

The Ethical Food Consumer - Ireland - October 2020

Report Price: £1495 | \$1995 | €1800

The above prices are correct at the time of publication, but are subject to change due to currency fluctuations.

This report looks at the following areas:

- The impact of COVID-19 on consumer behaviour and ethical food and drink.
- Disruption to the ethical food and drink market caused by COVID-19.
- Reasons consumers buy ethical products and what causes/issues are most important to them.
- How brands can leverage their ethical credentials more effectively to engage with consumers.

Irish consumers are increasingly considering ethics when buying food and drink; from where it is sourced, how it is produced and processed to how it has reached the shelves. Brands that are able to communicate these ethics and be transparent about their morals appear to be winning over loyal customers; seven in 10 Irish consumers agree they are loyal to companies and brands whose ethics align with their own.

This has only been accelerated by the pandemic as consumers use this downtime to re-evaluate their purchasing habits. However, price considerations remain a barrier to buying ethical food and drink, and the sector is left exposed as disposable household incomes are squeezed as a result of COVID-19 and the recession.

COVID-19's impact on the economy will therefore be a major threat for ethical food and drink sales given its higher price point. Brands will need to demonstrate why their products are worth paying more for and quantify in real terms how their efforts are benefiting the local and wider community.

As the sustainability movement picks up momentum, there are opportunities for food and drink to reduce plastic packaging as it remains Irish consumers' top ethical cause of concern. Investing in plastic alternatives that can deliver on quality and durability now will win over more consumers later when greater legislative action is enforced.



"Animal welfare and environmental and health concerns are among key reasons for buying ethical food and drink among Irish consumers, however, there is uncertainty among consumers over what the different ethical certifications stand for and whether their buying choices make a difference."

– Emma McGeown, Senior Food & Drink Analyst

Buy this report now

Visit	store.mintel.com
EMEA	+44 (0) 20 7606 4533
Brazil	0800 095 9094
Americas	+1 (312) 943 5250
China	+86 (21) 6032 7300
APAC	+61 (0) 2 8284 8100



Table of Contents

OVERVIEW

- What you need to know
- Key issues covered in this Report
- COVID-19: Market context
- Issues covered in this Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The market
- COVID-19 pushes some consumers to choose price over ethics
- Consumer sentiment will remain a barrier for certified products
- Ireland strives towards protecting the environment
- Who's innovating?
- The consumer
- Important ethical causes tend to centre on the environment

Figure 1: Expected impact of COVID-19 on ethical food and drink, short, medium and long term, 23 October 2020

- Free-range holds the most appeal in certifications

Figure 2: Ethical causes consumers consider before buying food and drink, NI and RoI, August 2020

- Demand for traceability sees consumers turning to certified foods

Figure 3: Types of certified/labelled food products bought in the last three months, NI and RoI, August 2020

- Retailers should do more in the sustainability movement

Figure 4: Reasons for buying ethical food and drink products, NI and RoI, August 2020

- What we think

THE MARKET – KEY TAKEAWAYS

- COVID-19 causes limited access to ethical food and drink
- Consumer sentiment hit by the outbreak
- Ireland strives towards protecting the environment

MARKET DRIVERS

- Consumer finances take a hit due to COVID-19

Figure 5: Agreement with the statement 'How has your financial situation changed since the start of the

What's included

Executive Summary

Full Report PDF

Infographic Overview

Powerpoint Presentation

Interactive Databook

Previous editions

Did you know?

This report is part of a series of reports, produced to provide you with a more holistic view of this market.

All Mintel 2020 reports contain specific COVID-19 related research and forecasts. The world's leading brands rely on Mintel reports for the most complete, objective and actionable market intelligence.

Buy this report now

Visit store.mintel.com

EMEA +44 (0) 20 7606 4533

Brazil 0800 095 9094

Americas +1 (312) 943 5250

China +86 (21) 6032 7300

APAC +61 (0) 2 8284 8100

The above prices are correct at the time of publication, but are subject to change due to currency fluctuations.

COVID-19 outbreak in your country?’, NI and RoI, September 2020

- **Brexit likely to add fuel to the market disruption experienced in 2020**

Figure 7: Agreement with statements related to Brexit, NI and RoI, June 2019

- **Expense and lack of understanding hold back ethical certifications**

Figure 8: Reasons consumers have not bought food and drink with sustainable or ethical labels and certifications in the last 3 months, NI and RoI, August 2020

- **2021 plastic tax likely to progress the sustainability movement**
- **RoI government progresses with ban on single-use plastics**
- **RoI makes bio-waste bins mandatory**

Figure 9: Consumers who said waste disposable was one of the most important environmental issues to them, NI and RoI, November 2018

- **Retailers vow to cut down on food waste**
- **Animal welfare important to consumers**

Figure 10: Consumers who said animal welfare was one of the most important environmental issues to them, NI and RoI, November 2018

Figure 11: Select diets consumers are currently adhering to, NI and RoI, June 2019

COMPANIES AND INNOVATIONS – KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Environmental packaging goes mainstream**
- **Animal welfare and vegan claims soar**
- **Organic launches on the rise**

WHO’S INNOVATING?

- **Environmentally friendly package is the leading claim across food and drink**
Figure 12: Launches in the food and drink market, by selected claims, UK and Ireland, 2015–20
- **Brands looking for alternative options to packaging waste**
Figure 13: Picture of Refill Quarter, NI, 2020
- **Tesco’s plan to reduce packaging waste**
- **Companies invest in reducing packaging**
- **Veganism/animal welfare claims on the rise**
Figure 14: New product launches, by vegan/no-animal-ingredients claims, UK and Ireland, 2015–20

What's included

Executive Summary

Full Report PDF

Infographic Overview

Powerpoint Presentation

Interactive Databook

Previous editions

Did you know?

This report is part of a series of reports, produced to provide you with a more holistic view of this market.

All Mintel 2020 reports contain specific COVID-19 related research and forecasts. The world’s leading brands rely on Mintel reports for the most complete, objective and actionable market intelligence.

Buy this report now

Visit	store.mintel.com
EMEA	+44 (0) 20 7606 4533
Brazil	0800 095 9094
Americas	+1 (312) 943 5250
China	+86 (21) 6032 7300
APAC	+61 (0) 2 8284 8100

The above prices are correct at the time of publication, but are subject to change due to currency fluctuations.

Figure 15: New launches with vegan/no-animal-ingredients claims, UK and Ireland, 2015-20

- **M&S opens "Plant Kitchen"**
- **Supermarkets supporting animal welfare**
- **Organic product launches on the rise**

Figure 16: New product launches, by organic claim, UK and Ireland, 2015-20

- **Increased awareness of palm oil sees a backlash**

Figure 17: New product launches, by palm oil as an ingredient, UK and Ireland, 2015-20

THE CONSUMER – KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Important ethical causes tend to centre on the environment**
- **Demand for traceability sees consumers turning to certified foods**
- **Retailers should do more in the sustainability movement**

COVID-19 AND THE ETHICAL FOOD CONSUMER

- **Short-, medium- and long-term impact on the industry**
Figure 18: Expected impact of COVID-19 on ethical food and drink, short, medium and long term, 23 October 2020
- **Impact on ethical food consumer segments**
- **Consumer incomes are being squeezed meaning ethical brands must do more**

Figure 19: Consumer agreement with statements related to ethical foods and the COVID-19 pandemic, NI and RoI, August 2020

- **Shortages and limited access to ethical foods may be seeing a decrease in usage**

Figure 20: Agreement with the statement 'I have found it hard to access sustainable/ethical food and drink products during the COVID-19/coronavirus outbreak', by age, NI and RoI, August 2020

- **Impact on companies and brands**

MOST IMPORTANT ETHICAL AND SUSTAINABLE CAUSES

- **Recyclable packaging is most important to consumers**
Figure 21: Ethical causes consumers consider before buying food and drink, NI and RoI, August 2020
- **Free-range more important to Irish women**
Figure 22: Consumers who consider 'free-range/ethical treatment of animals' when buying food and drink, by gender, NI and RoI, August 2020
- **Mature consumers seek out assured food standards**

What's included

Executive Summary

Full Report PDF

Infographic Overview

Powerpoint Presentation

Interactive Databook

Previous editions

Did you know?

This report is part of a series of reports, produced to provide you with a more holistic view of this market.

All Mintel 2020 reports contain specific COVID-19 related research and forecasts. The world's leading brands rely on Mintel reports for the most complete, objective and actionable market intelligence.

Buy this report now

Visit store.mintel.com

EMEA +44 (0) 20 7606 4533

Brazil 0800 095 9094

Americas +1 (312) 943 5250

China +86 (21) 6032 7300

APAC +61 (0) 2 8284 8100



Figure 23: Consumers who consider 'assured food standards' when buying food and drink, by age, NI and RoI, August 2020

- **Half of consumers concerned with protecting the environment**

TYPES OF CERTIFIED PRODUCTS BOUGHT

- **Free-ranging products bought most**

Figure 24: Types of certified/labelled food products bought in the last three months, NI and RoI, August 2020

- **Bord Bia Quality Assured holds appeal in RoI**

Figure 25: Consumers who have bought a Bord Bia Quality assured and/or Red tractor-approved product in the last three months, NI and RoI, August 2020

- **Organic products more popular among RoI consumers**

Figure 26: Consumers who have bought an organic product in the last three months, by social class, NI and RoI, August 2020

- **Affordability likely plays a part in organic purchases**

- **Gen Z most likely to buy ethical dairy products**

Figure 27: Consumers who have bought milk with Free Range Dairy Pasture Promise certification in the last three months, by age, NI and RoI, August 2020

Figure 28: Agreement with the statement 'Environmental reasons would encourage me to switch from standard milk to milk alternatives', by age, NI and RoI, November 2019

REASONS FOR BUYING ETHICAL FOOD AND DRINK

- **The environment and animal welfare are the top reasons to buy ethically**

Figure 29: Reasons for buying ethical food and drink products, NI and RoI, August 2020

- **Sustainability is a key driver when it comes to buying ethical products**

Figure 30: Consumers who agreed the reason they bought ethical food and drink was due to it being 'better for the environment than non-labelled/certified versions', by social class, NI and RoI, August 2020

- **Animal welfare claims can be leveraged in more categories**

Figure 31: Consumers who agreed the reason they bought ethical food and drink was due to 'concerns for animal welfare', by age, NI and RoI, August 2020

FOOD ETHICS AND SUSTAINABILITY

- **Eight in 10 consumers reducing their plastic packaging**

What's included

Executive Summary

Full Report PDF

Infographic Overview

Powerpoint Presentation

Interactive Databook

Previous editions

Did you know?

This report is part of a series of reports, produced to provide you with a more holistic view of this market.

All Mintel 2020 reports contain specific COVID-19 related research and forecasts. The world's leading brands rely on Mintel reports for the most complete, objective and actionable market intelligence.

Buy this report now

Visit store.mintel.com

EMEA +44 (0) 20 7606 4533

Brazil 0800 095 9094

Americas +1 (312) 943 5250

China +86 (21) 6032 7300

APAC +61 (0) 2 8284 8100

The above prices are correct at the time of publication, but are subject to change due to currency fluctuations.

Figure 32: Agreement with statements related to food and sustainability, NI and RoI, August 2020

- **Mature consumers link local foods with sustainability**

Figure 33: Agreement with the statement 'Buying local food is more sustainable', by age, NI and RoI, August 2020

- **Reducing packaging must be a priority for retailers**

Figure 34: Agreement with the statement 'Retailers should do more to help reduce packaging waste', by age, NI and RoI, August 2020

BEHAVIOURS TOWARDS FOOD ETHICS

- **Buying ethical food makes people feel good**

Figure 35: Agreement with statements related to food and ethics, NI and RoI, August 2020

- **Almost seven in 10 consumers are buying more organic food and drink**

Figure 36: Consumer agreement with the statement 'I am buying more organic food and drink now compared to last year', NI and RoI, August 2020

- **Younger consumers are more loyal, but their trust must be nurtured**

Figure 37: Consumer agreement with the statement 'I am loyal to companies/brands whose ethics align with my own', by age, NI and RoI, August 2020

Figure 38: Consumer agreement with the statement 'I have stopped buying products from companies that have acted unethically', by age, NI and RoI, August 2020

ATTITUDES TOWARDS FOOD ETHICS

- **Six in 10 consumers don't know what ethical cause to prioritise**

Figure 39: Agreement with statements related to food and ethics, NI and RoI, August 2020

- **Retailers should stock more local produce**

Figure 40: Consumer agreement with the statement 'Offering a wider selection of local produce makes a supermarket more appealing', by gender, NI and RoI, August 2020

- **Greater education needed in ethical food**

Figure 41: Consumer agreement with the statements 'Companies need to do more to prove their ethical/sustainable credentials' and 'It's difficult to know the differences between the various sustainable/ethical schemes', NI and RoI, August 2020

What's included

Executive Summary

Full Report PDF

Infographic Overview

Powerpoint Presentation

Interactive Databook

Previous editions

Did you know?

This report is part of a series of reports, produced to provide you with a more holistic view of this market.

All Mintel 2020 reports contain specific COVID-19 related research and forecasts. The world's leading brands rely on Mintel reports for the most complete, objective and actionable market intelligence.

Buy this report now

Visit	store.mintel.com
EMEA	+44 (0) 20 7606 4533
Brazil	0800 095 9094
Americas	+1 (312) 943 5250
China	+86 (21) 6032 7300
APAC	+61 (0) 2 8284 8100

The Ethical Food Consumer - Ireland - October 2020

Report Price: £1495 | \$1995 | €1800

The above prices are correct at the time of publication, but are subject to change due to currency fluctuations.



APPENDIX – DATA SOURCES, ABBREVIATIONS AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- Data sources
- Generational cohort definitions
- Abbreviations

What's included

Executive Summary

Full Report PDF

Infographic Overview

Powerpoint Presentation

Interactive Databook

Previous editions

Did you know?

This report is part of a series of reports, produced to provide you with a more holistic view of this market.

All Mintel 2020 reports contain specific COVID-19 related research and forecasts. The world's leading brands rely on Mintel reports for the most complete, objective and actionable market intelligence.

Buy this report now

Visit store.mintel.com

EMEA +44 (0) 20 7606 4533

Brazil 0800 095 9094

Americas +1 (312) 943 5250

China +86 (21) 6032 7300

APAC +61 (0) 2 8284 8100



About Mintel

Mintel is the **expert in what consumers want and why**. As the world's leading market intelligence agency, our analysis of consumers, markets, product innovation and competitive landscapes provides a unique perspective on global and local economies. Since 1972, our predictive analytics and expert recommendations have enabled our clients to make better business decisions faster

Our purpose is to help businesses and people grow. To find out how we do that, visit **[mintel.com](https://www.mintel.com)**.