



# SUGAR

## The Voice of the Consumer 2021 • TREND INSIGHT REPORT

Life is all about balance. Creating a lifestyle where we are rewarded for healthy eating and a job well done with a special treat at the end of the day or after a delicious meal is very common. The desire to eat sweet foods is one that comes from our very early ancestors and indicated safety and also provided nutrients in a time when calories were hard to come by. So fast forward to 2021 and whether it's cake at a birthday party or ice cream after a bad day, sweet foods are used to celebrate and soothe. But consumers know that they need to reduce their sugar intake, but that is easier said than done. To dig deeper into this topic, we commissioned a nationwide survey, and this data will be compared to a similar FONA study conducted in 2019. Let's dig in!

# SUGAR, SUGAR!

*The war on sugar as they call it has been eye-opening to many consumers as they are now enlightened through the nutrition facts panel the amount of added sugars a product may contain. This provides transparency into how a product is created like never before. Consumers are looking to reduce their overall sugar intake and looking to the nutrition facts panel for more information all while having the expectation that foods and beverages will still taste good. This creates an opportunity for product developers to create great tasting and healthier products that consumers are looking for.*

With so many products available at the grocery store, it can be difficult for consumers to make purchasing decisions. We asked consumers what's more important as it relates to food and beverage purchases, and when asked to choose between grams of sugar per serving and both price and taste, our consumers stated that price and taste are more important than grams of sugar per serving.

- **70%** of consumers surveyed stated that **TASTE** is more important than grams of sugar per serving.
- **62%** of consumers surveyed stated that **PRICE** is more important than grams of sugar per serving.



*“It is no surprise to me that consumers value taste over grams of sugar per serving. No matter what category I conduct a survey on, taste always comes to the top as a priority to consumers and ultimately what drives brand loyalty and repeat purchases.”*

*Pamela Oscarson, Consumer Insights Manager, FONA International*



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50%

OF CONSUMERS WOULD LIKE TO REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF SUGAR THEY CONSUME.

*\* This is an 8% increase from 2019.*

## CUTTING BACK

While 54% of consumers we surveyed are consuming the same amount of sugar than one year ago, 50% would like to reduce their overall sugar intake. This is an increase of 8% from 2019. In addition, this is for consumers 24-years-old and older. Only 31% of 18–23-year-olds would like to reduce their sugar intake and 38% of the same age group believe that they have a healthy relationship with sugar.

Weight loss is the primary reason consumers are cutting their overall intake of sugar according to 37% of consumers surveyed. This is a decrease of 13% since 2019 where 50% of consumers surveyed were reducing their sugar intake to lose weight. There is a 21% increase from 2019 with consumers reducing their sugar intake due to specific health conditions with 36% of consumers now interested in the reduction for that reason.



## WEIGHT LOSS

REMAINS THE PRIMARY REASON CONSUMERS ARE REDUCING THEIR OVERALL SUGAR INTAKE SINCE 2019

### Top Actions to Reduce Overall Sugar Intake

67%	Drinking water instead of caloric beverages
37%	Eliminating certain foods/beverages
37%	No longer adding table sugar to foods/beverages
30%	Using the Nutrition Facts Panel to choose foods/beverages with less sugar
29%	Reducing the number of calories I consume each day

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# REDUCED CONSUMPTION

We asked consumers what foods and beverages are being reduced and/or eliminated from their diets since reducing their overall sugar intake. The categories that rose to the top should be no surprise—they are the in fact the categories that contain the most sugar, if not all sugar. In 2019, candy was in the top spot and now carbonated soft drinks rose to the top spot.

58%

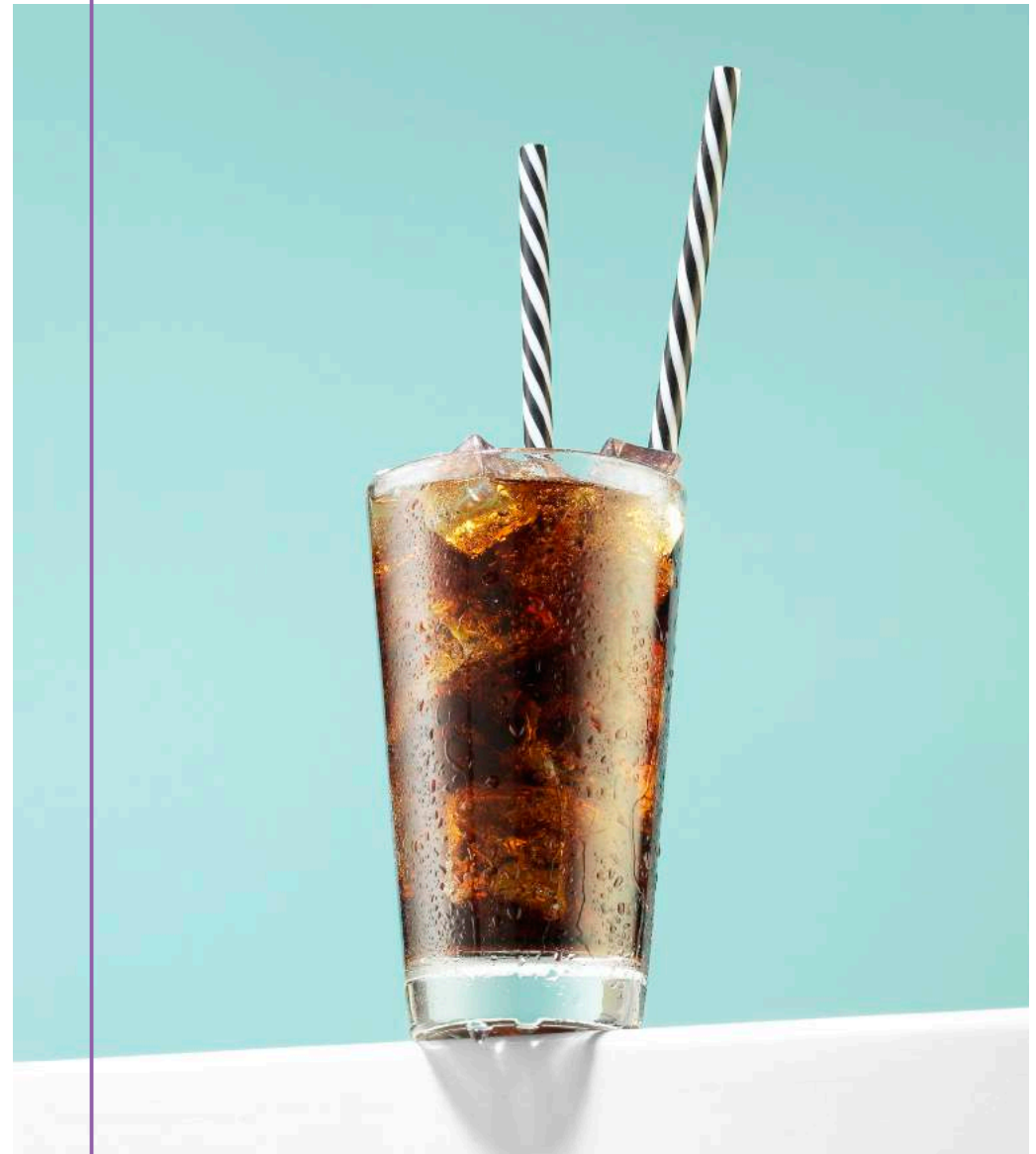
CARBONATED  
SOFT DRINKS

54%

CANDY

51%

BAKED GOODS



54%

INCREASE IN NEW PRODUCTS  
WITH A SUGAR REDUCTION  
CLAIM SINCE 2017.

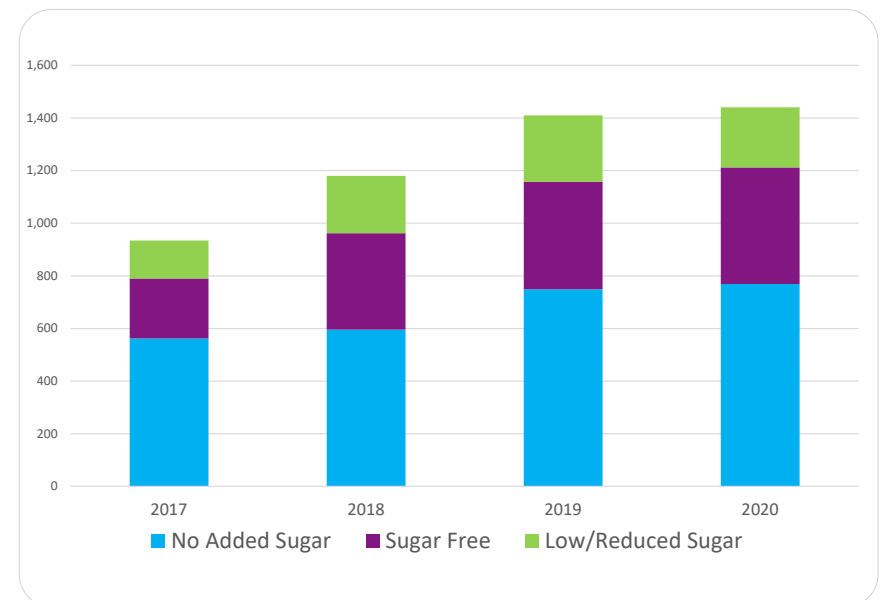
## SUGAR REDUCTION/ ELIMINATION CLAIMS

According to research conducted by Innova Market Insights, 91% of consumers are influenced by sugar reduction claims and there is definitely no lack of products with those claims being introduced. Since 2017, there has been 5,290 products introduced with a sugar reduction/elimination claim in North America. The no-added sugar claim is the top claim with 54% of the products with sugar reducing claims have a no-added sugar claim. This is followed by sugar-free at 29% and low-no sugar at 17%. The top growing categories from 2019-2020 with new products and a sugar reduction/elimination claims include:

- Meals & Meal Centers +200%
- Breakfast Cereal +126%
- Sports & Energy Drinks +126%
- Alcoholic Beverages +111%



### New Products with Sugar Reduction/Elimination Claims



SOURCE: Mintel GNPD



OF CONSUMERS STATED THAT THE NO-SUGAR ADDED CLAIM IS IMPORTANT.

## NO-ADDED SUGAR

In the past couple of years, the nutrition facts panel has received a new and improved look providing consumers with additional detailed information to help them make wise purchasing decisions. When purchasing a food and/or beverage product for the first time, 50% of consumers we surveyed look to the nutrition facts panel to determine if they will purchase the product.

With this newly provided information, such as added sugars being declared on the label, it has been eye-opening to consumers to see the amount of additional sugars added to a product. We asked consumers how this information will impact their purchasing decisions and 50% of consumers surveyed stated, "I will re-think purchasing the product now that I know the grams of added sugar." This new addition is going to change consumer how consumers make purchasing decisions.



### BERTOLLI PARMESAN & ROMANO PASTA SAUCE

5 g Sugar; 0 g Added Sugar

Purchase Intent: 79%

This product is significantly outperforming its subcategory with a purchase intent of 79% compared to 39% for the remainder of the category.

CONSUMER QUOTE: "I like this brand and love this version with the cracked pepper and cheese. Especially like that there is no sugar added." | Female, Midwest, 55+



### CASCADIAN FARMS ORGANIC CINNAMON APPLE CEREAL

9 g Sugar; 0 g Added Sugar

Purchase Intent: 52%

This product is significantly outperforming its subcategory with a purchase intent of 52% compared to 37% for the remainder of the category.

CONSUMER QUOTE: "I like that it doesn't have added sugar and looks healthy." | Female, South, 55+



### TWO GOOD RASPBERRY GREEK YOGURT

2 g Sugar; 0 g Added Sugar

Purchase Intent: 62%

This product is significantly outperforming its subcategory with a purchase intent of 62% compared to 45% for the remainder of the category.

CONSUMER QUOTE: "I would try it because it only has 2 grams of sugar. This is something unique as yogurt usually has sugar in the double digits per serving." | Female, West, 35-54

## THE TAKEAWAYS

*From our research we learned that consumers do want to reduce their sugar intake, and this is especially important for those consumers over 24-years-old. For younger consumers, they believe that they already have a healthy relationship with sugar. Consumers are reducing and/or eliminating carbonated soft drinks, candy, and baked goods to reduce the amount of sugar that they are consuming. With taste and price more important than grams of sugar per serving, consumers are weighing all of their options when making purchasing decisions and using the nutrition facts panel to help guide their choices. This provides product developers an opportunity to reformulate and create new products meeting the lower sugar demands of today's consumers.*

## SOURCES

- FONA International Nationwide Consumer Survey
- Mintel GNPD
- Mintel Purchase Intelligence
- Innova Market Insights



## YOU DESERVE MORE. LET'S GET STARTED.

What does true partnership look like? You deserve a flavor partner ready to turn these trends into the tangible.

Let FONA's market insight and research experts get to work for you. Translate these trends into bold new ideas for your brand. Increase market share and get to your "what's next." Our technical flavor and product development experts are also at your service to help meet the labeling and flavor profile needs for your products to capitalize on this consumer trend. Let's mesh the complexities of flavor with your brand development, technical requirements and regulatory needs to deliver a complete taste solution.

From concept to manufacturing, we're here for you — every step of the way. Contact our sales service department at 630.578.8600 to request a flavor sample or chat us up at [www.fona.com/contact-fona/](http://www.fona.com/contact-fona/)