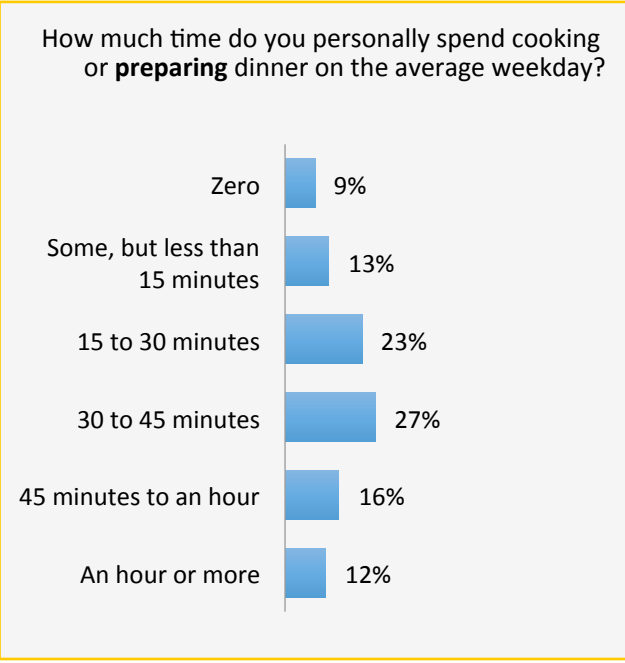
On an average weekday, how much time do you personally spend **eating** dinner?

**Generations:**

B < M & GP  
**26%**  
 LESS THAN 15 MINUTES



2015 Food & Health Survey:



2016 Boomers n=326; 2015 Boomers n=333

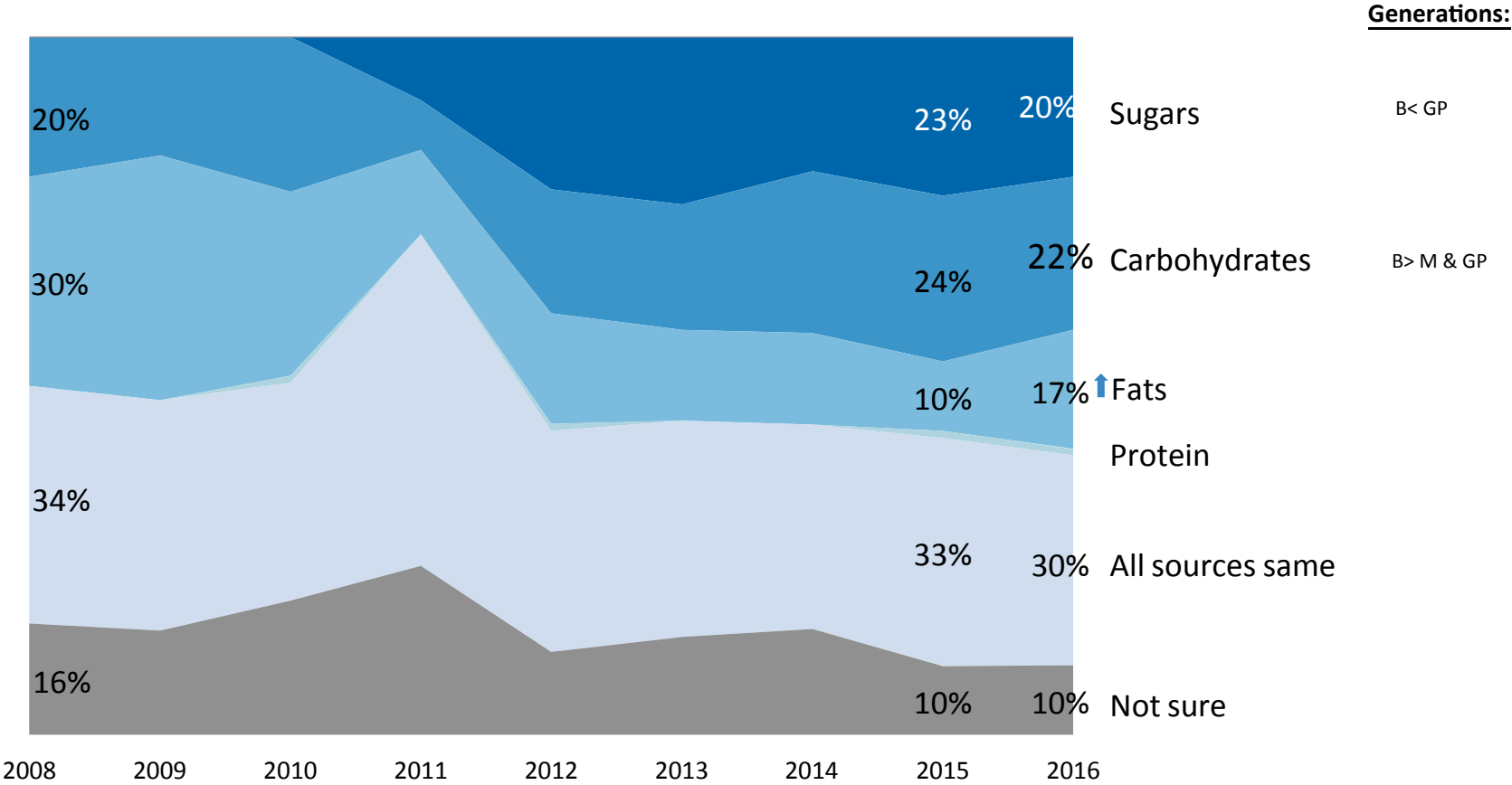


DIETARY  
COMPONENTS

[foodinsight.org](http://foodinsight.org)

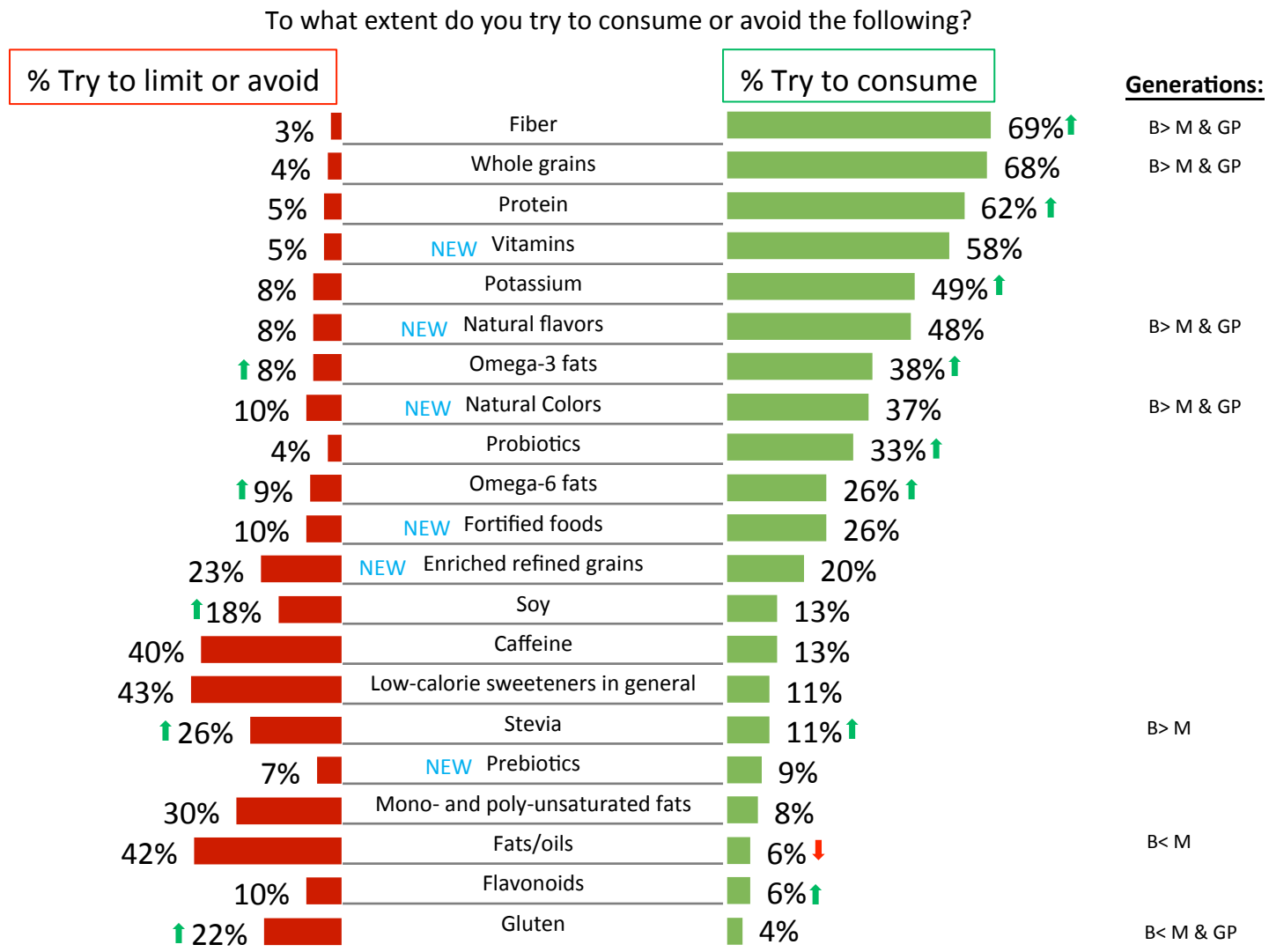
# Boomers are more likely than other generations to state that calories from carbohydrates, but not sugar, cause weight gain more than other sources

What source of calories are the most likely to cause weight gain?



2016 Boomers n=326  
 Arrows indicate significant (.95 level) differences vs. 2015

# Boomers are more likely than other generations to try to consume nutrients and components, such as fiber and whole grains.

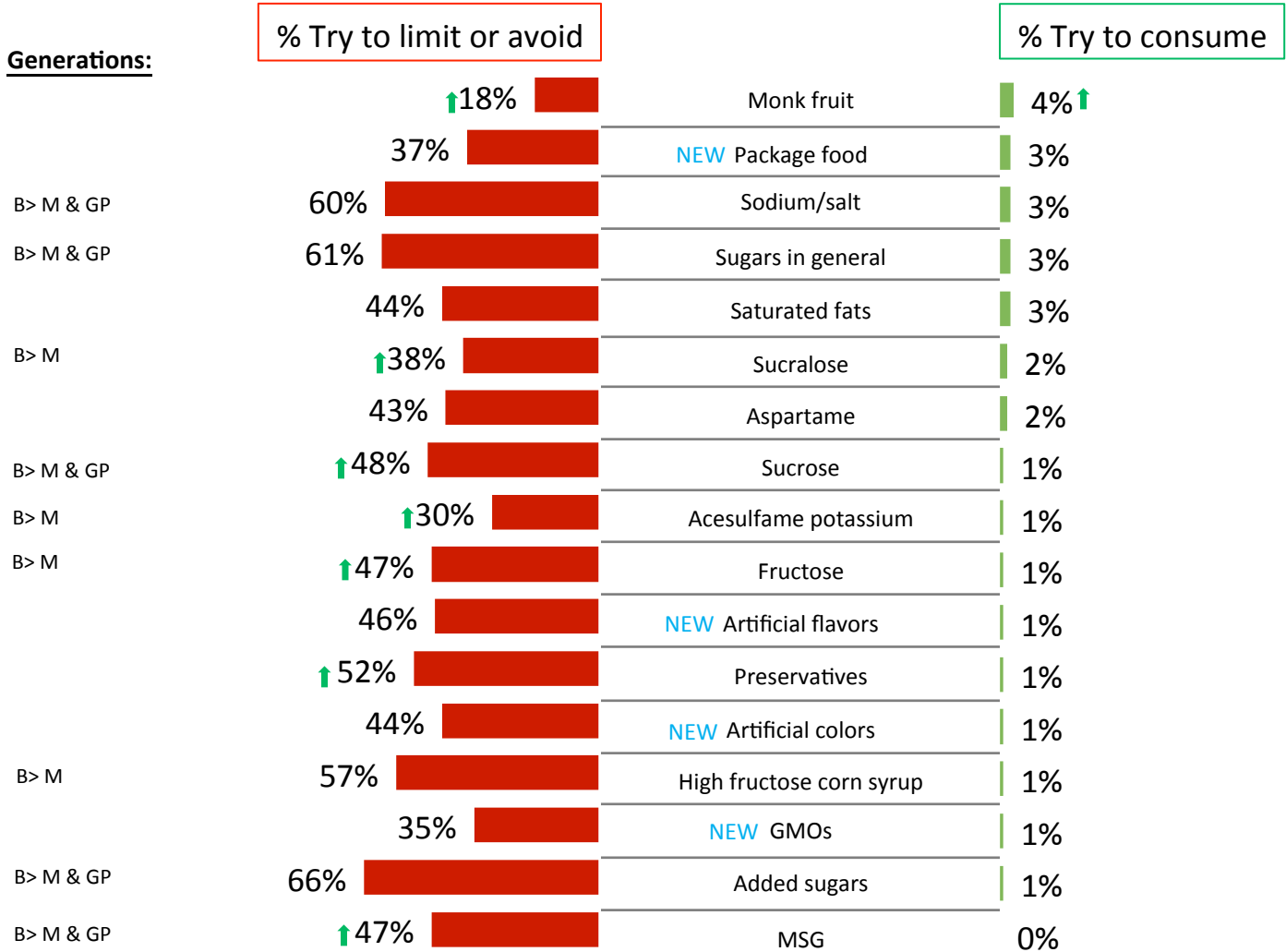


2016 Boomers n=326  
 Arrows indicate significant (.95 level) differences vs. 2015



# Compared to other generations, Boomers are more likely avoiding a variety of components such as sugars, low-calorie sweeteners, sodium, and MSG.

To what extent do you try to consume or avoid the following?



2016 Boomers n=326  
 Arrows indicate significant (.95 level) differences vs. 2015

# Different subgroups within the Boomer generation influence action.

To what extent do you try to consume or avoid the following?

% Try to limit or avoid

% Try to consume

Subgroup	% Try to limit or avoid	Item	% Try to consume	Additional Info
Women, Less than college	3%	Fiber	69%↑	Has spouse/partner, Those with non-comm. diseases
Less than college	4%	Whole grains	68%	Women
Has spouse/partner	5%	Protein	62%↑	Women
	5%	NEW Vitamins	58%	
	8%	Potassium	49%↑	Women
	↑8%	NEW Natural flavors	48%	Less than \$100K income, Older Boomers (65-70)
	8%	Omega-3 fats	38%↑	
	10%	NEW Natural Colors	37%	
	4%	Probiotics	33%↑	Women
	↑9%	Omega-6 fats	26%↑	
	10%	NEW Fortified foods	26%	
	23%	NEW Enriched refined grains	20%	White
Conservatives	↑18%	Soy	13%	Moderates
Liberals	40%	Caffeine	13%	
College grads, Younger Boomers (52-57)	43%	Low-calorie sweeteners in general	11%	Higher BMI
	↑26%	Stevia	11%↑	
	7%	NEW Prebiotics	9%	
Those with non-communicable diseases	30%	Mono- and poly-unsaturated fats	8%	No spouse/partner
Those with non-communicable diseases, Liberals	42%	Fats/oils	6%↓	
Less than \$50K income	10%	Flavonoids	6%↑	
Minority	↑22%	Gluten	4%	Less than college, Less than \$50K income

# Different subgroups within the Boomer generation influence action.

To what extent do you try to consume or avoid the following?



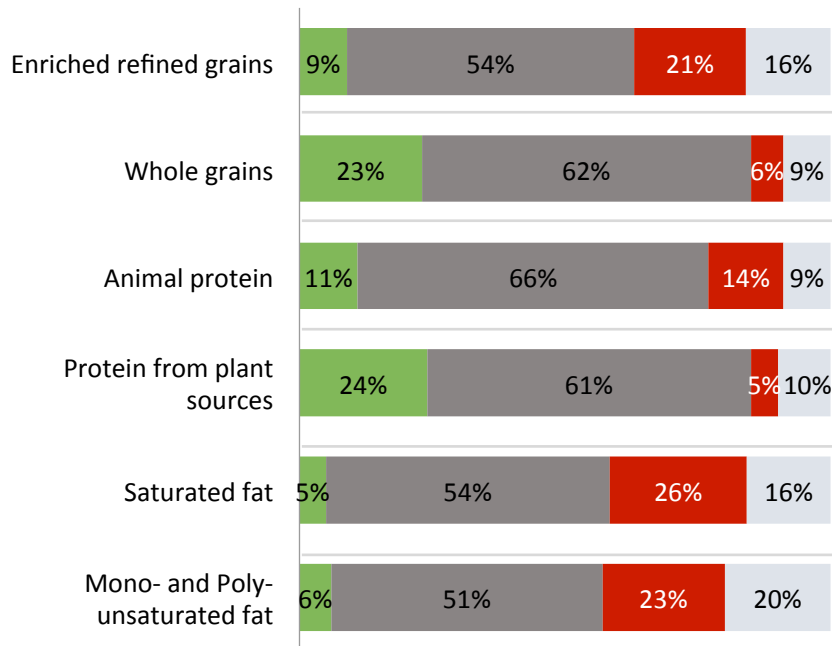
	% Try to limit or avoid		% Try to consume
	↑18%	Monk fruit	4% ↑
Women, Less than \$100K income, Older Boomers (65-70)	37%	NEW Packaged foods	3%
	60%	Sodium/salt	3%
Women, Those with non-comm. diseases	61%	Sugars in general	3%
	44%	Saturated fats	3%
College grads, Younger Boomers (52-64)	↑38%	Sucralose	2%
Has spouse/partner, College grads, Younger Boomers (52-64)	43%	Aspartame	2%
	↑48%	Sucrose	1%
College grads, Younger Boomers (52-64)	↑30%	Acesulfame potassium	1%
Minority	↑47%	Fructose	1%
Women, Less than \$50K income	46%	NEW Artificial flavors	1%
	↑52%	Preservatives	1%
Women, Less than \$50K income	44%	NEW Artificial colors	1%
Younger Boomers (52-64)	57%	High fructose corn syrup	1%
Women	35%	NEW GMOs	1%
Those with non-comm. diseases	66%	Added sugars	1%
College grads	↑47%	MSG	0%

# Media headlines or articles most often influence Boomers to believe grains, proteins, and fats are less healthful, while friends or family influence them to believe they are more healthful.

## Opinion Change: Grains, Proteins, and Fats

Thinking about the past year, how has your opinion changed, if at all, about the healthfulness of...

More healthful No change Less healthful Not sure



### Top factor influencing opinion change by Generation\*

#### More healthful

Boomers: Friend/Family  
Millennials: Friend/Family  
General Population: Friend/Family

Boomers: Office visit & Friend/Family  
Millennials: Friend/Family  
General Population: Friend/Family

Boomers: Reading a scientific study  
Millennials: Friend/Family  
General Population: Reading a scientific study

Boomers: Media headline or article  
Millennials: Friend/Family  
General Population: Friend/Family

Boomers: Friend/Family  
Millennials: Registered Dietitian  
General Population: Registered Dietitian

Boomers: Registered Dietitian  
Millennials: Friend/Family  
General Population: Friend/Family

#### Less healthful

Boomers: Media headline or article  
Millennials: Friend/Family  
General Population: Friend/Family

Boomers: Reading a scientific study  
Millennials: Friend/Family  
General Population: Friend/Family

Boomers: Office visit w/ healthcare prof.  
Millennials: Food expert on TV  
General Population: Friend/Family

Boomers: Media headline or article  
Millennials: Registered Dietitian  
General Population: Office visit w/ healthcare prof. & Fitness prof

Boomers: Media headline or article  
Millennials: Friend/Family  
General Population: Reading a scientific study

Boomers: Office visit w/ healthcare prof.  
Millennials: Media headline or article  
General Population: Reading a scientific study

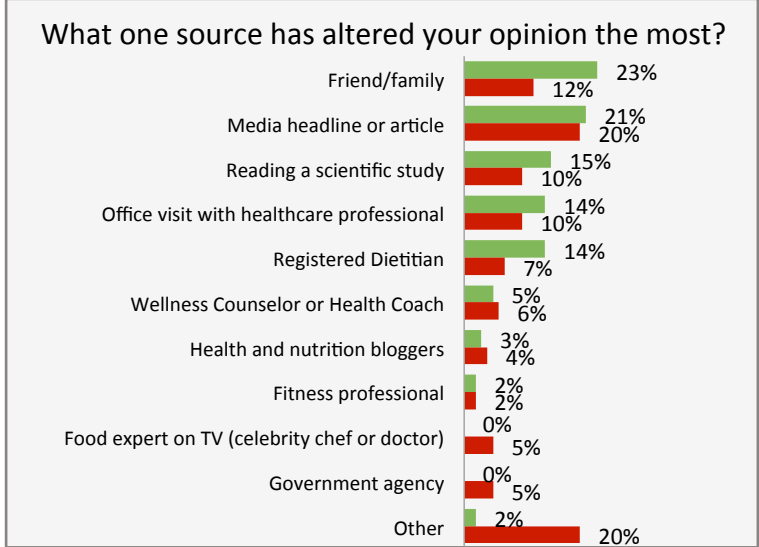
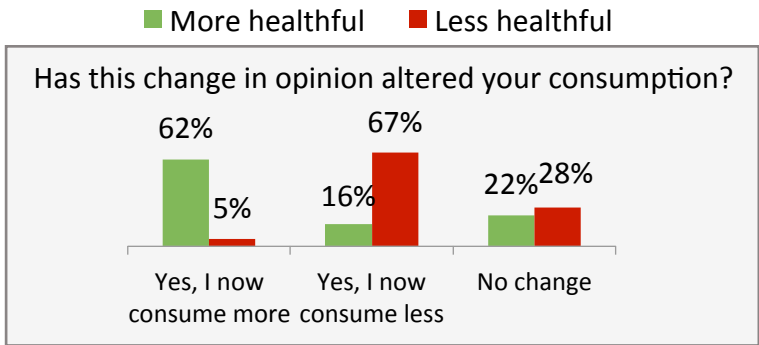
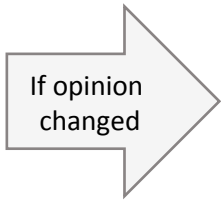
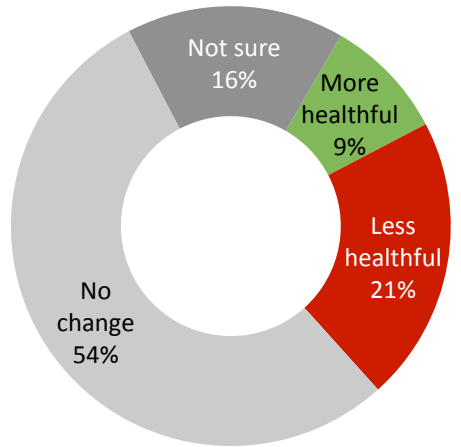
2016 Boomers n=326  
 \*Not including "Other"



# Three in ten Boomers have changed their opinion about enriched refined grains, with about two in ten reporting they are less healthful.

## Opinion Change: Enriched Refined Grains

Thinking about the past year, how has your opinion changed, if at all, about the healthfulness of enriched refined grains?

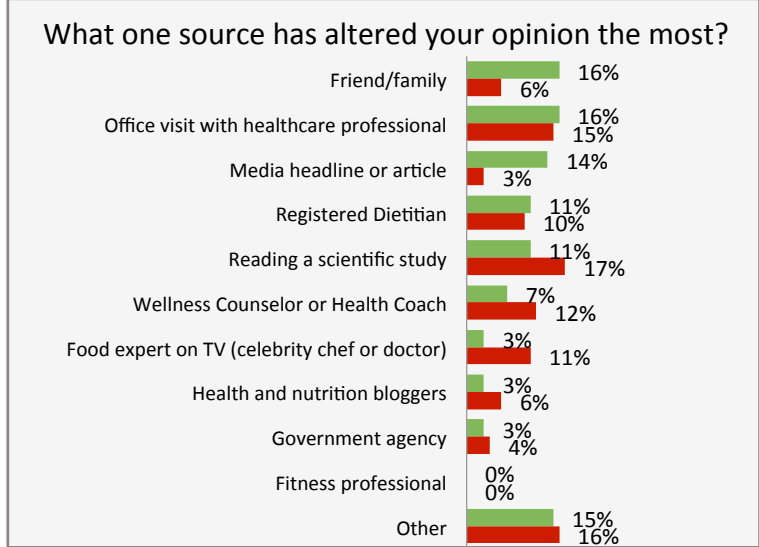
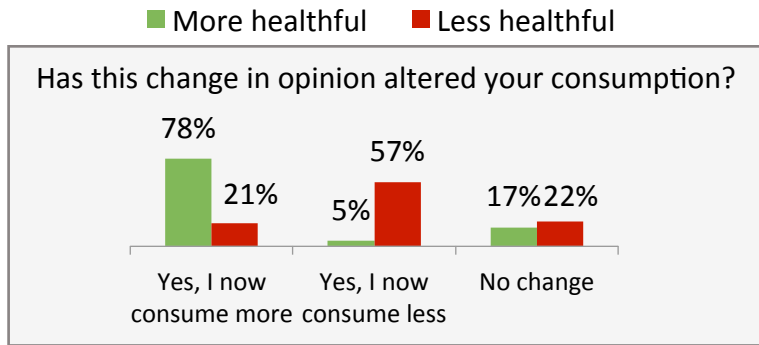
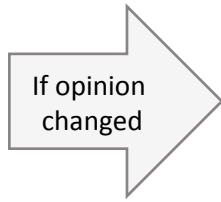
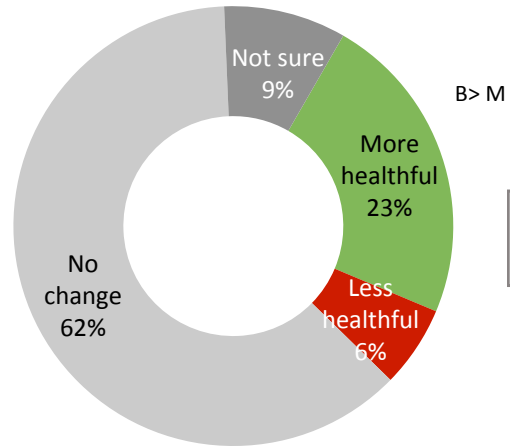


2016 Boomers n=326; More healthful n=33; Less healthful n=68

# Boomers are more likely to view whole grains as more healthful compared to Millennials.

## Opinion Change: Whole Grains

Thinking about the past year, how has your opinion changed, if at all, about the healthfulness of whole grains?

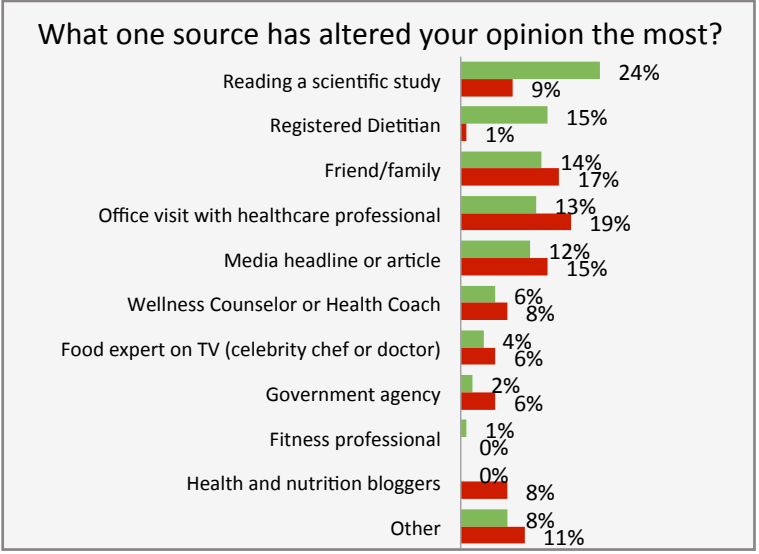
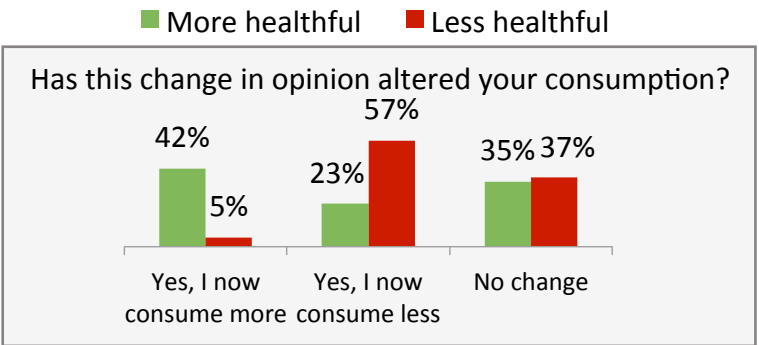
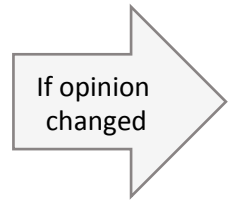
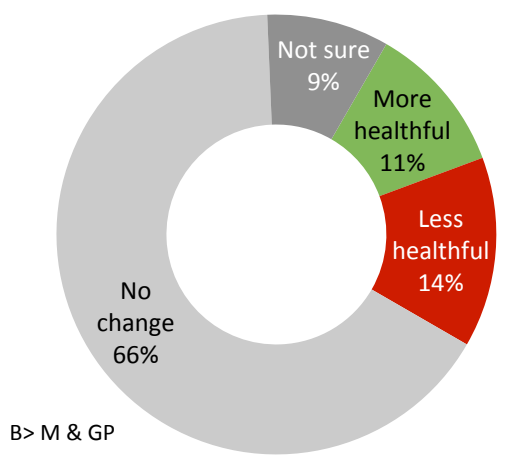


2016 Boomers n=326; More healthful n=82; Less healthful n=19

While equal amounts of Boomers view animal protein as less or more healthful, Boomers are more likely to have no opinion change compared to other generations.

### Opinion Change: Animal Protein

Thinking about the past year, how has your opinion changed, if at all, about the healthfulness of animal protein (ex: meat, fish, or dairy)?

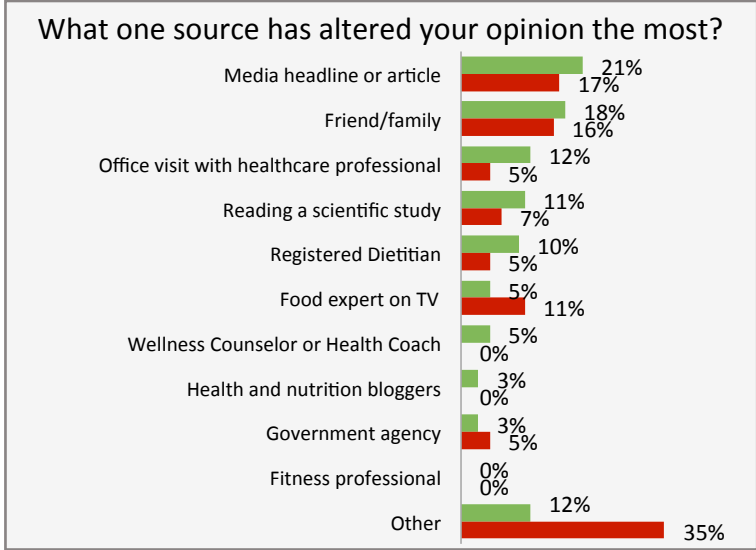
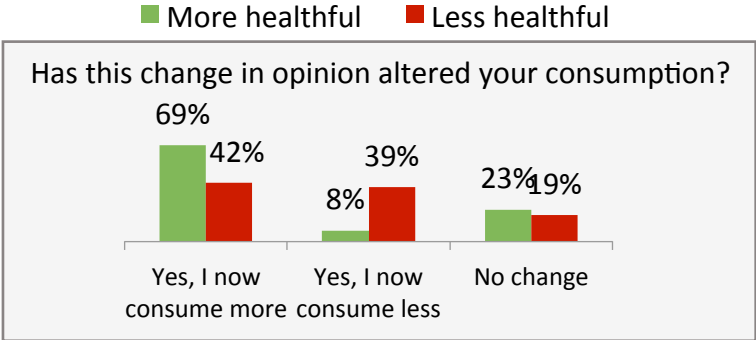
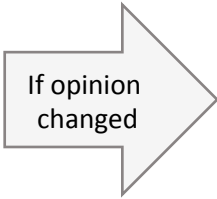
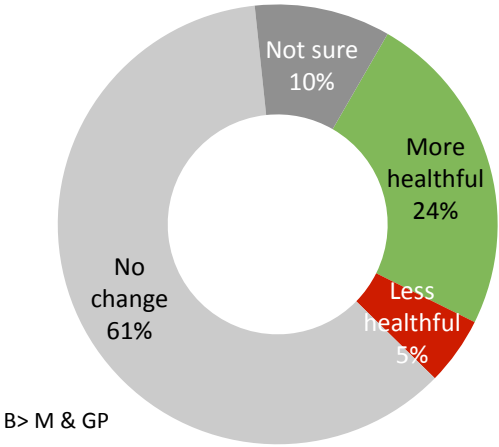


2016 Boomers n=326; More healthful n=42; Less healthful n=51

While one in four Boomers have an improved opinion about plant protein, Boomers are more likely to have no opinion change compared to other generations.

### Opinion Change: Protein from Plant Sources

Thinking about the past year, how has your opinion changed, if at all, about the healthfulness of protein from plant sources (ex: soy, nuts, or beans)?



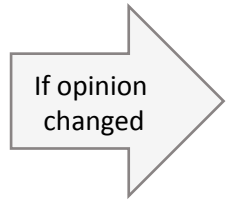
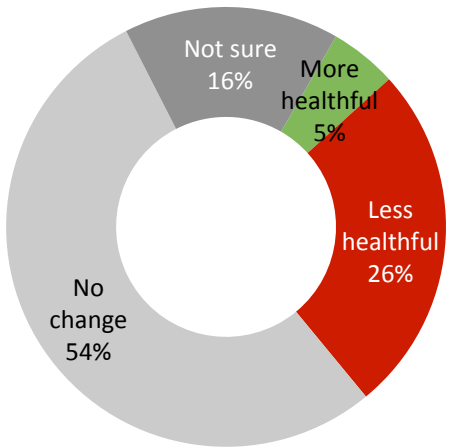
2016 Boomers n=326; More healthful n=83; Less healthful n=16



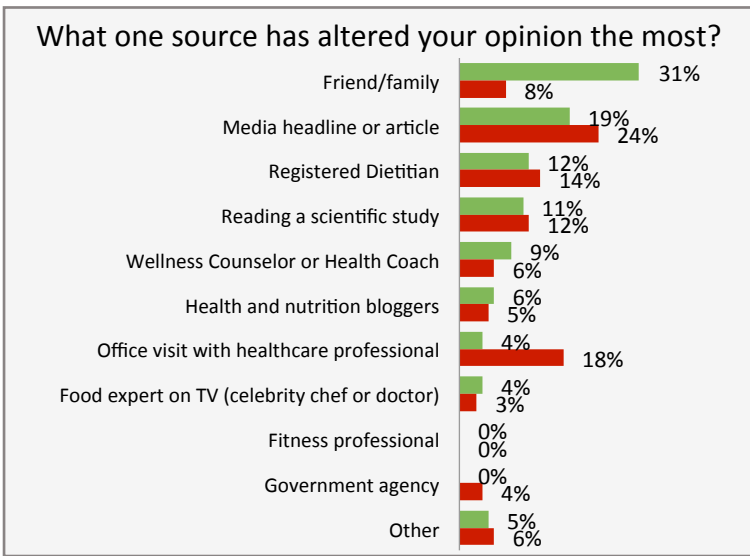
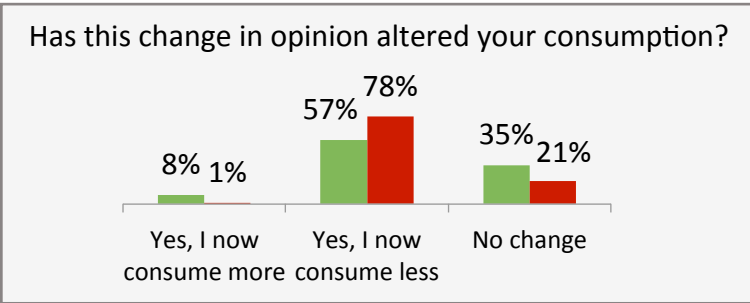
# 3 in 10 Boomers have changed their opinion about saturated fat, with more than a quarter now believing it to be less healthful.

## Opinion Change: Saturated Fat

Thinking about the past year, how has your opinion changed, if at all, about the healthfulness of saturated fat?



More healthful (green) Less healthful (red)

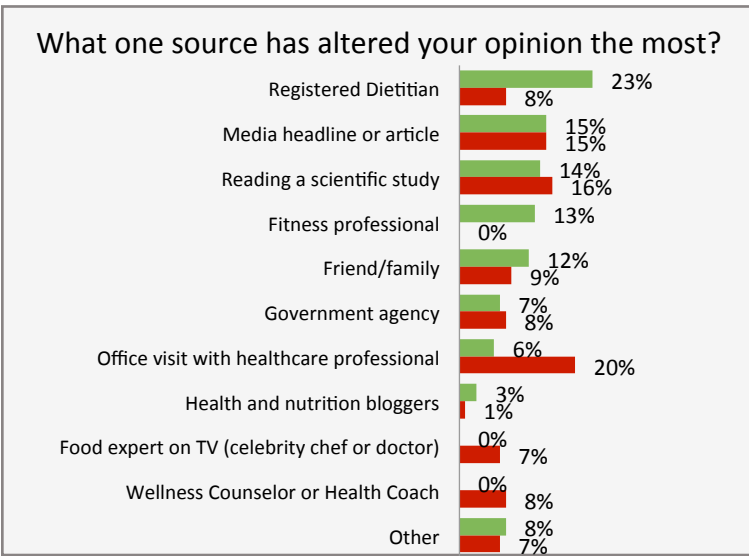
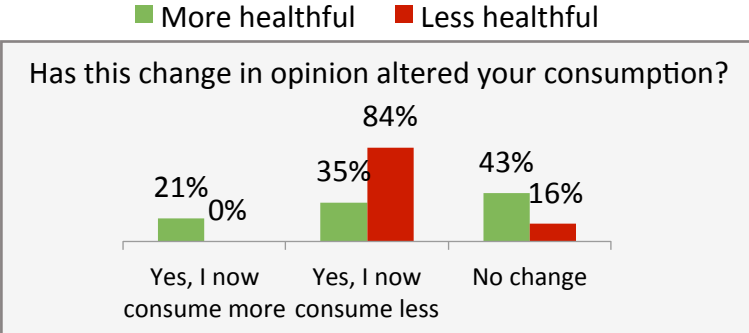
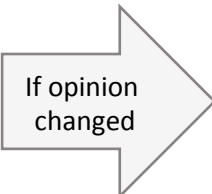
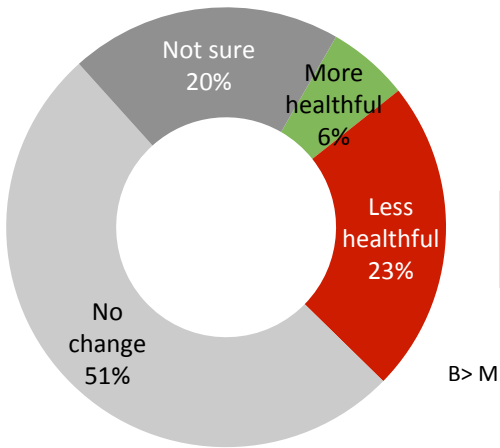


2016 Boomers n=326; More healthful n=18; Less healthful n=93

# Boomers are more likely than Millennials to believe unsaturated fat is less healthful.

## Opinion Change: Mono- and Poly- unsaturated Fat

Thinking about the past year, how has your opinion changed, if at all, about the healthfulness of mono- and poly-unsaturated fat?



2016 Boomers n=326; More healthful n=22; Less healthful n=79

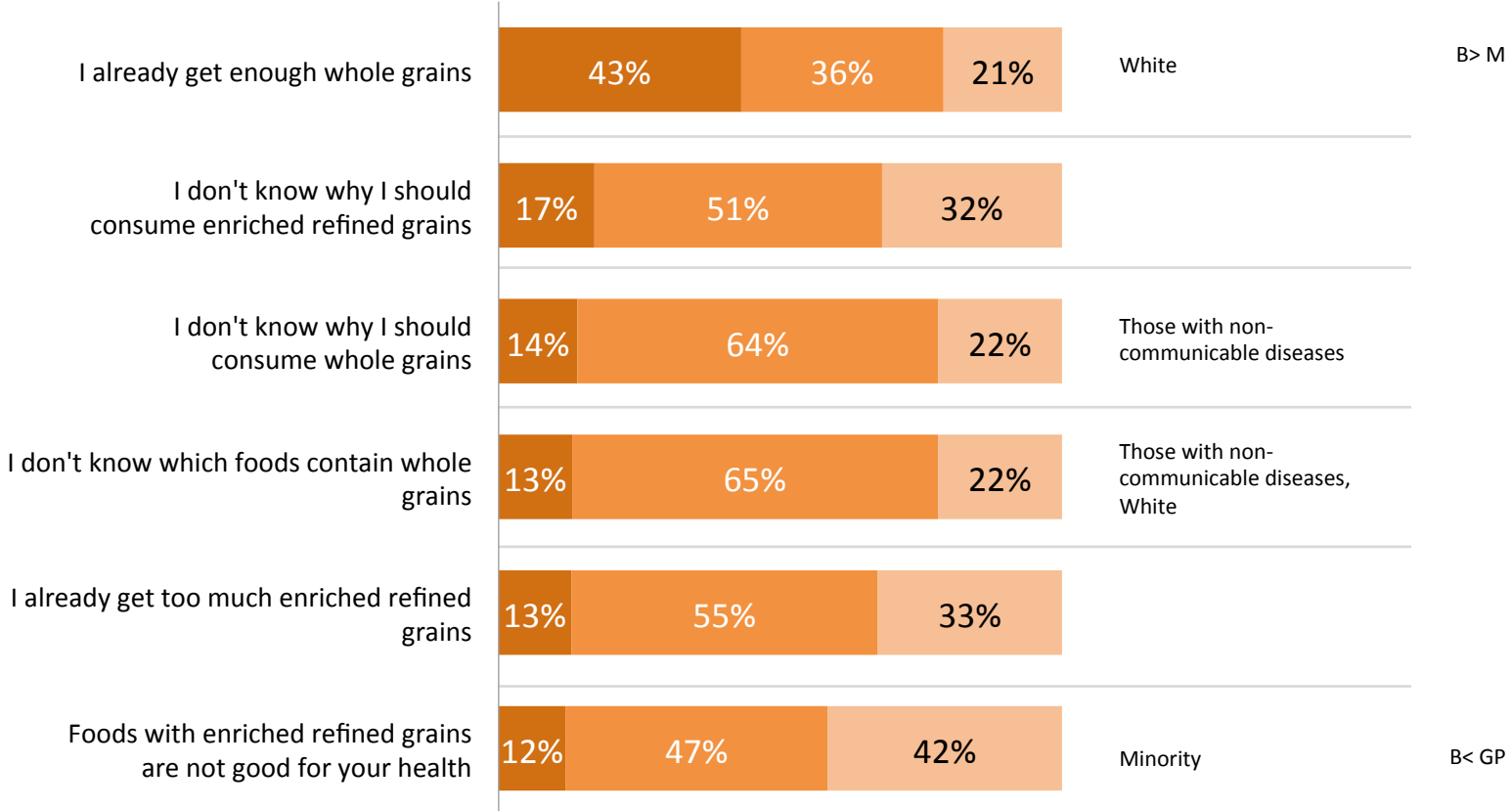
# Compared to Millennials, Boomers do not consume more whole grains because they believe they already get enough in their diet.

Which of the following are reasons why you do not consume *more* grains than you do now?

■ Yes, this is a reason   ■ No, this isn't a reason   ■ Not sure

**Boomer groups:**

**Generations:**



2016 Boomers Sample C n=111

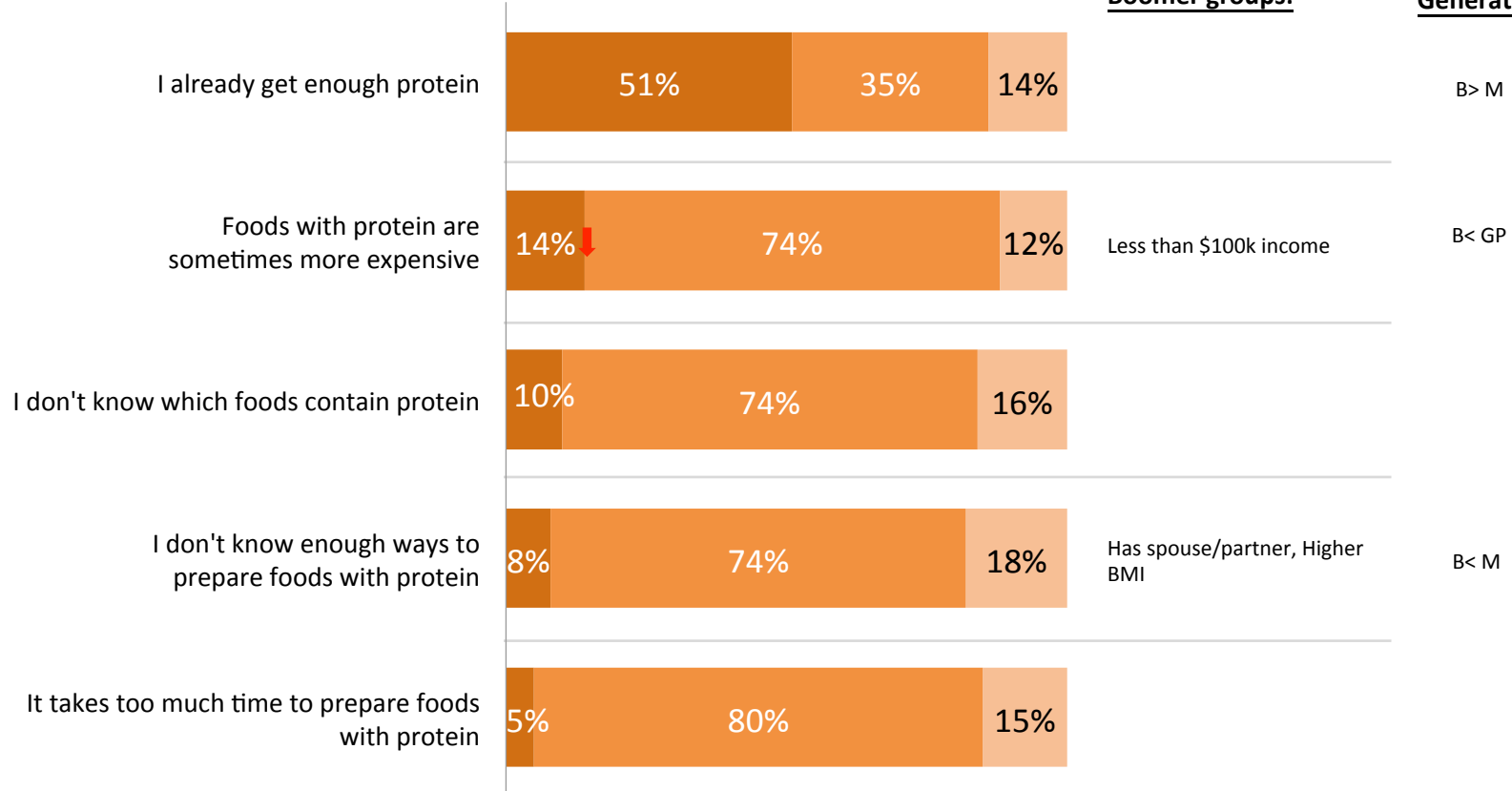
# Compared to Millennials, Boomers do not consume more protein because they believe they already get enough in their diet.

Which of the following are reasons why you do not consume *more* protein than you do now?

■ Yes, this is a reason 
 ■ No, this isn't a reason 
 ■ Not sure

**Boomer groups:**

**Generations:**



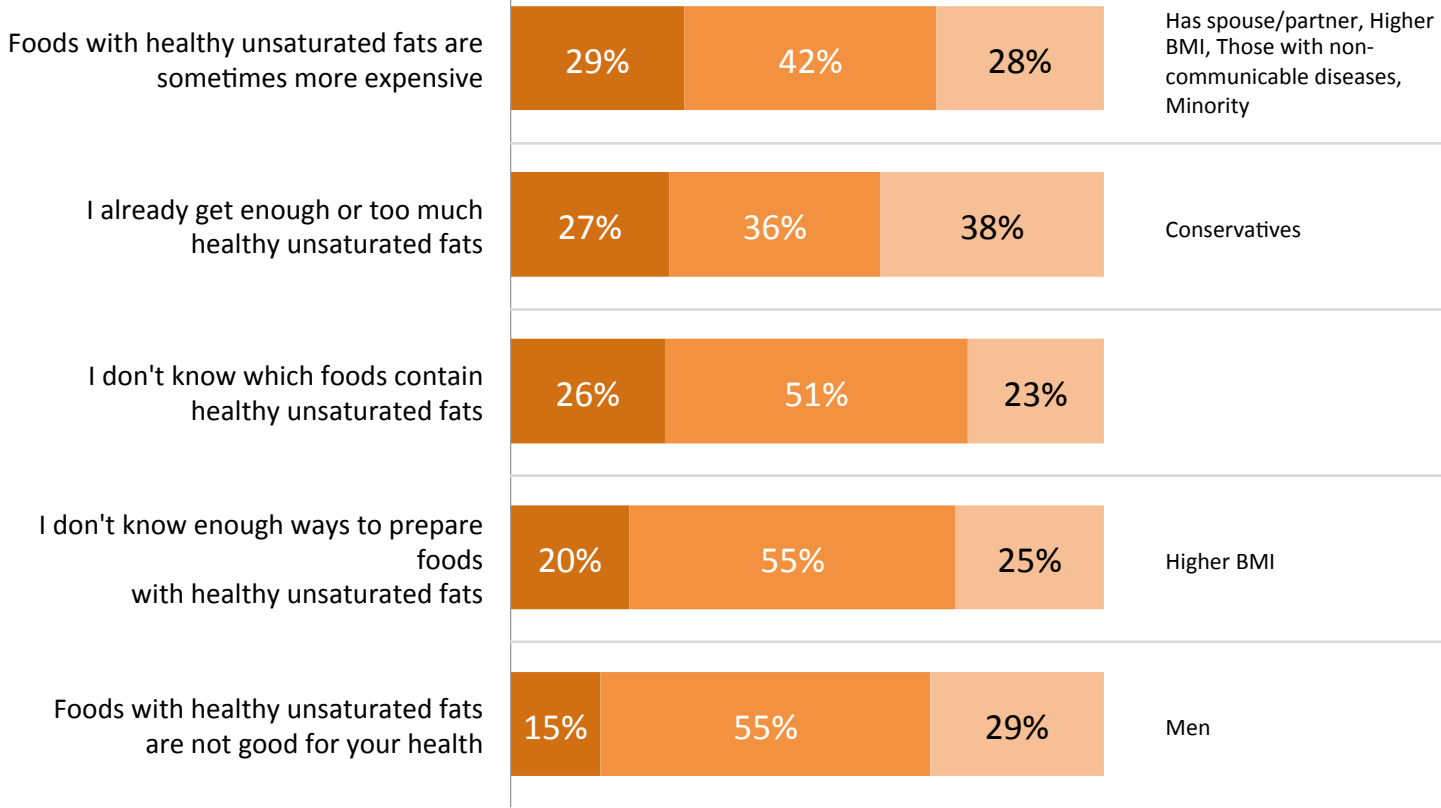
2016 Boomers Sample A n=120  
 Arrows indicate significant (.95 level) differences vs. 2015

# For almost one in three Boomers, the price of healthy unsaturated fats and the belief that they already get enough of these fats are top barriers for consumption.

Which of the following are reasons why you do not consume *more* healthy unsaturated fats like Omega-3 fatty acids than you do now?

■ Yes, this is a reason ■ No, this isn't a reason ■ Not sure

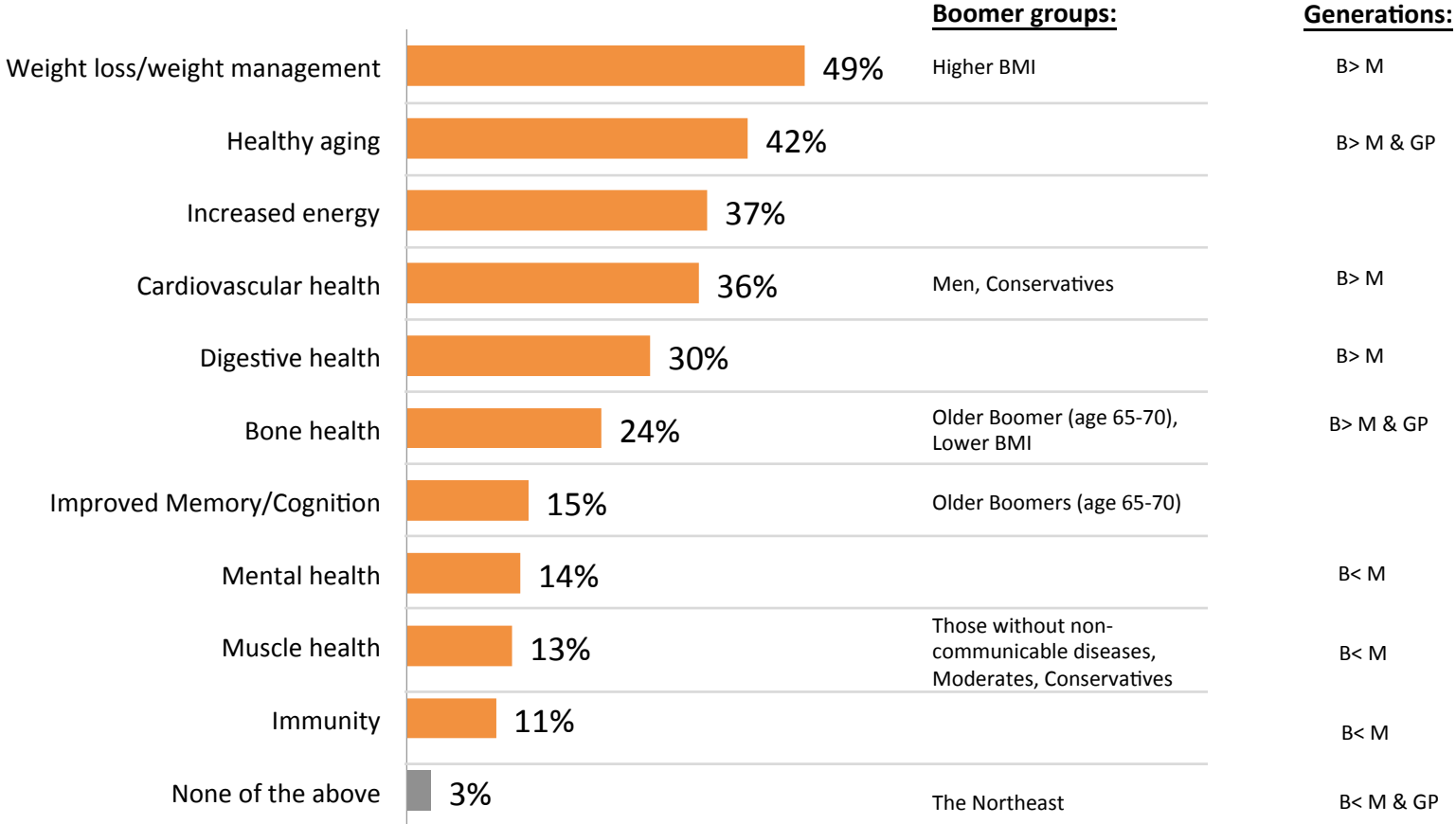
**Boomer groups:**



2016 Boomers Sample B n=95.

# Boomers are more likely than other generations to be interested in foods associated with health benefits such as with weight management and healthy aging.

Many nutrients in food are associated with health benefits. Which health benefits are you most interested in getting from foods? *(Please select up to 3.)*

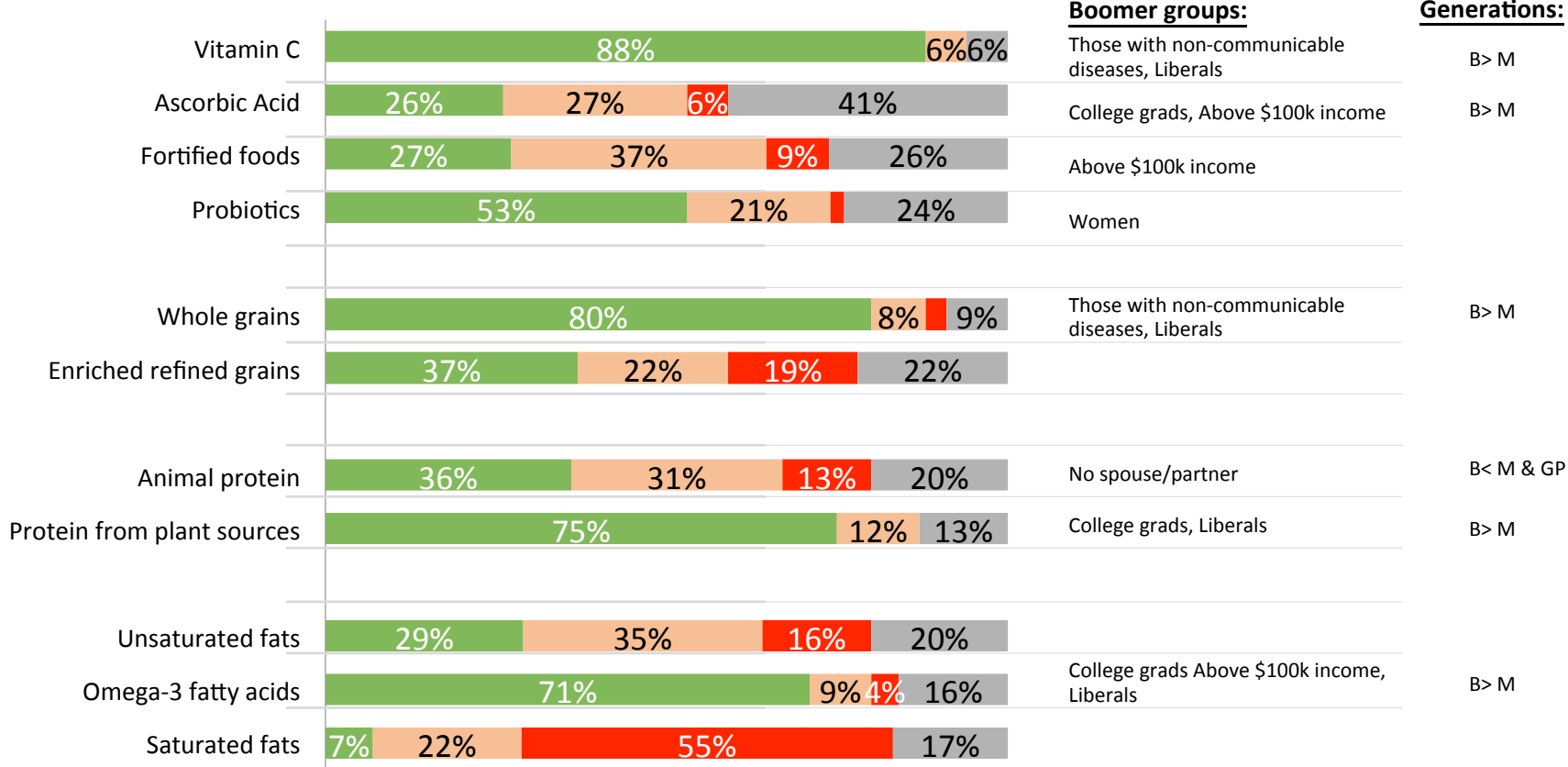


2016 Boomers n=326

# Nearly 90 percent of Boomers rate Vitamin C as healthy, while only one in four rate ascorbic acid as healthy.

How would you rate the healthfulness of each of the following?

Healthy Neither Healthy Nor Unhealthy Unhealthy Unaware



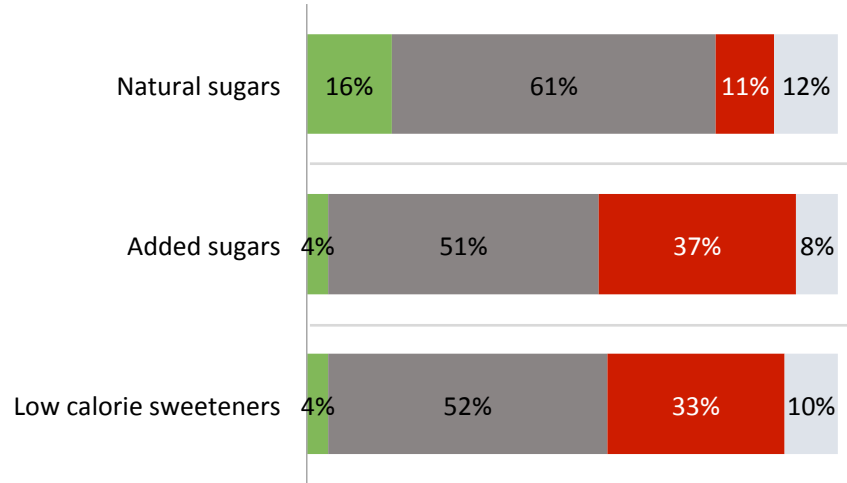
2016 Boomers n=326

# Media headlines or articles is the top factor influencing Boomers who view sweeteners as less healthful than they used to.

## Opinion Change: Natural Sugars, Added Sugars, and Low Calorie Sweeteners

Thinking about the past year, how has your opinion changed, if at all, about the healthfulness of...

More healthful    No change    Less healthful    Not sure



### Top factor influencing opinion change by Generation\*

#### More healthful

Boomers: Media headline or article  
Millennials: Friend/family  
General Population: Media headline or article

#### Less healthful

Boomers: Media headline & Office visit  
Millennials: Friend/family  
General Population: Friend/family

Boomers: Friend/family  
Millennials: Friend/family  
General Population: Friend/family

Boomers: Media headline or article  
Millennials: Friend/family  
General Population: Reading a scientific study

Boomers: Registered dietitian  
Millennials: Media headline or article  
General Population: Registered dietitian

Boomers: Media headline or article  
Millennials: Friend/family  
General Population: Media headline or article

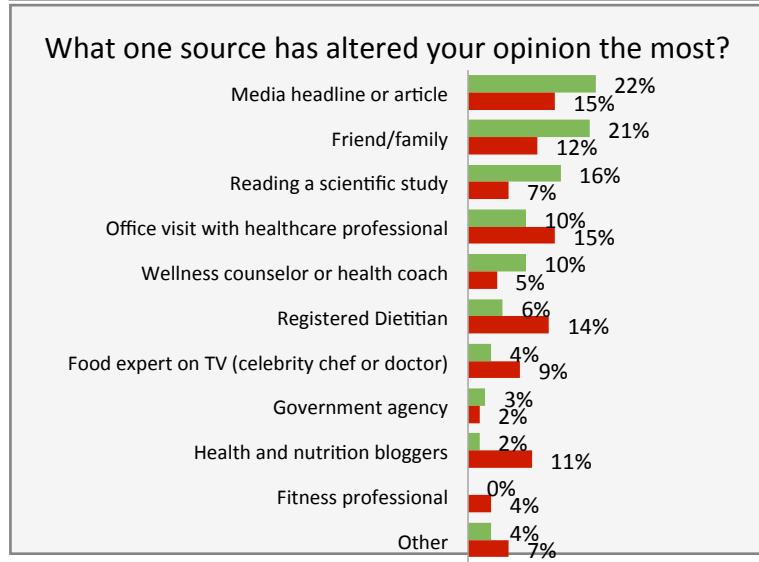
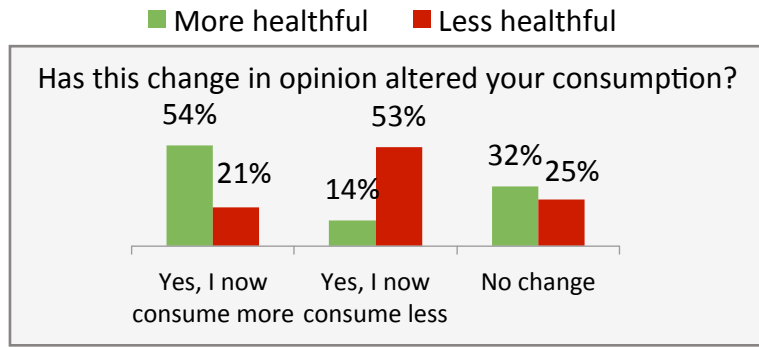
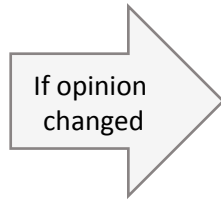
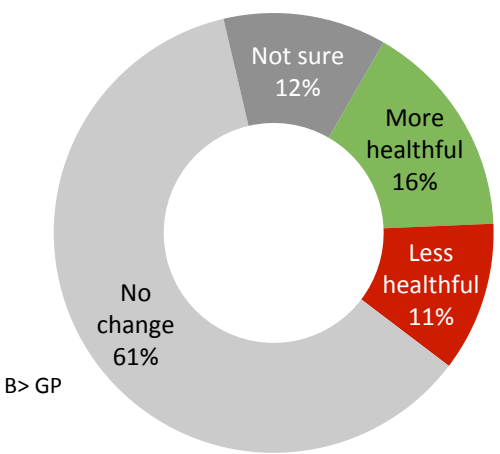
2016 Boomers n=326  
 \*Not including "Other"



While three in five Boomers have not changed their opinion on the healthfulness of “natural” sugars, one in six Boomers have improved their opinion of “natural” sugars.

### Opinion Change: Natural Sugars

Thinking about the past year, how has your opinion changed, if at all, about the healthfulness of “natural” sugars (ex: from fruit or honey)?

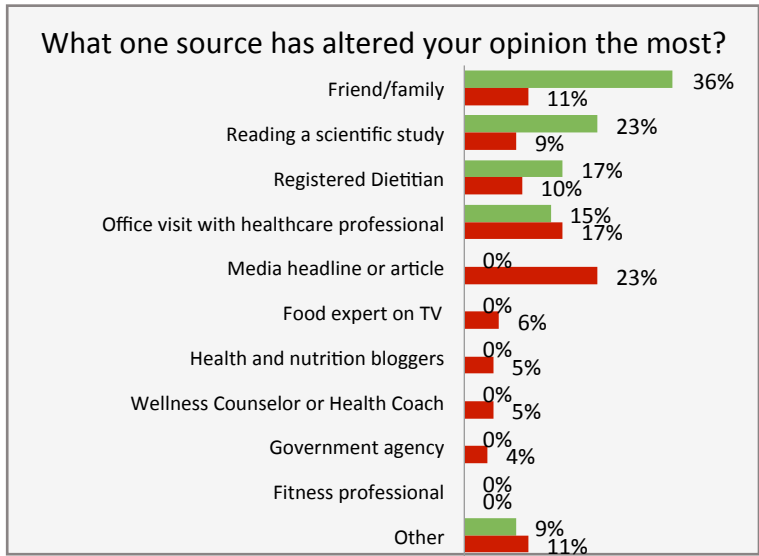
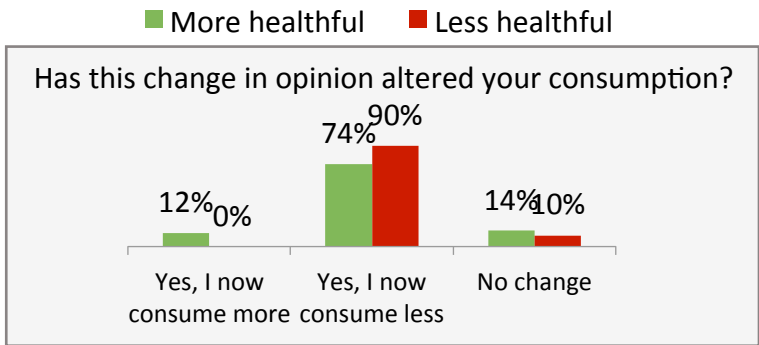
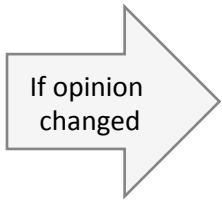
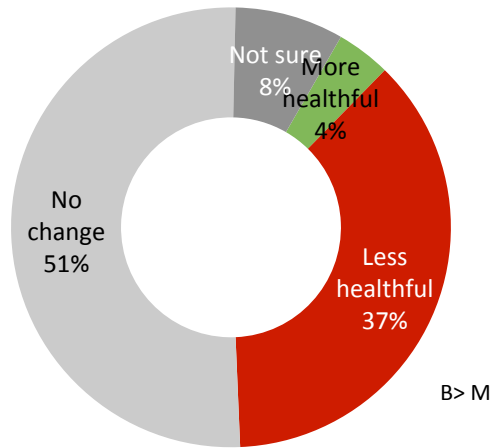


2016 Boomers n=326; More healthful n=57; Less healthful n=40

Almost four in ten Boomers believe “added” sugars are less healthful than they thought a year ago. Of those that now believe “added” sugars are less healthful, nine in ten say they are consuming less.

### Opinion Change: Added Sugars

Thinking about the past year, how has your opinion changed, if at all, about the healthfulness of “added” sugars (ex: table sugar or high fructose corn syrup)?

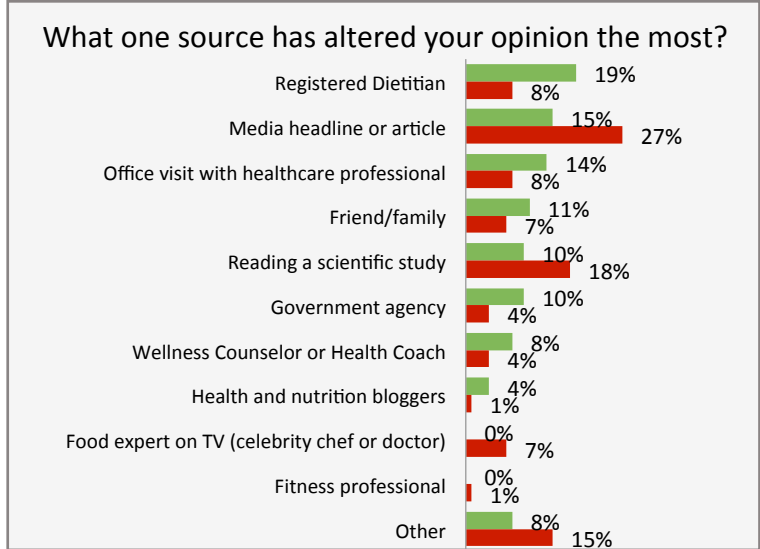
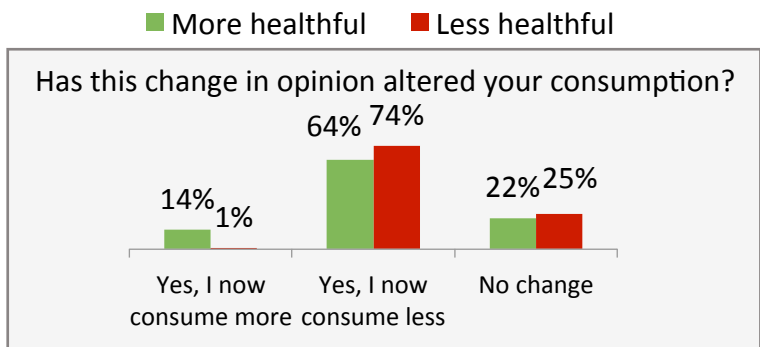
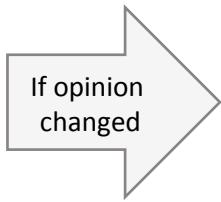
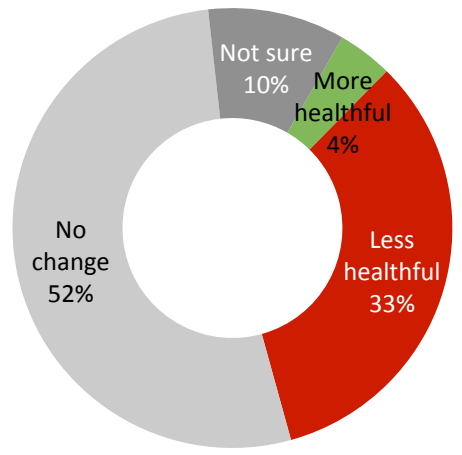


2016 Boomers n=326; More healthful n=12; Less healthful n=131

More than one-half of Boomers have not changed their opinion on the healthfulness of low-calorie sweeteners, while one-third believe them to be less healthful than they used to.

Opinion Change: Low Calorie Sweeteners

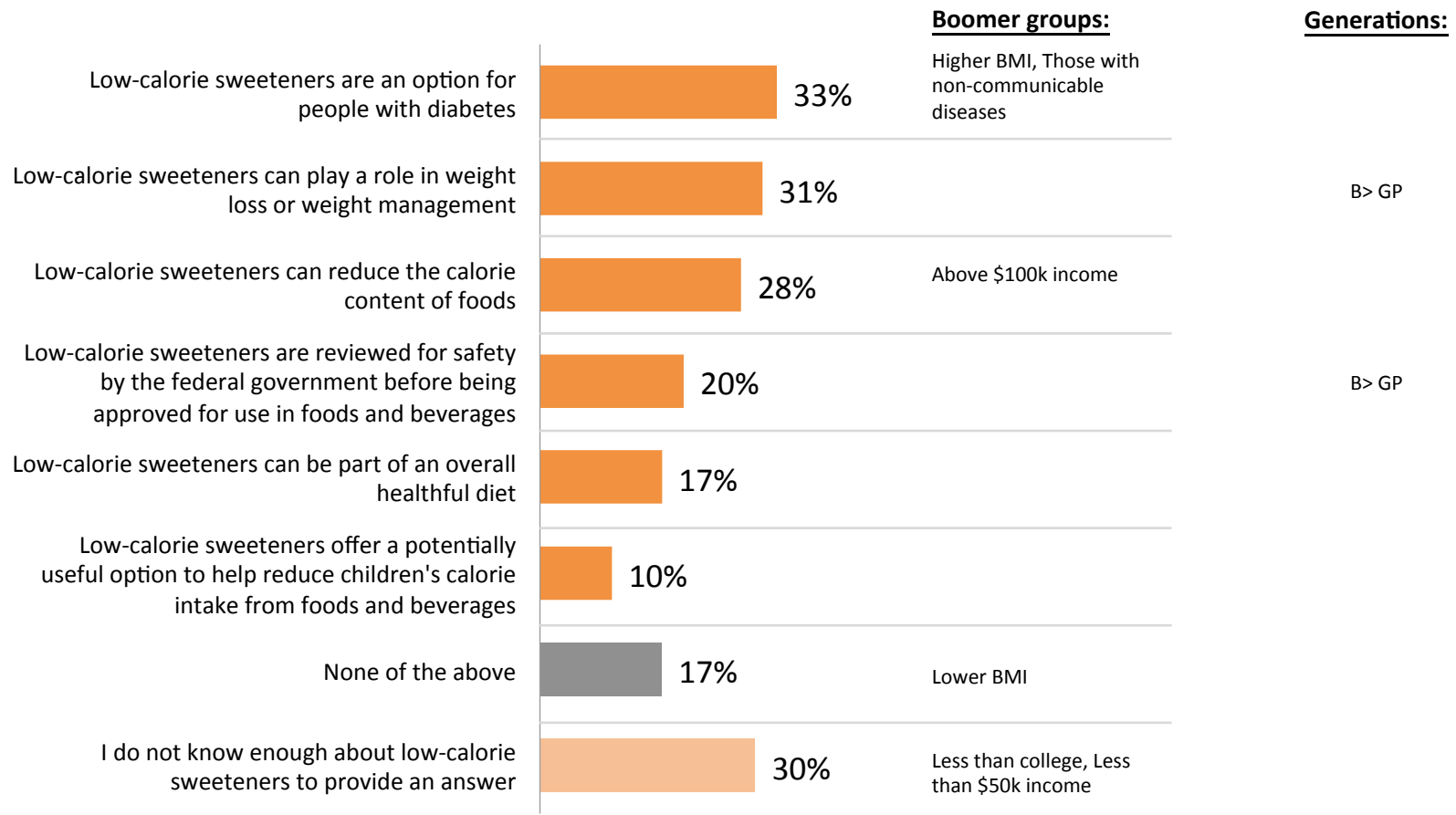
Thinking about the past year, how has your opinion changed, if at all, about the healthfulness of low calorie sweeteners (ex: Sucralose, Aspartame)?



2016 Boomers n=326; More healthful n=16; Less healthful n=113

# Boomers' opinions on low-calorie sweeteners are split, with nearly one in three reporting they do not know enough about low-calorie sweeteners.

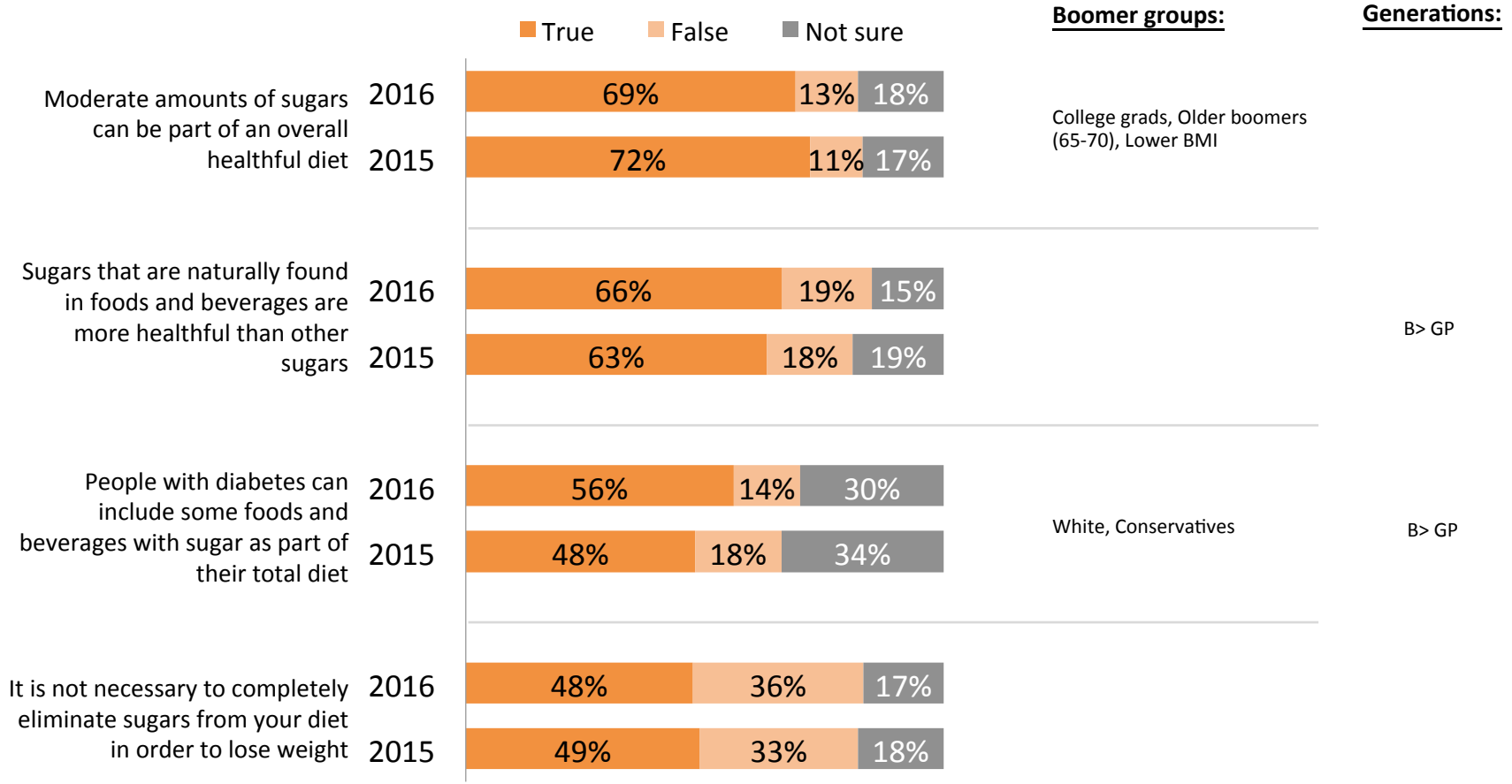
Which of the following statements, if any, do you agree with regarding low-calorie sweeteners?  
(Select all that apply.)



2016 Boomers Sample A n=164

# Seven in ten Boomers believe that moderate amounts of sugars can be part of an overall healthful diet.

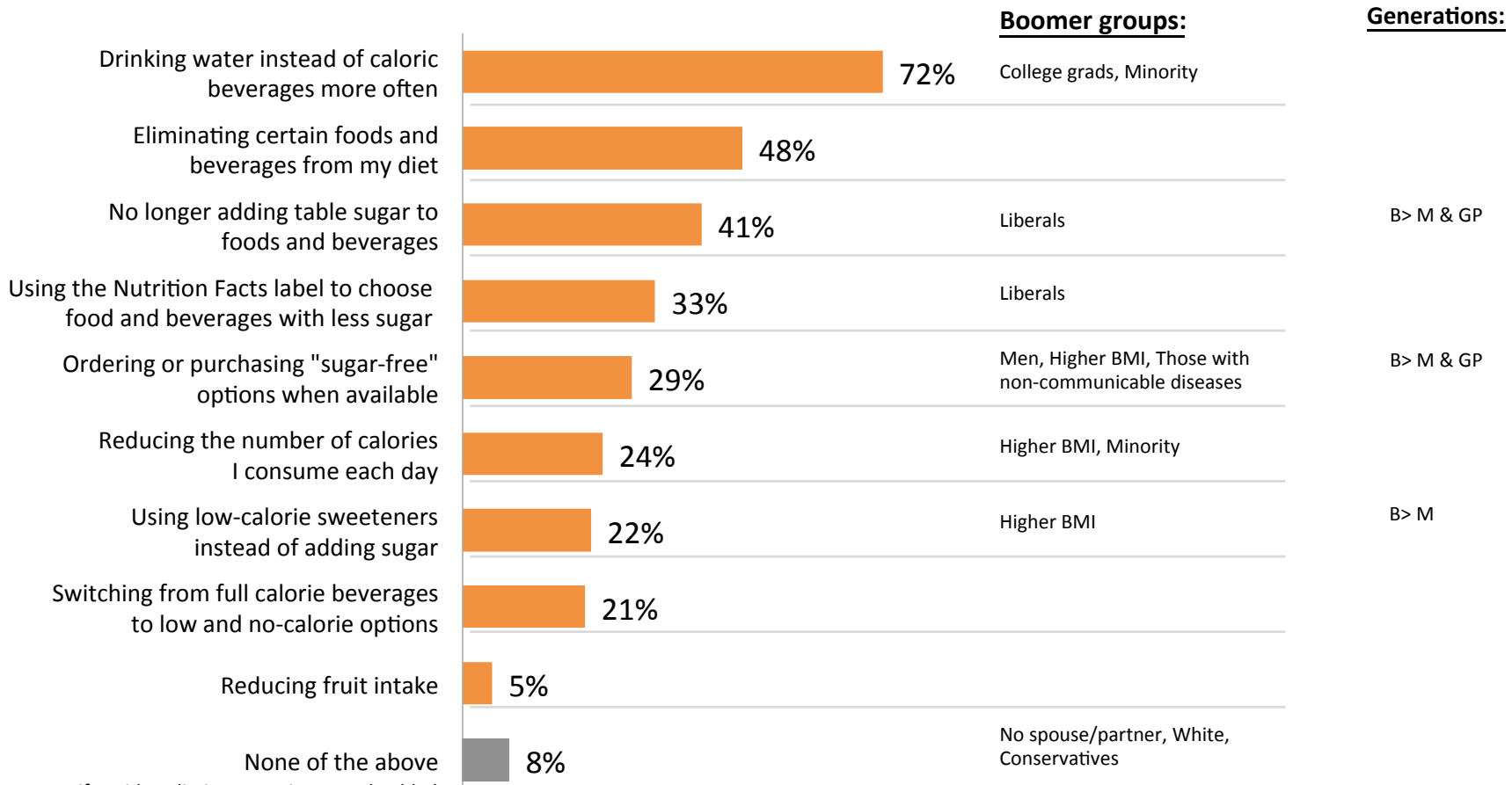
As far as you know, which of the following statements, if any, are true?



2016 Boomers n=162; 2015 Boomers n=333  
 There were no significant (.95 level) differences vs. 2015

The top action for Boomers in reducing sugar is choosing water over caloric beverages. Compared to other generations, Boomers are more often using less table sugar, purchasing the “sugar-free” option, and using low-calorie sweeteners.

What actions are you taking to achieve reduction in your consumption of sugars?  
(Select all that apply.)



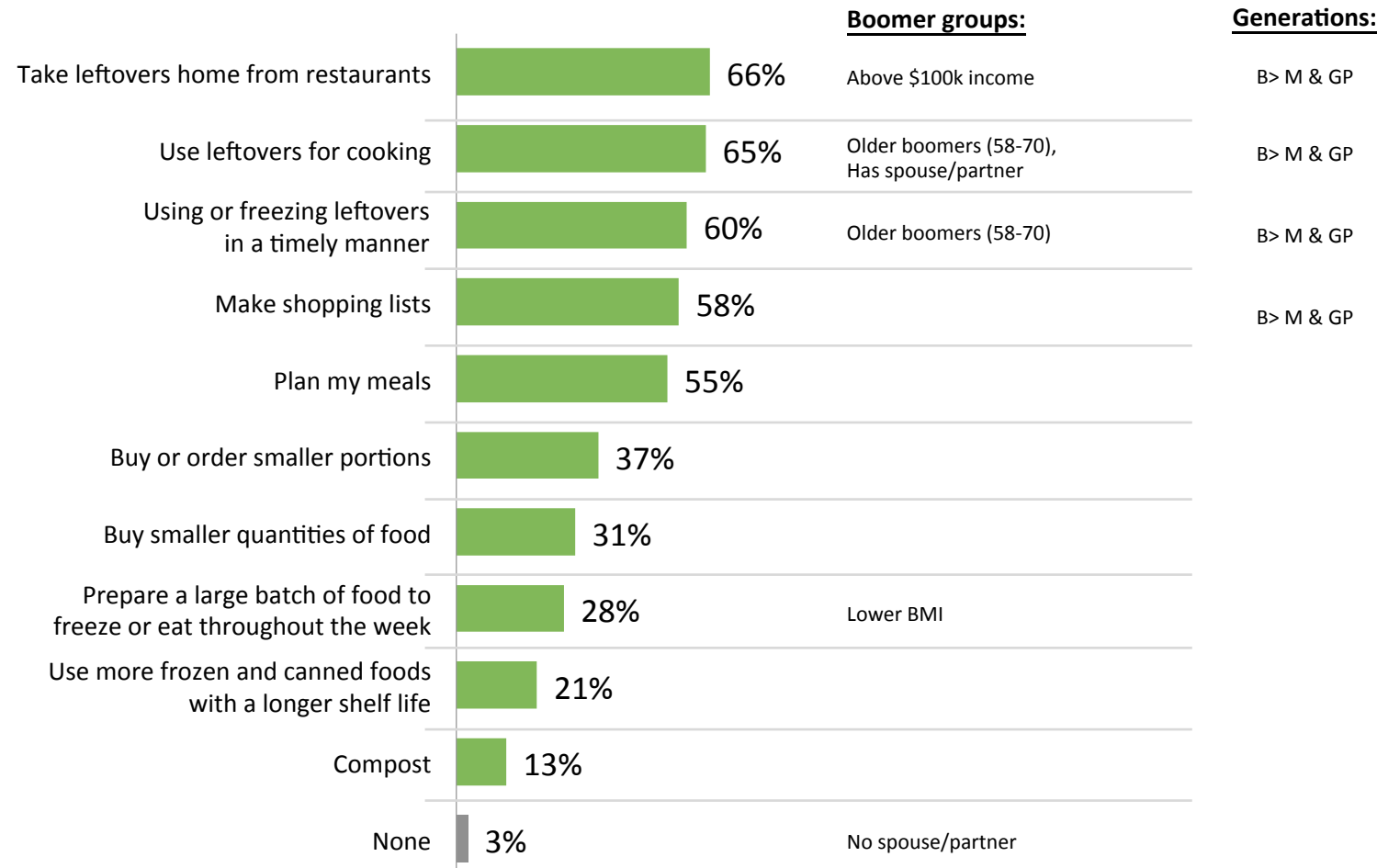
2016 Boomers if avoids or limits sugars in general, added sugars, HFCs, or low-calorie sweeteners n=255



[foodinsight.org](http://foodinsight.org)

# In general, Boomers are more likely to make an effort in reducing food waste than other generations by taking leftovers home from restaurants and using leftovers for cooking.

Which of the following do you actively try to do to reduce the amount of food you waste/throw-away? (Select all that apply.)

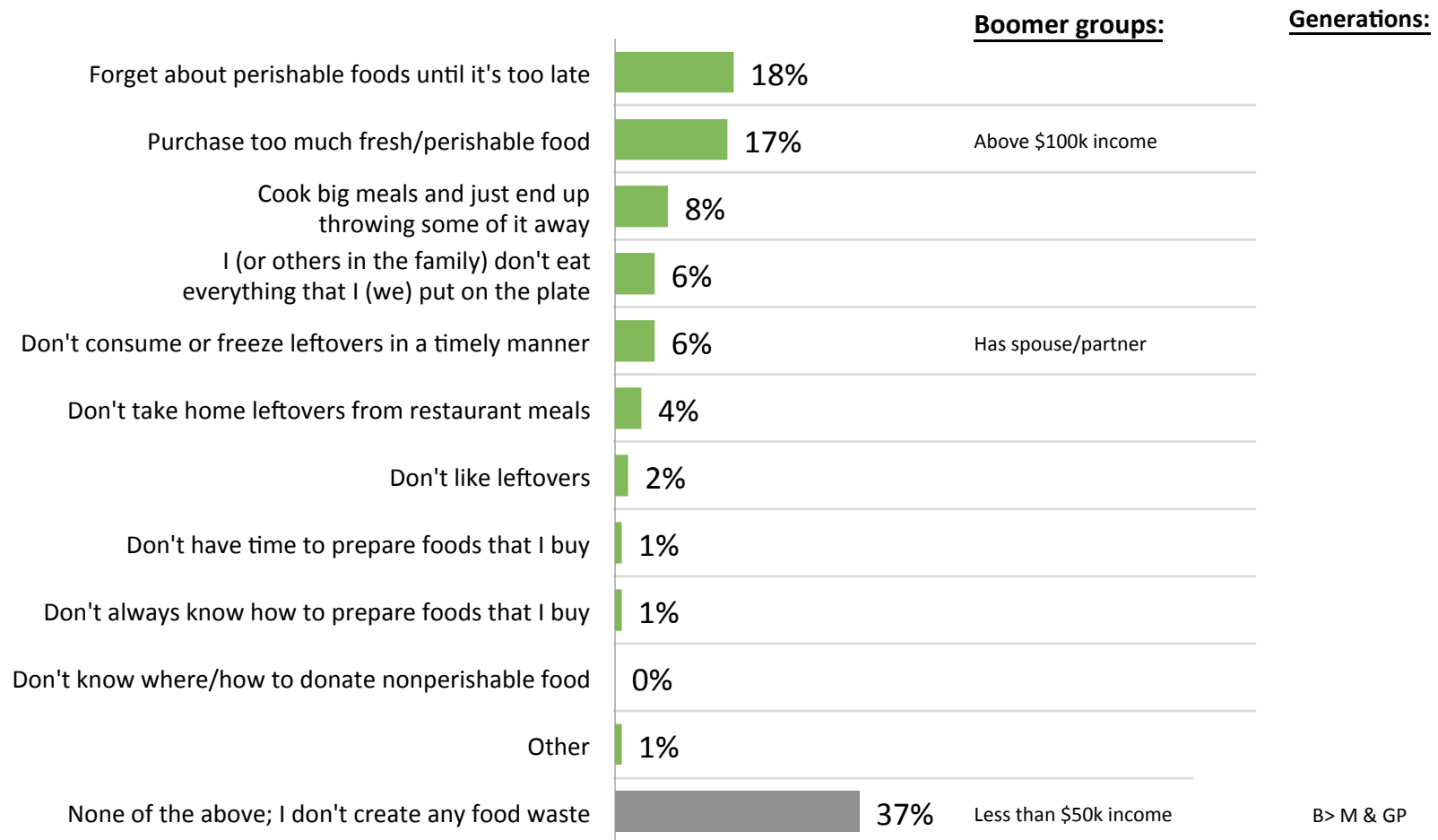


2016 Boomers Split Sample A n=176



# Boomers cite forgetting about perishables and purchasing too much fresh food as top food waste contributors.

What contributes the most to the amount of food waste you produce?  
*(Please select just your top answer.)*



2016 Boomers Split Sample n=150

# Respondent Profile

# Respondent Profile

Age	(n=326)	Gender	(n= 326)
50 to 64 years old	70%	Male	48%
65 to 80 years old	30	Female	52
Education		Marital Status	
Less than high school	1%	Married	64%
Graduated high school	43	Divorced	15
Some college (no degree)	19	Single	12
Associates degree, technical or vocational school	7	Widowed	5
Bachelor's degree	18	Living with partner	4
Graduate/Professional work or degree	11	Other	--
		Prefer not to say	<0.5
Race/Ethnicity			
White (Non-Hispanic)	75%		
Black or African American	11		
Hispanic/Latino/Spanish descent	9		
Asian or Pacific Islander	5		
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1		
Native Hawaiian	<0.5		
Other	<0.5		

# Respondent Profile

<b>Region</b>	<b>(n=326)</b>	<b>Medical Conditions</b>	<b>(n=326)</b>
Northeast	19%	High blood pressure	44%
Midwest	21	High cholesterol	37
South	38	Diabetes	13
West	22	Stress/anxiety/depression	11
		Overweight/obesity	7
		Osteoporosis	4
		Heart disease	3
		Cancer	2
		Stroke	1
<b>Household Income</b>		ADHD	--
Less than \$35,000	13%	Alzheimer's or related forms of dementias	--
\$35,000 to less than \$50,000	18	None of the above	36
\$50,000 to less than \$75,000	17		
\$75,000 to less than \$100,000	20	<b>BMI score</b>	
\$100,000 to less than \$150,000	13	Normal or low	31%
\$150,000 and above	8	Overweight	33
Don't know	--	Obese	33
Prefer not to answer	12	No answer	3

# Respondent Profile

<b>Political Leaning</b>	<b>(n=326)</b>	<b>Political Party</b>	<b>(n=326)</b>
Very Liberal	7%	Democrat	35%
Somewhat Liberal	15	Independent	25
Moderate	30	Republican	33
Somewhat Conservative	24	Not sure	6
Very Conservative	15		
Not sure	9		