

Sustainability in Food - UK - 2023

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This report looks at the following areas:

- Regulatory changes relating to sustainability in food.
- Recent trends in food and drink product launches making links to sustainability.
- Barriers to buying sustainable food and drink products.
- Consumer behaviours relating to sustainability in food, including openness to synthetic products.
- Consumer attitudes towards sustainability in food, including interest in 'traffic light' labels.

Consumers show an openness to synthetically produced food; 46% of people who buy sustainable food/drink say they would prefer a more sustainable, synthetically produced food or drink product over a less sustainable, naturally produced one. While naturalness is typically highly valued by consumers in food and drink, a spotlight on their green credentials offers a powerful means to drive acceptance of synthetically made products.

The rising cost of living is causing consumers to reconsider their priorities, with sustainability taking a backseat for many when it comes to grocery shopping. Amongst those who opt for food/drink products with sustainability claims, 65% say the rising cost of living will make this aspect less important to them.

Even among those with healthy finances, price is a top barrier to engaging more with sustainable food and drink, their being too expensive cited as a reason by 39% of those who don't always choose such products. Brands able to offer budget-friendly, sustainable products will gain goodwill, this associating them with helping consumers enjoy the feelgood factor that buying sustainable food and drink can bring; 73% of those choosing sustainable products report this.

'Traffic light' style sustainability labels hold strong potential for driving engagement with sustainable food and drink, as 59% of people say these would be helpful. This points to how the many and varied aspects of



"Sustainable food and drink has not been immune to the wider struggles within the food and drink sector amid tougher financial times. As people are prioritising making their budgets go further, this issue has become less of a focus for many."

- Angharad Goode, Research Analyst, January 2023

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sustainability can make it difficult for consumers to weigh the green credentials of products against one another, and that current trials of this style of labelling are heading in the right direction.



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