## UNDERSTANDING THE EATING HABITS OF

## THE SOUTH AFRICAN POPULATION



## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main purpose of this research is to create a source of information that stakeholders can tap into in order to shape the health of the nation

We aim to gain a clear understanding and track the changes of:


Dietry types and plate composition


Attitides and behaviour towards food


Understanding of what is healthy


Access to healthy food


Challenges in eating healthy

## GENERAL EATING HABITS

## COVID-19 EFFECT ON SOUTH AFRICANS

With declines in income, and being financially worse off due to COVID-19, South African consumers' current ability to spend is much lower than global average.


## Increase in meat eaters, and a general decline in breakfast consumption

South Africans eat an average of $\mathbf{2}$ meals per day


Breakfast declines driven by Black, Male and age 24-35, Urban and Singles

## Total South African plate remains consistent with last year, with only a small portion of vegetables

ADULTS AGE 16+


This is consistent across all regions and demographics with no significant shifts Different meal occassions also remain consistent with last year

RECOMMENDED COMPOSITION
Source: University of Cambridge - School of clinical medicine


- Meat products (includes eggs)
- Starch
- Vegetables
- Dairy
- Legumes
- Fats \& oils


## Kids are eating the same plate composition as their parents

Kids are 10\% more likely to eat the same foods as their parent's than last year


## Top dishes have not changed, with the majority of meat and veg consumed at dinner

Breakfast is the most carbohydrate heavy meal of the day with the least vegetables/fruit consumed, while dinner has the greatest focus on meat and the highest consumption of vegetables.

| BREAKFAST | LUNCH |
| :---: | :---: |
| TOP MEAL <br> Toast / porridge | TOP MEAL <br> Sandwich |
| - Bread/Toast (46\%) <br> - Porridge (30\%) <br> - Egg ( $23 \%$ ) <br> - Cereal (17\%) <br> - Meat (14\%) | - Meat (48\%) <br> - Bread / sandwich (41\%) <br> - Pap ( $23 \%$ ) <br> - Rice (10\%) |
|  | - Veg/salad/fruit (14\%) |

## Frequency of snacking in between meals declines

70\% of people snack in between meals, and this is consistent with 2020.
Significant declines seen for chocolate, sweet biscuits, nuts and popcorn.


## FOOD GROUP EXPLORATION

## More people claim to be eating meat on a daily basis

There has been a decline in people using beans as a substitute for meat

FREQUENCY OF CONSUMPTION


MEAT REPLACEMENTS USED


[^0]n=1005
Significantly higher than previous year
Significantly lower than previous year

## Starch is consumed more often than meat or vegetables, however with less variety

This is likely due to people buying in bulk on promotion

FREQUENCY OF CONSUMPTION
AVE. PER WEEK - 6 times


- Once a week

STARCH TYPE REGULARLY
CONSUMED


STARCH REPLACEMENTS USED


## People have less variety of fruit and vegetables in their diet than previously seen

Again likely due to bulk buys or promotional purchases

## FREQUENCY OF CONSUMPTION

AVE. PER WEEK - 4 times


■ Every day
■ Once a week
■ Once a month

- 2-3 times per week - 2-3 times per month

■ Less often

VEGETABLES REGULARLY
CONSUMED


FRUIT REGULARLY
CONSUMED


## HEALTHY FOODS

## Increased information seeking online, accessibility to healthy foods improved, but cost is still an issue

ATTITUDES \& BEHAVIOUR TOWARD HEALTHY FOODS

- Declines in nutritional information seeking from friends, family and health care professionals, but increases in searching online, especially on Social Media
- Understanding of the concept of a plan based diet is still very low
- Different reactions to the pandemic with some trying to be healthier and others resorting to eating whatever they can afford
- Consumers believe that healthy food has become more accessible over the past year
- The top reason for not eating healthier is price


## SUMMARY \& RECOMMENDATIONS

## KEY FINDINGS

- Increase in meat eaters in South Africa, with $46 \%$ eating meat daily
- Plate composition is consistent with last year with no movement towards more vegetables and less meat
- Kids even more likely to eat the same as their parents, so there is unlikely to be a change in future behaviour without intervention
- Vegetables perceived as healthy but people are eating less variety than before and have not increased the quantity on the plate
- Accessibility of healthy food improved, but affordability is a more of a barrier than ever before


Taste good, feel good, force for good.


[^0]:    20212020

