

Prepared Meals – Frozen and Refrigerated – Canada – 2022

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This report looks at the following areas:

- The recent impact of the COVID-19 on consumer behaviour as related to prepared meals in Canada.
- The potential impact of inflation on prepared meals and the grocery industry in general.
- The advantages prepared meals offer versus making meals at home and ordering from quick-service restaurants.
- The categories in which consumers would like to see a greater variety of prepared meals.

The pandemic increased the importance of prepared meals as the ability to dine out disappeared overnight. While the health crisis may be subsiding, the fundamentals that drive Canadians to use prepared meals persist. Those fundamentals revolve squarely around convenience. At a macro level, however, the main concern Canadians express has shifted from safety to value as the cost of living continues to rise. The question for the prepared meal category, and for that matter nearly all categories, is how to convey value relevantly in today's uncertain economic climate.

This Report examines what matters most (and least) to Canadians when it comes to prepared meals; the penetration of the category based on feedback; what are the most prominent barriers to usage; and views around cooking from scratch, health and nutrition, quality and convenience as well as value. More granularly, feedback is also provided around what prepared meal sub-categories (such as pizza) consumers would like to see more variety of. As with all Reports, feedback is broken out by demographics where it's warranted. They include age, gender, parental status, household income and whether one is new to Canada, as a few examples.



“When the pandemic started, prepared meals sold in the frozen and refrigerated sections of grocery stores took on heightened importance. The environment that bolstered the sales for prepared meals has changed. Future innovation and promotional activity in this space should first and foremost be rooted in this central premise.”

– **Joel Gregoire, Associate Director for Food and Drink**

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