

Consumer Digest

Issue 7: 2025

Welcome to this edition of the Consumer Digest, our periodic newsletter where we provide relevant, informative, and actionable insights around consumer trends. Back-to-school season isn't just about new notebooks and backpacks—it's a total reset for household routines, especially in the kitchen. This issue, we explore how the school year impacts spending, cooking, and what is most important when it comes to lunches!

Smart Starts: Savvy Spending during the School Season

Nearly half of households indicate they plan to spend more on Back-to-School Supplies and Groceries compared to last year- but they are being smart about when, where and how they choose to spend their dollars.



How Does Your Household's Spending Stack Up Versus Last Year?

Back-to-School Shopping

46% Plan to spend MORE

29% Plan to spend the SAME

25% Plan to spend LESS

Grocery Shopping during the School Year

47% Plan to spend MORE

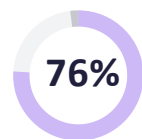
37% Plan to spend the SAME

16% Plan to spend LESS

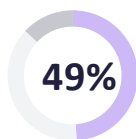
Q: How much is your household planning to spend on each of the following compared to last year? (n=397)



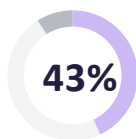
Households plan to do MORE of this when buying School Supplies:



Purchase on Sale



Purchase from Multiple Retailers



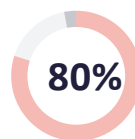
Purchase as Needed

My household will do more of this

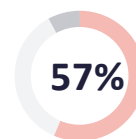
No change/ do not do this

My household will do less of this

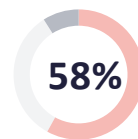
Households plan to do MORE of this when buying Groceries



Purchase on Sale



Purchase in Bulk



Purchase Store Brand

My household will do more of this

Q: Which of the following best describes how your household's back-to-school shopping journey will compare to last year? (n=397)

Q: For each of the following, please select how the back-to-school season will impact your cooking habits and routine: (n=397)

Serving Up Inspiration: Where School-Year Meals Start



60%

Ideas from friends or family

57%

Social media

43%

Meal prep or recipe apps

38%

Getting creative with leftovers or frozen items

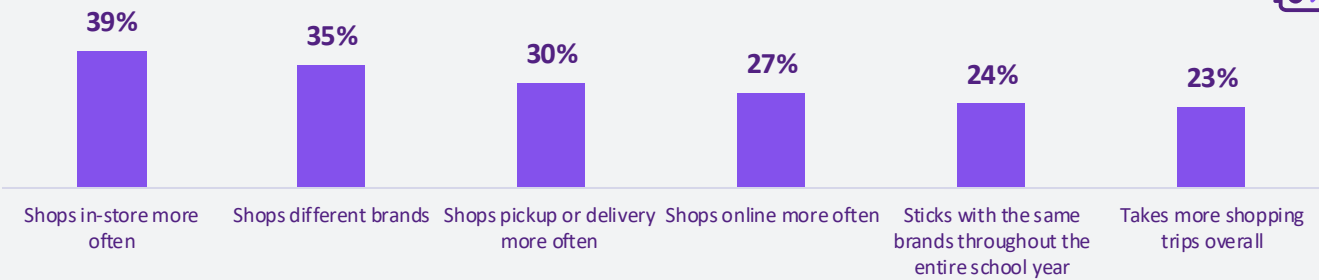
31%

Cooking television or other video content

Q: CQ8:How does your household typically find inspiration for meals or recipes during the school year? (n=397)



Grocery Shopping Shifts During the School Year: A Fresh Opportunity for Brands



Q: Which of the following describe(s) how your household shops for groceries during the school year? When shopping for groceries during the school year my household... (n=397)



Prepare meals ahead of time

67% of households will do more of this



Purchase Fruits & Vegetables

63% of households will do more of this

As the school year begins, **households are cooking more at home and eating out less**. They are also putting a stronger focus on incorporating fresh, healthy ingredients into their diets. Doubling down on fresh produce—**63% are stocking up on fruits and veggies, a big jump from 31% last year**.



Eat Out at Restaurants

62% of households will eat out **less** at Sit-Down Restaurants
55% of households will eat out **less** at Fast Food Restaurants



Q. For each of the following, please select how the back-to-school season will impact your cooking habits and routine: (n=397)

Nearly 1 in 3 Households opt for Homemade Lunches—Here’s What They’re Shopping For!



TOP PRIORITIES FOR LUNCHBOX SHOPPING

- 58% Presence of a sale or promotion
- 56% Items are fresh/not processed
- 53% Items balance out for a “full meal”
- 53% Items require minimal prep for the one packing the lunch
- 52% Easy to open packaging
- 50% Flavors/Varieties available

Q. How important are each of the following when shopping for school lunch items? (n=397)
T2B – Top-2 Box % on 7-point agreement scale)

TOP LUNCHBOX ITEMS

-  Chips/Pretzels
-  Cookies/Dessert
-  Fresh Fruits
-  Juice Boxes
-  Homemade Sandwiches
-  Crackers

Q.. What items do you typically pack in a lunch box? (n=397)



Q. How do your children typically eat lunch during the school year? During the school year, my children eat... (n=397)

This publication is developed by the same research and insights experts who provide consultation to help grow your business.



STRATUM

Powered by cutting-edge science, we use 1st-party retail data from over 62 million U.S. HHs to fuel a more customer-centric journey.

84.51° Stratum combines rich customer behavior insights with retail performance measures to deliver science-powered insights that drive results.

84.51° Consumer Research

We know that reliable insights start with trustworthy data. That's why we've always prioritized quality—working exclusively with verified households (leveraging double-verified behavioral sample) to ensure accuracy and integrity at every step.

These practices aren't new to us—they're just part of how we operate. It's our way of making sure the insights you rely on are grounded in reality, not noise.

If you ever want to learn more about how we protect data integrity, we're always happy to share.

Dig deeper with 84.51° Consumer Research & Customer Journeys

84.51° Consumer Research

- Understand perceptions of retailers and the reasons for these perceptions for back-to-school shopping to collaborate on retailer strategies for 2026.
- Learn which back to school campaigns resonated and the reasons why they resonated to develop stronger creative in 2026.
- Research unmet needs and pain points to drive innovation for the 2026 back to school season.



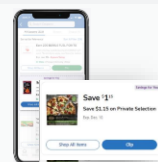
Customer Journey

- Dive into the Customer to **understand the complete path a shopper takes** from discovery and purchase to exploring and exiting an item or category.
- Drive **new household acquisition** by understanding how they enter a product group through pricing, promotions, modality and multiplicity.
- Discover **how households shift their behavior** in other product groups after exiting one.
-and more!

Connect with us at Insights@8451.com

Deliver on custom objectives through Targeted Digital Coupons

Leverage Targeted Digital Coupons to create custom, tailored digital-only offers that utilize 84.51° personalization sciences to deliver your campaign specific objectives.



- Meet households where they are during the school year**, drive trial of new products, recapture lapsed households and re-engage repeat purchases.
- Recommended:** Campaign length 4-6 weeks, with a 2-week post-period redemption window.
- Drive stronger sales uplift with media amplification** and 84.51° Collaborative Cloud: 6.64x aROAS, 0.94x iROAS, +18.31% Sales uplift.

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Inspire School Year Shopping with Pinterest

Pinterest is where shoppers go to **plan** their meals throughout the school year. **Activate on Pinterest** to reach engaged, high-intent users as they **search, save, and shop** for dinner, lunch and new brands!



Moments are made on Pinterest.

- Pinterest continues to be a go-to **destination for users seeking recipe inspiration year-round**. On average, the platform sees over **35 million recipe-related searches every month**, reflecting consistent interest in meal planning and culinary discovery.
- When it comes to grocery shopping behavior, discovery plays a key role: **8 in 10** users say that **Pinterest influences their grocery decisions** and they turn to the platform on a **weekly basis to explore and try new recipes**.

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Reach relevant shoppers through Product Listing Ads

Product Listing Ads are a pay-per-click solution where brands can set a bid price to **boost individual products across highly trafficked placements in search results** and other customized carousels across Kroger.com and mobile app.



- Basket Builder:** Get your lunch-box items in the basket via personalized, science-driven carousels across the site & app.
- Search & Browse:** Boost products when users are actively shopping for lunch-box categories and adding products to their cart.
- Savings:** Re-engage past buyers or attract savings-oriented households with sales or digital coupons.

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