

Executive Summary of the Ohio Agricultural Industry Meat Options Research

Introduction

Throughout the U.S., there has been growing interest in alternative meat options, including plant-based and lab-grown meat options. A team of researchers in the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences at The Ohio State University recently surveyed 130 Ohioan participants who identified themselves as members of the agricultural industry. These individuals were surveyed to better understand industry perceptions regarding current and future meat options. Prior to answering questions, respondents were shown the following definitions:

Conventional Meat: Flesh or other edible parts of animals (usually domesticated livestock or wildlife) obtained through the slaughter of animals.

Plant Based Meat Alternatives: Plant or vegetable based products that are developed to mimic the taste and texture of conventional meat.

Cultured Meat: Also known as lab-grown meat, in-vitro, or clean meat, is meat-like tissue produced from animal cells in laboratory without the need for animal slaughter.

Participant Demographics

- The average birth year of participants was **1979**.
- **60.0%** of participants identified as female, while **39.2%** identified as male.
- **26.2%** were from Northwest Ohio, **26.9%** were from Northeast Ohio, **24.6%** were from Central Ohio, **12.3%** were from Southwest Ohio, and **9.2%** were from Southeast Ohio.
- The top five agricultural organizations participants were involved in the Ohio Farm Bureau (**48.5%**), Ohio Cattleman's Association (**25.4%**), Ohio Pork Council (**11.5%**), Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association (**9.2%**), and Ohio Soybean Council (**8.5%**).

Key Findings

The survey found information regarding agriculturalists' purchasing intent, preferred sources and methods of learning about meat options, and meat option topics of interest to them. Recommendations for agricultural communicators and organizations were gathered based on the results as well. Below are the key findings of the survey.

Purchasing Intent

- **Attitude** was found to significantly influence **purchasing intent**.
- **89.2%** of agriculturalists said they regularly purchase conventional meat, and **91.5%** said they planned to in the future.

Purchasing Intent Continued

- **10.8%** of agriculturalists said they regularly purchased plant-based meat, and **16.2%** said they planned to in the future.
- **0.8%** of the surveyed agriculturalists said they planned to purchase cultured meat when it becomes available

Preferred Sources Regarding Meat Options

- Surveyed agriculturalists' top sources to gather information about meat options were agricultural organizations (**66.2%**), farmers (**66.2%**), nutritionists (**63.1%**), universities (**60.8%**), butchers (**41.5%**), and doctors (**23.8%**).
- Other results indicated less desirable sources for information were food production companies (**22.3%**), government organizations (**20.8%**), friends or family (**19.2%**), environmental organizations (**18.5%**), chefs (**17.7%**), colleagues (**16.9%**), and news media (**4.6%**) to be less desired.
- **23.1%** ranked universities as their first preferred source of information about meat options.
- **17.7%** ranked farmers as their first preferred source of information about meat options.
- **13.8 %** ranked nutritionists as their first preferred source of information about meat options.
- **10.8%** ranked agricultural organizations as their first preferred source of information about meat options.

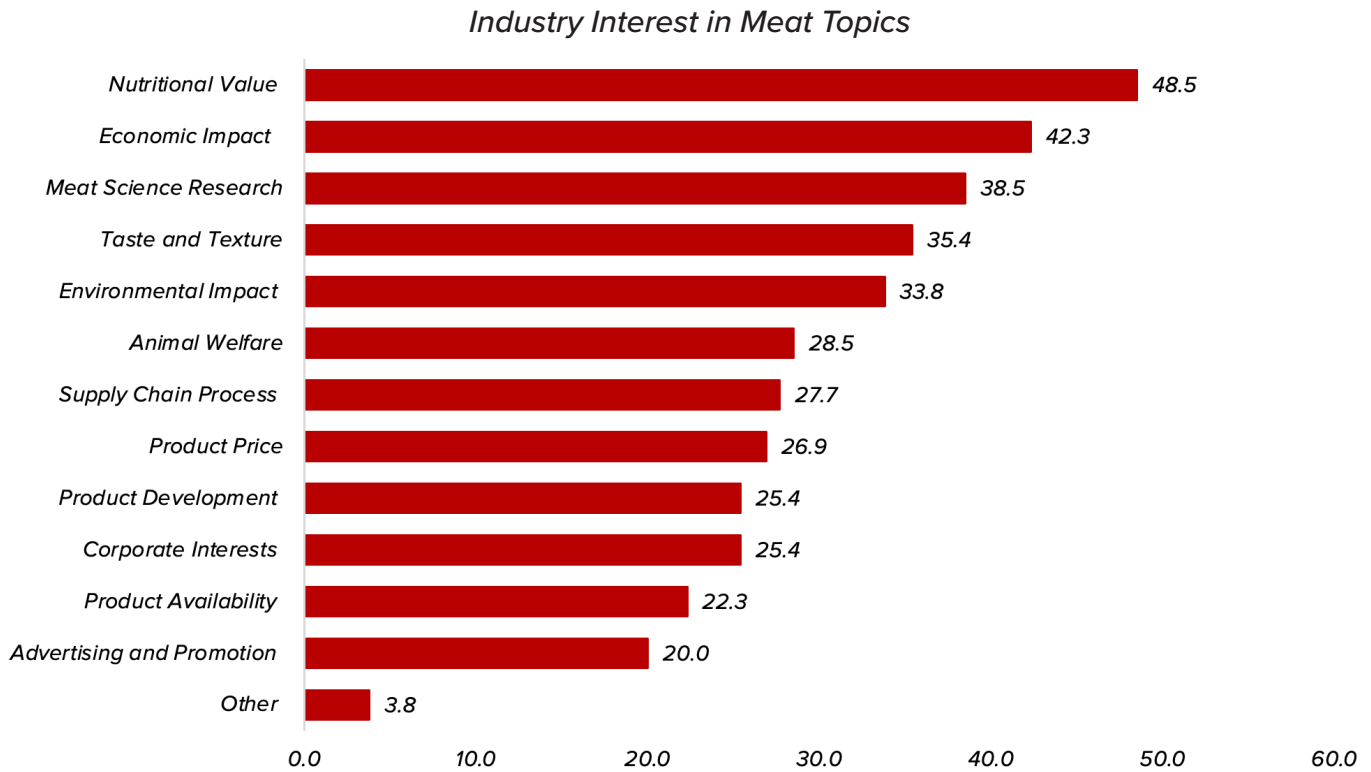
Preferred Methods of Learning Regarding Meat Options

- **56.9%** of survey participants selected reading printed fact sheets, bulletins or brochures as a preferred method of learning, and **12.3%** of those participants ranked it as their first method.
- **48.5%** selected face-to-face conversations as a preferred method, with **22.3%** of those ranking it as their first choice to learn more.
- Visiting a website and attending a seminar or conference were selected by **46.9%** and **41.5%** of participants.
- All of the learning methods data, in order of percentage, can be found in the table below.

Learning Methods	% selected	% ranked #1
Read Printed Fact Sheets, Bulletins or Brochures	56.9	12.3
Face-to-face Conversations	48.5	22.3
Visit a Website	46.9	9.2
Attend a Seminar or Conference	41.5	6.2
Attend a Course or Workshop	37.7	6.2
Watch a Documentary	33.8	2.3
Read a Newspaper Article or Series	33.1	4.6
Listen to a Podcast	28.5	3.1
Watch a Video on YouTube	26.2	3.1
Look at a Demonstration or Display	25.4	0
Connect with others on Social Media	17.7	1.5
Attend a Fair or Festival	11.5	1.5
Listen to News on the Radio	11.5	2.3
Watch TV News Coverage	8.5	0.8
Other	2.3	1.5

Meat Option Topic Interest

- Respondents were found to be most interested in the following topics regarding these meat options: nutritional value (**48.5%**), economic impact (**42.3%**), meat science research and technology (**38.5%**), taste and texture (**35.4%**), environmental impact (**33.8%**), animal welfare (**28.5%**), and supply chain process (**27.7%**). All results can be seen in the chart below.



Recommendations for Agricultural Organizations and Communicators

- Consider the increased future purchasing intent of plant-based meat among agriculturalists.
- Continue to communicate with agriculturalists via hard-copy documents and face-to face encounters.
- Consider partnerships with nutritionists, farmers, and other agricultural organizations in their communications efforts.
- Examine how industry preferences differ from consumer preferences and communicate to elevate existing products.
- Communicate about changing protein options from a systematic perspective considering food safety and preference, economics, environmental impact, animal welfare, and the supply chain impacts

View the Executive Summary of Ohio consumers' meat preferences, to compare industry and consumer preferences, [here](#).

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