

The Impact of COVID-19 on Grocery Retailing - Canada - June 2020

Report Price: £3695 | \$4995 | €4400

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This report looks at the following areas:

- A broad overview of how the pandemic has impacted consumer attitudes and behaviours in general
- A discussion on the state of the grocery retailing market with specific regard to consumer attitudes and behaviours before the pandemic
- Strategy recommendations in the short-, medium- and longer-term discussed from the lens of Mintel Consumer Trend Drivers.

The next six months will be challenging as the gains seen by the grocery sector during the immediate weeks/early months after lockdown (eg larger cart sizes, increased online activity) cannot be taken for granted and will take effort to sustain – particularly as the conditions will create the temptation for consumers to resume old habits. Moreover, grocers will need to actively moderate less positive behavioural changes when it comes to grocery shopping like reduced spontaneity or browsing, lesser interest in tactile stimulus like sampling and even the elimination of micro-trips. The middle period will be critical for grocery retailers to get ahead of behaviours and to guide consumers towards new habits.

In the long run, supporting consumers will ultimately be more about empowerment – giving them more opportunities to shop with their morals, as Canadians will come away with a heightened sense of community.



“With much investment and actions like putting safety barriers into place, sending communications about shelves not being empty, supporting vulnerable segments of the population and stepping up employee support, the grocery sector has come to shine as a partner in supporting the needs and interests of consumers during the outbreak.”

– Carol Wong-Li, Associate Director Lifestyles & Leisure

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