



Prepared Meals - US - 2023

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This report looks at the following areas:

- Analysis of sales and market share trends in key category segments
- Motivations for prepared meal consumption and key attributes sought
- Consumer interest in prepared meal product concepts
- Attitudes toward prepared meals

After the of disruption of spiking volume amid the pandemic and spiking inflation in its aftermath, the large and mature prepared meals category is settling back into its long-term slow-growth pattern. More than eight in 10 consumers reporting having eaten at least one type in the past three months, and while convenience is the main reason for use, other factors, including enjoyment, cuisine exploration and health play key roles as well.

While category users tend to stick with familiar favorites when choosing meals, they're also open to suggestions that might help to break the routine or start a new one. Interest in new cuisines beyond the category's stronghold of traditional comfort food is wide. Retail merchandising strategies could play a key role in opening shoppers' eyes to the increasingly wide variety that the category has to offer.

Alternative preparation methods that bypass the microwave, customization opportunities and greater portioning flexibility are key innovation areas that could help to accelerate growth by deepening engagement in the category and making it relevant across a wider array of use occasions.



“Convenience is a category-defining benefit for prepared meals, but the biggest opportunities for growth may come for products that slow things down, just a little bit.”
– John Owen, Associate Director – Food and Retail

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