



FOODBYTES

YOUR FREE DATASSENTIAL  
TREND REPORT

### CONSUMER SNACK MOTIVATORS

Discover what motivates each generation of consumers to eat snacks on pg. 4.

### EXPLORE THE SNACK MAC

Uncover what stages on the Menu Adoption Cycle various snack foods are at on pg. 12 (can you guess where seaweed chips are?).

### WHAT CAN BE A SNACK?

Spoiler alert: pretty much anything! See pg. 6 to discover the percentage of consumers who are likely to order a slice of pizza as a snack.

---

# SNACK

## TRENDS CONSUMERS CRAVE

NIBBLE ON INSIGHTS  
FROM OUR SNACKING  
KEYNOTE REPORT

---

# MOST-LOVED SALTY SNACKS

Below are some of the most-loved salty snacks by consumers, according to Datassential's consumer preferences database.



**POTATO CHIPS**  
52% OF CONSUMERS LOVE THEM



**POPCORN**  
46% OF CONSUMERS LOVE IT



**TORTILLA CHIPS**  
38% OF CONSUMERS LOVE THEM



**BEEF JERKY**  
34% OF CONSUMERS LOVE IT



**PRETZELS**  
32% OF CONSUMERS LOVE THEM



in follow on linkedin: [datassential](#)

### A surprising thing I learned

I was surprised to learn in our *Snacking Keynote Report* that nearly 30% of consumers' last snacks replaced a meal, and 74% of consumers have a snack in place of a traditional meal at least once a week. But maybe I shouldn't be that surprised, given that my husband typically replaces lunch with a few handfuls of trail mix.

### My go-to snack

I lean more towards salty snacks, in general, and my go-to has always been either tortilla chips and salsa or tortilla chips and guac (or even sometimes just an avocado I'll scoop out of its shell with the tortilla chips). The combo of tortilla chips and salsa or guac I've found to be more filling and satisfying compared to other snacks when I'm between meals (my main snacking motivator).

What is a snack? It's a real question, and according to our *Snacking Keynote Report*, most consumers (66%, to be exact) believe that anything can be a snack! That's why it's important even if you don't think of your menu options or product line as part of the snack aisle or snack menu to still position items like slices of pizza and baked goods as such potentially (according to our *Snacking Keynote*, 48% of consumers are likely to order baked goods as a snack from a restaurant). With snacking occasions sometimes even taking the place of meals, it's vital for both operators and manufacturers to understand what consumers' snacking habits and preferences are, as well as the trends within the category, which is why this edition of *FoodBytes* is dedicated to snacking and offers up a sneak peek at data and insights from our full *Snacking Keynote Report*.

On pg. 4, we reveal how each generation has different motivators for consuming snacks, with a few key motivators including: craveability, wanting to treat themselves (which ties in with overarching mental health trends), as a holdover until mealtime, to boost energy, and to relax/relieve stress.

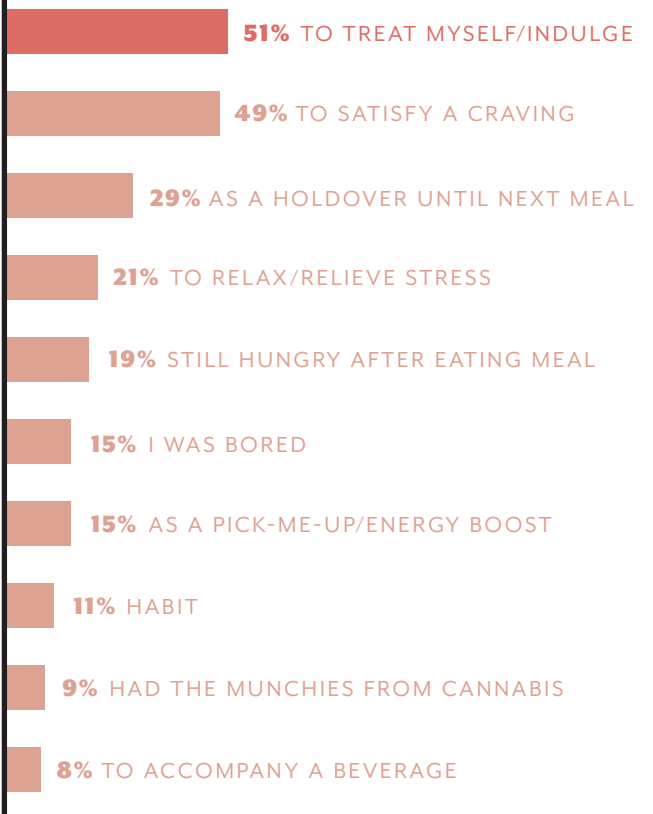
And we wouldn't be TrendSpotting without exploring current trends in the snacking category. One of the larger trends is subscription boxes (many of which are geared towards B&I) that allow customers to try a variety of unique snacks that may be globally-inspired and add interest to their day (notably, 15% of Gen Z consumers snack out of boredom). And when it comes to trending flavors, nostalgia is driving the return of sweet snacks like Dunkaroos and many savory snacks at retail are leaning into spice (*Food Dive* reports that rolled tortilla chip brand Takis, which is known for its spicy flavors, "has found viral success in recent years — boasting nearly 2 million TikTok followers — especially among younger consumers."). Manufacturers tying snacks into health trends are also showcasing snack packaging with words like "bare," "no B.S.," and "real" front-and-center to communicate clean labels and how their snacks are health-forward. For more snack trends and inspiration at retail, see pg. 10.

Jaclyn Marks,  
Senior Publications Manager

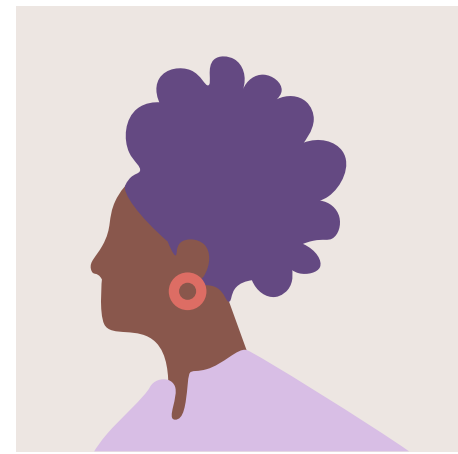
● GENERATIONAL SNACK MOTIVATORS

Gen Z is the only generation that more often says they had their last snack to treat themselves vs. to satisfy a craving. Operators could stand out to Gen Z by positioning their products as a way for consumers to treat themselves.

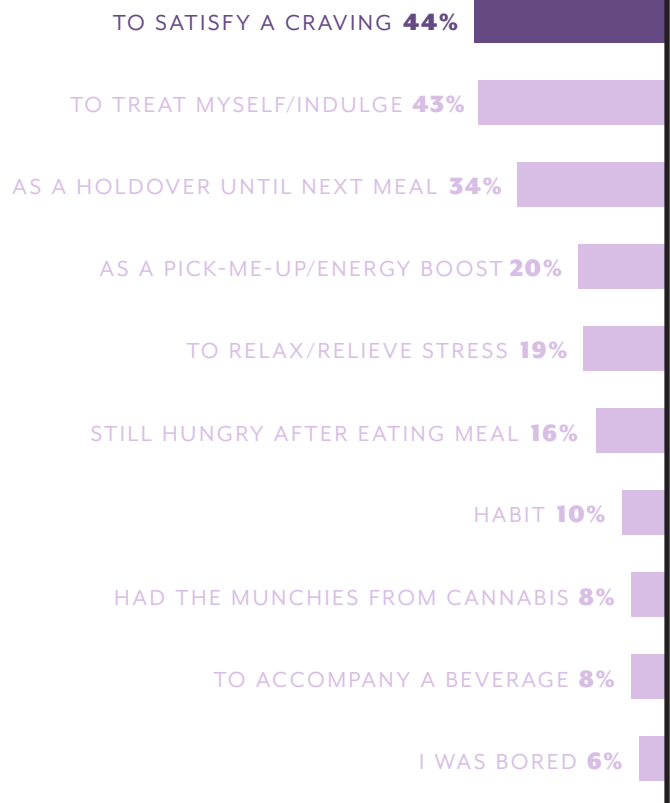
Gen Z more often than other generations says they're motivated to eat a snack because they're bored, so there may be an opportunity to capitalize on innovative, next-level snacks that bring this generation out of their boredom.



**GEN Z**  
BORN: 1998-2016



**MILLENNIAL**  
BORN: 1983-1997

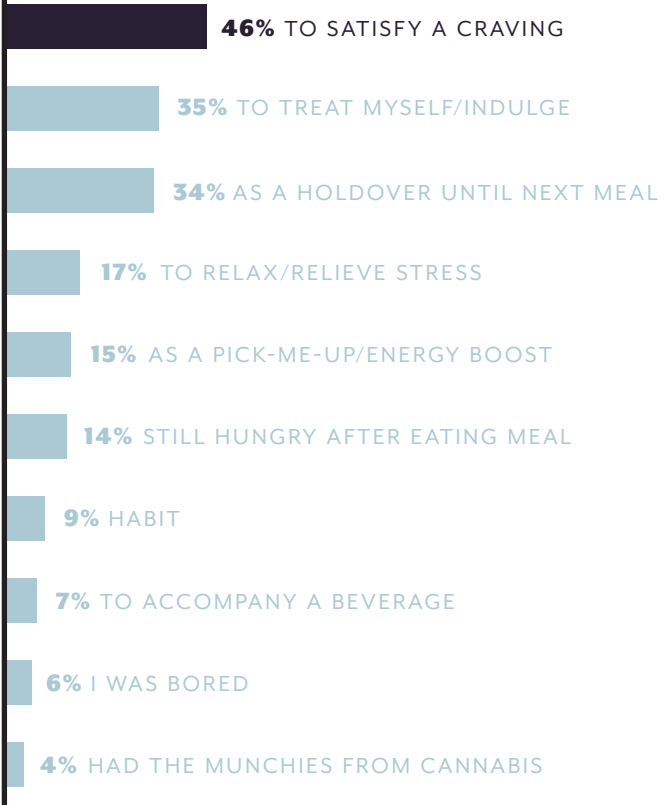


Way more Millennials were motivated to eat their last snack as a pick-me-up/energy boost. Operators and manufacturers targeting Millennials could consider positioning snack items as energy boosters to increase appeal.

**SNACK MOTIVATORS BY GENERATION**

There are a variety of reasons consumers are motivated to eat snacks, but these motivators aren't the same across generations. Here we answer the "why" behind each generation's last snack occasion.

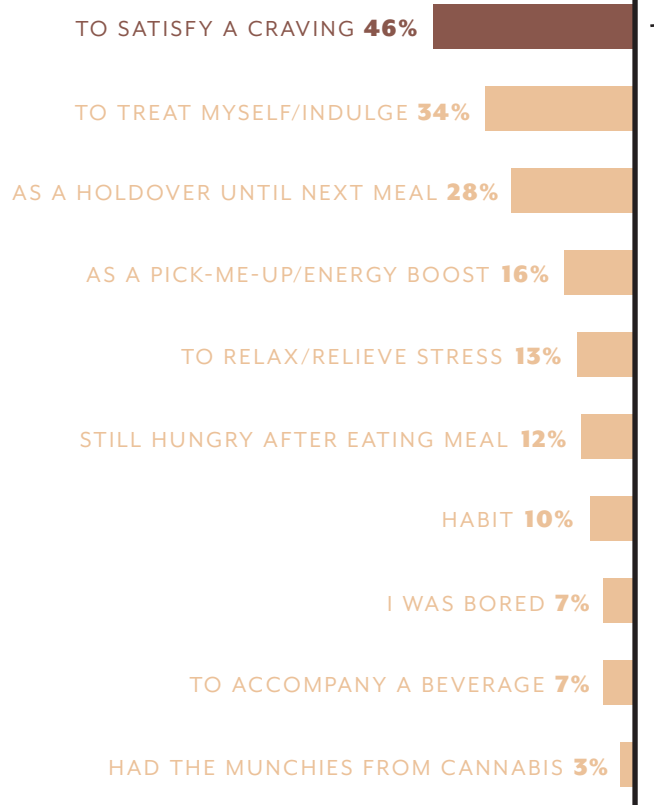
Gen X and Millennials, more than other generations, turn to snacks as a holdover until their next meal, which could be how operators and manufacturers position snacks to reach these generations.



**GEN X**  
BORN: 1966-1982



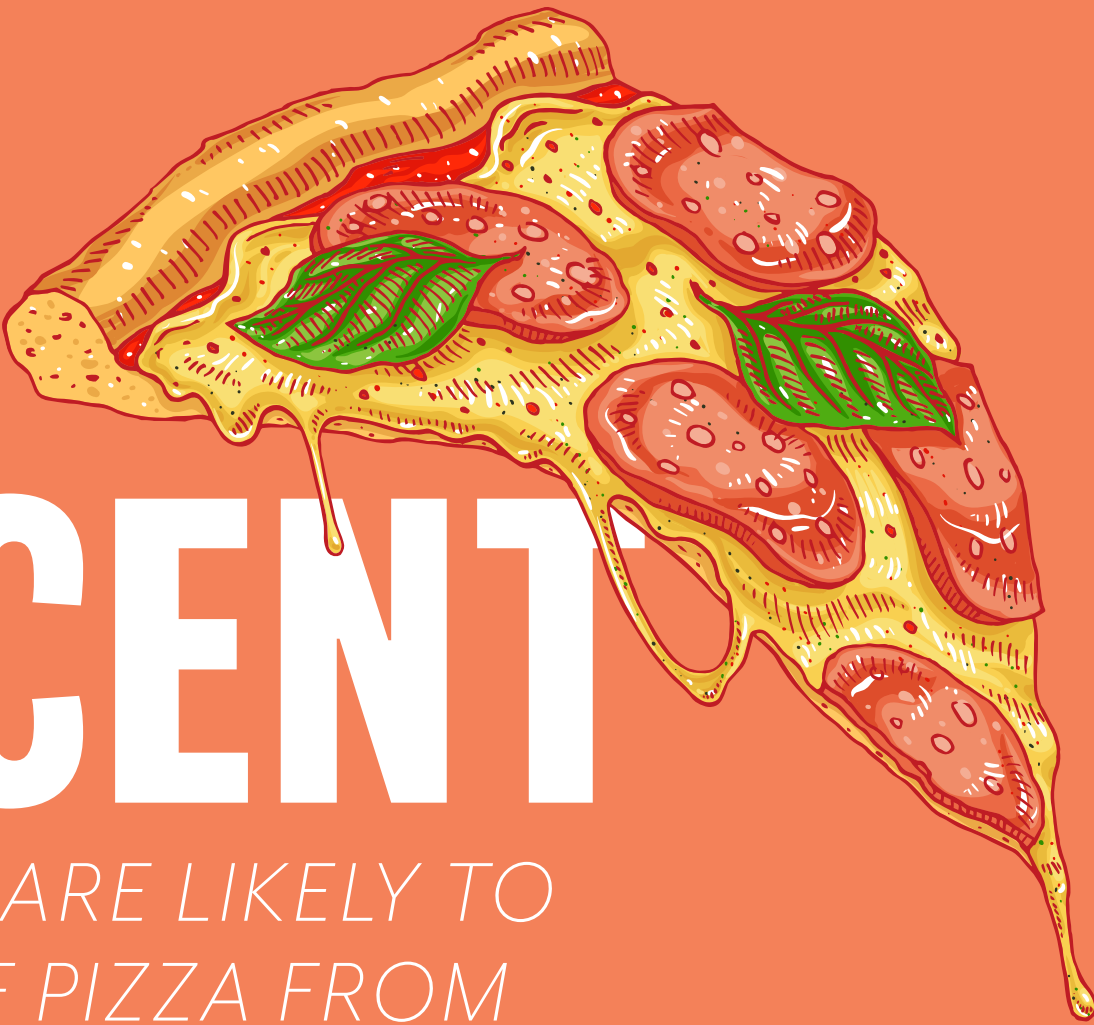
**BOOMER**  
BORN: 1946-1964



A variety of snacking motivators that resonate with other generations don't resonate with Boomers. Cravability and indulgence are their main motivators for snacking.

# 42 PERCENT

*OF CONSUMERS ARE LIKELY TO ORDER A SLICE OF PIZZA FROM A RESTAURANT AS A SNACK*



# DATA DIVE NOSH ON SNACKING INSIGHTS

Snacking isn't just a way to indulge (although it can definitely be that, especially for Gen Z, as you saw on pg. 4). Many consumers also consider snacking an important part of eating healthy. Here we dive into the data behind consumers' last snacking occasion, the frequency at which consumers are purchasing packaged snacks from supermarkets, how consumers' snacking consumption frequency has changed in the past year (or not changed), and look at the snacks consumers say they consumed more of in the past year.



**THIRTY PERCENT OF CONSUMERS PURCHASE PACKAGED SNACKS FROM SUPERMARKET STORES ONCE PER WEEK OR MORE OFTEN**



**49%**  
OF CONSUMERS SAY THAT SNACKING IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF HEALTHY EATING

**38%**  
OF CONSUMERS SAY THEIR LAST SNACK WAS HEALTHY



**41%**  
OF CONSUMERS SAY THEIR LAST SNACK WAS INDULGENT

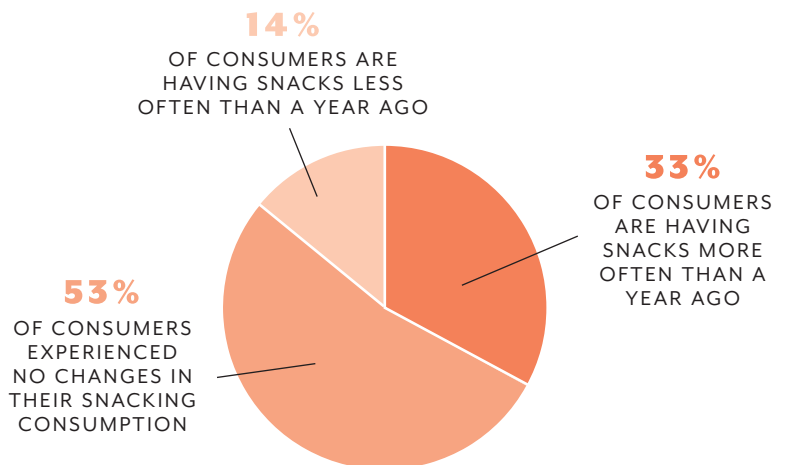
## OPERATOR STAT

**78%** OF OPERATORS SAY THAT SNACKS ARE PROFITABLE



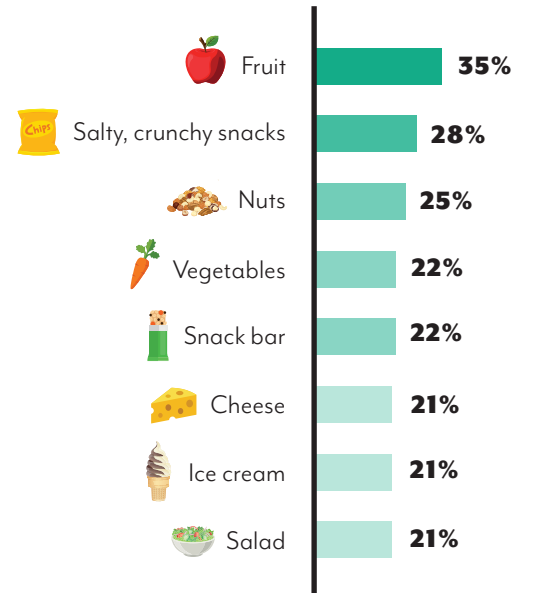
Discover how many operators believe sales of snacks will increase in the upcoming year and more operator insights in our full *Snacking Keynote Report*.

Datassential asked consumers how their snacking frequency changed in the past year. See below for their responses.



If you aren't currently a subscriber to Report Pro where our full *Snacking Keynote Report* can be accessed, reach out to us at [hello@datassential.com](mailto:hello@datassential.com) to learn how you can become a subscriber.

Datassential asked consumers what snacks they're consuming more often. See the chart on the right for the snacks that consumers ate more of in the past year.



# STANDOUT SNACKS ON RETAIL SHELVES

Innovation is going strong in the snacking category, with a variety of brands, both newer to the scene and established, capitalizing on current trends, such as spicy flavors, health-forward eating, plant-based, global foods/flavors, and more. Below we highlight just a few examples of standout snacks to have on the radar.



**Pictured clockwise from the far left:**

Truly Good Foods was one of the winners of "The Most Innovative New Product" at the Snacks & Sweets Expo this year for their **Henrietta Said-branded jumbo peanut snack line** that comes in a variety of chicken wing-inspired flavors that range from Buffalo to Nashville Hot Chicken with Pickle.

Back in July, Pringles joked on social media that their "Caviar" flavor was "a fake flavor so fancy, we wish it was real" (the joke flavor was featured on social media in honor of National Caviar Day). But, in September, Pringles did get their big chance to pair their Crisps with caviar through the **Crisps and Caviar Collection** launched by Pringles and The Caviar Co. It was described as "two of the world's finest foods in one swanky package."

Snack brand You Need This debuted plant-based, cinnamon-flavored **Churro Puffs** (the term "puffs" is popping up more and more in association with snacks at retail) that lean into consumers' love for Mexican foods.

**Amazi Food's Dried Pineapple** snacks stand out with their unique Moringa Hibiscus flavor that ties into current health trends.

Daily Crunch's **Sprouted Nut Snacks** highlight health front-and-center on their packaging, calling out how the nut snacks are made with all real ingredients, are keto-friendly, and contain plant protein. Pictured here is their new, on-trend Dill Pickle flavor featuring sprouted almonds and pepitas.

Nopales (cactus paddles) are given the star treatment for Tia Lupita's **Cactus Grain Free Tortilla Chips**, which are available in a variety of flavors including Hot Sauce, Habanero, Salsa Verde, and more. *Good Housekeeping* notes that since nopales "take minimal water to grow," it makes them "incredibly sustainable."

# SNACK MAG



shrimp chips



dessert hummus



hummus



seaweed chips



egg bites



toaster pastries



fries



cookie butters



charcuterie



cereal

Take inspiration from seafood for new, next-level chip varieties!

Put a twist on hummus by offering sweet dessert-inspired varieties like chocolate or red velvet!

● vegan chocolate

● insects

● lotus chips

● coconut chips

● sprouted nut

● smoked chocolate

● restaurant-branded snacks

● mushroom chips

● quinoa-based alternative puff

● egg white chips

● alt meat jerky & bars

● roasted chickpeas

● bean snacks

● craft popcorn

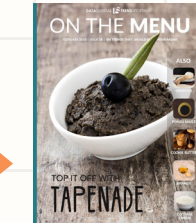
● energy bite

● diet-specific

● plantain chip

● vegan cheese

Covered in *On the Menu*



● cookie butters

● skyr

● soft pretzel

● olive

● pork rinds

● kettle corn



charcuterie

Learn how to put a sweet spin on charcuterie with dessert boards in *Trend Watch: Social Media Sensations*.

● pizza bites

● protein shake

● gluten-free snacks

● seeds



egg bites

● chia pudding

● nut butter

● fried mozzarella sticks

Covered in *Trend Watch: Trends Yuzu Should Know*



● applesauce

● guacamole

● snack mix

● cookies

Leverage safe experimentation and look to toaster pastries as a vehicle for innovation.

● fruit

● yogurt

● chocolate candy bar

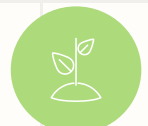
Fries are loved or liked by 92% of consumers, according to Datassential's consumer preferences database.

● chocolate covered nuts

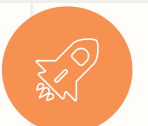
● popcorn

● hard boiled egg

Cereal isn't just for breakfast! Look to it for snacking opportunities, too.



INCEPTION



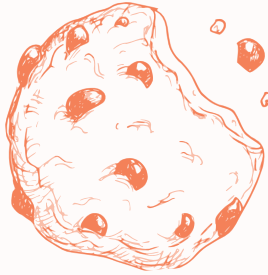
ADOPTION



PROLIFERATION



UBIQUITY



# A FEW FINAL TREND BITES

As we close out this issue, we hope not only that we've inspired you to reach for a few new snacks to try, but also demonstrated how snacking is relevant to the entire industry. Below we leave you with just a few final ways to take action on the snack trends featured in this issue, and for more snacking insights, see our full *Snacking Keynote Report* in Report Pro or email us at [hello@datassential.com](mailto:hello@datassential.com) if you aren't currently a subscriber and would like to learn how you can become one.

## 3 WAYS TO TAKE ACTION ON SNAKKING TRENDS

- **Focus in on trending flavors.** Spicy snacks are a hot trend, and Mexican foods are also inspiring new snack flavors (think churro, habanero, salsa verde, and more).
- **Create snacks that align with generational motivators.** Each generation has different motivators for snacking. Make sure that your products align with your target market's main motivators. For instance, if Gen Z is your target customer base, you'll likely want to offer snacks that are positioned as a way for consumers to treat themselves, or as a way to relax/relieve stress, both of which are tied to the overarching mental health awareness trend (learn more about mental health in the industry in this issue of *FoodBytes*).
- **Capitalize on trending keywords.** Snacks that lean into current health trends are showcasing keywords that communicate clean labels front-and-center on packaging. Some health-related keywords we noticed come up repeatedly on snack packaging include things like "no B.S.," "real," and "bare."

## MOST-LOVED SWEET SNACKS

Below are some of the most-loved sweet snacks by consumers, according to *Datassential's consumer preferences database*.



**COOKIES**  
54% OF CONSUMERS LOVE THEM



**CHOCOLATE CANDY BARS**  
54% OF CONSUMERS LOVE THEM



**FUDGE**  
38% OF CONSUMERS LOVE IT

### KEY QUOTE:

Despite food inflation that has plagued the entire economy over the past year, Americans continue to stock up on snacks. Strong sales will likely continue this year as Americans flock to convenient, healthy, and indulgent snacks.

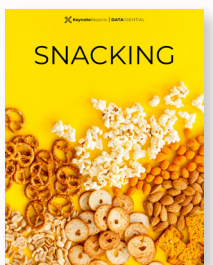
- Food Dive

## WHAT'S COMING UP NEXT MONTH?

3 cheers for our 2024 Trends edition of *FoodBytes*, one of our most highly-anticipated issues, which will launch next month in Report Pro, so stay tuned! If you haven't already, be sure to turn on Content Watch in *Report Pro* for TrendSpotting to make sure you're kept up-to-date on all the latest trends as we look forward to a new year.



## HUNGRY FOR MORE TRENDS? Check out related reports in Report Pro!



**Keynote Report: Snacking**  
*Hungry for more snacking research? Nibble on insights from our full [Snacking Keynote Report](#).*

Snacking is a universal activity with daily occasions. Foodservice snacks are updated frequently and serve many functions, such as allowing operators to stay up-to-date with current trends, boost check averages, draw in non-peak traffic, experiment with new flavors, and more. Learn more about snacking trends in our *Snacking Keynote Report*.



**Inspiration Report: Snacks**  
*Dive deep into top-growing snacks on restaurant menus in our [Snacking Inspiration Report](#).*

Get an overview of some of the top-growing snacks on menus. Discover how sub-categories (fried apps, dips, wings, smoothies, coffee, brownies, cookies, and frozen treats) are also included with top-growing terms, and explore megatrends, such as new jerky, chip alternatives, craft versions of classics, and more.



**CC: Retail Snacks**  
*Nosh on snacking trends at retailers in this issue of [Creative Concepts](#).*

Discover the latest CPG snacking trends, from meaty jerkies to plant-based foods. Dive into functional foods, see how restaurants are inspiring new snacks, and check out some of the snacking subscription services that are bringing new snacks to consumers' door steps.



discover foods, places,  
articles, and more

**JUST START  
TYPING**

**Report Pro | Content Watch**



Stay up to date on new  
content as it's published!

**SIGN UP**