

Nearly 70% of Americans Say Animal Wellness Plays an Important Role in Purchasing Decisions

New research from NSF demonstrates a shift towards ethical consumerism with a rising demand for consistency and compliance among meat producers.

ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN, UNITED STATES, February 15, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [NSF](#), the leading global public health and safety organization, today shared its compelling research findings on US consumer attitudes towards animal wellness and its influence on purchasing decisions.

A recent study conducted by NSF revealed that consumers are concerned about how animals are treated in the food industry, as well as the origin of animal products in food production at a time when meat

consumption in the US is projected to remain consistent from 2022 until at least 2032¹. Of the US respondents to the NSF study, 67% state that animal wellness is either very or extremely important to purchasing decisions while 68% place importance on companies demonstrating transparency and compliance in animal wellness throughout their global supply chains.

Animal wellness refers to quality of life in the food supply chain and includes physical health, psychological health, living conditions and how animals are handled and treated. Most animal wellness programs involve sustainability practices, food safety and the responsible use of antibiotics and medication.

"This research makes it clear that the ethical treatment of animals is now a fundamental concern for consumers when making food-related decisions," said Dr. Elaine Vanier, a veterinarian and



the animal wellness program lead for NSF. “Animal wellness plays an important role in the majority of today’s purchasing decisions and brands must prioritize using quality practices across their entire protein supply chain.”

Key findings from the study include:

67% of US consumers say animal wellness is either very or extremely important to purchasing decisions.

68% of US consumers said it was very important or extremely important that companies demonstrate consistency and compliance with animal wellness throughout their supply chain.

62% declared they are more likely to purchase a product that has been certified for animal wellness by a third party, especially those between the 30 to 44 age group, who were 77% more likely.

Two-thirds, or 66%, of respondents said they would be probably or definitely willing to pay a higher price for products certified for animal wellness.

73% expect animal products sold by international brands to comply with animal wellness standards and for those between the ages of 30-44, this expectation rises to over 84%.

Just one-third, or 38%, said they were very or extremely informed of US animal wellness standards.

While most US livestock and poultry industry animal wellness standards are voluntary and not certification schemes, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) does require animal wellness on a federal level through the Federal Meat Inspection Act and the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act. Some individual states have specific legislation and certification requirements, such as the California Department of Food and Agriculture’s recent approval of Proposition 12, which amended the state’s Animal Care Program.

“With only 38% of respondents saying they were very or extremely informed of US animal wellness standards, these findings underscore a lack of understanding and education among consumers on animal wellness certifications and product labels,” Dr. Vanier commented. “By investing in certification to standards such as NSF’s Global Animal Wellness Standard, brands can better communicate that they both meet and uphold quality in animal care while growing consumer trust.”

NSF encourages both food manufacturers and agricultural companies to embrace independent animal wellness certifications to deliver on their promise of animal wellness. [NSF GAWS](#) offers a



NSF surveyed consumers across the US to explore their attitudes towards animal wellness and its influence on purchasing decisions. Here are the results.



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Dr. Elaine Vanier, NSF

comprehensive framework that ensures wellness for the entire lifespan of animals throughout the protein supply chain. Such commitments benefit all parties involved, offering long-term advantages including reduced antibiotic use, improved feed efficiency, higher yields and better product grading.

For more information on animal wellness and NSF, visit <https://www.nsf.org/nsf-standards/standards-portfolio/nsf-global-animal-wellness-standards>.

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ABOUT NSF

NSF is an independent, global services organization dedicated to improving human and planet health by facilitating standards development and providing world-class testing, inspection, certification, advisory services, and digital solutions to the food, water, health sciences, and consumer goods industries. NSF operates in 180 countries and is a World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Center on Food Safety, Water Quality, and Medical Device Safety.

About the Research

The independent research was conducted with a representative sample of respondents in the US. The sample was controlled for gender, age and region. A total of N=1004 interviews were collected. The study sought to explore consumer attitudes toward animal wellness in purchasing decisions, evaluating their importance, willingness to pay, and awareness to guide companies in aligning their strategies with ethical expectations and market demands. The survey was conducted using online interviews on the TGM Research Panel. Fieldwork: January 2024.

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