Center of Store - US - 2021

Report Price: £3695 | $4995 | €4400

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 behavior and the center of the store**
- **Center-store purchase factors**
- **Interest in center-store product and promotional concepts**
- **Attitudes toward the center of the store**

Sales in center-store shelf-stable and frozen food categories surged in the initial stages of the pandemic and have remained at elevated levels as many consumers continue to work from home and do more home cooking. As the pandemic wanes, the center store overall will settle back into its long-term slow growth pattern.

While consumers broadly view packaged foods from the center store as less healthful than fresh foods, they acknowledge improvement, a positive trend that may in part reflect the introduction of healthier alternatives in the freezer case. Nearly six in 10 center-store shoppers agree that frozen fruits and vegetables are just as healthy as fresh, a perception that may have been bolstered during the pandemic as more food shoppers turned to the freezer case.

The tendency toward routine and repetition is both a challenge and an opportunity for center-store retailers and marketers. Routine purchases can reflect a degree of shopper loyalty, but breaking the routine can result in incremental sales.

While improved product quality and healthfulness is helping to propel sales growth in these categories, the bigger opportunity for the center store as a whole may be to position it as a facilitator of freshly prepared meals rather than an alternative.

“While center store sales overall will inevitably revert to their slow-growth pre-pandemic pattern, retailers and marketers can leverage the center store to deepen shopper loyalty and engagement, deliver value and help make fresh meal preparation a little easier.”
– John Owen, Associate Director – Food and Retail

Report Price: £3695 | $4995 | €4400

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

Table of Contents

MARKET FACTORS

COMPANIES AND BRANDS – KEY TAKEAWAYS

COMPETITIVE STRATEGIES

MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES

Report Price: £3695 | $4995 | €4400

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

THE CONSUMER – KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **While online is growing, most shoppers still prefer the store**
- **Taste, cost and convenience, as ever, are top priorities in the center store**
- **Convenience and value are core center-store assets**
- **Routine and repetition represent both challenge and opportunity**
- **A little help: opportunity to partner with fresh foods**
- **Consistently low prices favored over short-term promotions**
- **Health perceptions lag but are on the rise**

PREFERRED CENTER-STORE SHOPPING METHODS

- **While online is growing, most shoppers still prefer the store**
  Figure 14: Preferred center-store and perimeter shopping methods, 2021
- **Preference for online center-store shopping highest among younger adults**
  Figure 15: Preferred center-store shopping methods, by age, 2021

CENTER-STORE PURCHASE FACTORS

- **Taste, cost and convenience remain top priorities in the center store**
  Figure 16: Center-store purchase factors, 2021
- **Organic and environmentally friendly rise in importance among younger shoppers**
  Figure 17: Center-store purchase factors, by age, 2021

GROCERY DEPARTMENT ASSOCIATIONS

- **Convenience and value are core center-store assets**
- **Innovation vs routine in the center store**
  Figure 18: Correspondence Analysis – Store department associations by type, 2021
  Figure 19: Store department associations by type, 2021
- **Methodology**

CENTER-STORE SHOPPING BEHAVIORS

- **Routine and repetition represent both challenge and opportunity**
  Figure 20: Center-store shopping behaviors, 2021
- **Younger shoppers less likely to stick to routine**
  Figure 21: Center-store shopping behaviors, by age, 2021

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

INTEREST IN CENTER-STORE PRODUCT CONCEPTS

- **Low prices are appealing, but not at the expense of quality**
- **A little help: opportunity to partner with fresh foods**
  Figure 22: Interest in center-store product concepts, by age, 2021

INTEREST IN CENTER-STORE PROMOTION CONCEPTS

- **Consistently low prices favored over short-term promotions**
- **New items offer opportunities for deeper engagement**
  Figure 23: Interest in center-store promotion concepts, 2021

ATTITUDES TOWARD THE CENTER STORE

- **Health perceptions lag but are on the rise**
  Figure 24: Attitudes toward the center store – Healthfulness and quality, by age, 2021
- **Budget concerns are bubbling up**
  Figure 25: Attitudes toward the center store – Budget and planning, by age, 2021

APPENDIX – DATA SOURCES AND ABBREVIATIONS

- **Data sources**
- **Sales data**
- **Forecast**
- **Consumer survey data**
- **Abbreviations and terms**
- **Abbreviations**
- **Terms**

APPENDIX – THE MARKET

Figure 26: Total US retail sales and forecast of center-of-store foods, at inflation-adjusted prices, 2016-26
Figure 27: Total US retail sales and forecast of edible grocery, at current prices, 2016-26
Figure 28: Total US retail sales and forecast of edible grocery, at inflation-adjusted prices, 2016-26
Figure 29: Total US retail sales and forecast of frozen food, at current prices, 2016-26
Figure 30: Total US retail sales and forecast of frozen food, at inflation-adjusted prices, 2016-26

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.**