

Text draft

Checking each ingredient in the small, difficult to read text on the back of food products is extremely inconvenient for anyone, but especially so for people with difficulty reading, such as those with dyslexia, poor vision, or unfamiliarity with the language. However, it is a necessity for many, as dietary restrictions become more common around the world. This is demonstrated in the 2022 Food and Health Survey, where 52% of participants said they were following a specific diet or eating pattern, much more than the 39% found in 2021. [Ref 1]. This inconvenience is compounded by how the existing UK regulations aren't sufficient in many cases. Even though current regulation requires certain common allergens being formatted in a manner that emphasizes their presence in the ingredients list, there are some kinds of dietary restrictions that can't rely on this system to highlight unacceptable ingredients, or to point out a lack of them. An example of this is how, currently, there is no indication on the packaging of the Nature Valley Protein Peanut & Chocolate Cereal Bar as to whether the product is vegetarian, even though the Nature Valley website explicitly lists its suitability to vegetarians, describing it as a benefit of the product. [Ref 11]. Though some would scoff at this and say that the product is clearly vegetarian from common sense, there are some protein bars that use egg whites [Ref needed], so the product being non-vegetarian is plausible.

In 2021, the census conducted the Office for National Statistics showed a rise in people who describe themselves as Muslim or Hindu in the UK [Ref 6]. Considering both religions impose dietary restrictions on their followers, this is a strong indication of a rise dietary restrictions in the UK. Lacto-vegetarianism, a diet that includes milk-based foods but excludes meat and eggs, is popular among Hindus [Ref 7], and some Hindus, particularly those following the Vaishnav tradition, avoid eating onions and garlic, either completely, or during certain periods [Ref 8]. One of the most well know dietary restrictions is that among non-vegetarian Hindus, where the vast majority avoid the consumption of beef, due to the importance of cows in Hindu beliefs. Islamic dietary laws vary greatly, however they generally require meat to be sourced from animals slaughtered in a specific way, and totally forbid the consumption of intoxicants and pork. For some Muslims, this means they cannot consume some kinds of vinegar or foods containing them, as vinegar is produced by the conversion of alcohol to acetic acid, resulting in trace amounts of alcohol [Ref 9]. A 2016 paper found a mean ethanol content of 2.64g/L in white wine vinegar, translating to about 0.25% ABV [Ref 10]. Another thing to consider is that some Muslims are permitted to eat all forms of seafood, while others must avoid crustaceans or eels, or are limited to non-poisonous fish.

All this shows that in the UK, a growing number of people, must deal with the inconvenience of checking each item in the ingredients list of each product they buy, without the help of the ingredients that they are looking to avoid being formatted in a manner that emphasizes their presence, such as onion or garlic. However, even reading all the ingredients is not always enough. For example, not many people know that the vitamin D3 in breakfast cereals often comes from lanolin, an ingredient that comes from sheep's wool, which is non-vegan [Ref needed, difficult to find good sources], or that whey powder is derived from animal-derived rennet during the cheese making process, so it is also non-vegan. These all greatly increase the chance of someone inadvertently consuming something that their dietary restrictions don't allow.

The meteoric rise in people partaking in the annual month-long temporary veganism challenge know as "Veganuary" has risen enormously since its inception in 2014, rising from a little more than 1000 people participating in 2015 to over 600,000 in 2022 [Ref 3]. Although the event is said to have signups from nearly every country, it originated in the UK, founded by Jane Land and Matthew Glover in 2014 [Ref 5]. Furthermore, according to Google Trends, from January 1st 2004 to August 31st 2023, in terms of interest by region on the topic of Veganism, the UK was the 3rd highest rated, with a score of 92 [Ref 4]. This implies that there is a large market for products aimed at vegans in the UK.

All this implies a large local population who experience this very time-consuming inconvenience, granting us a large pool of potential stakeholders, since anyone with any kind of dietary restriction could be a stakeholder.

References

- Some of these references are copied from Wikipedia, and we should check they are reliable before using them.
- The references are out of order in the report due to rearrangement of ideas.

- Consistent reference format needed.

Ref 1:

[https://foodinsight.org/2022-food-and-health-survey-results-a-focus-on-eating-patterns/#:~:text=In%202022%2C%2052%25%20of%20Food,calorie%2Dcounting%20\(13%25\).](https://foodinsight.org/2022-food-and-health-survey-results-a-focus-on-eating-patterns/#:~:text=In%202022%2C%2052%25%20of%20Food,calorie%2Dcounting%20(13%25).)

DIETS AND EATING PATTERNS

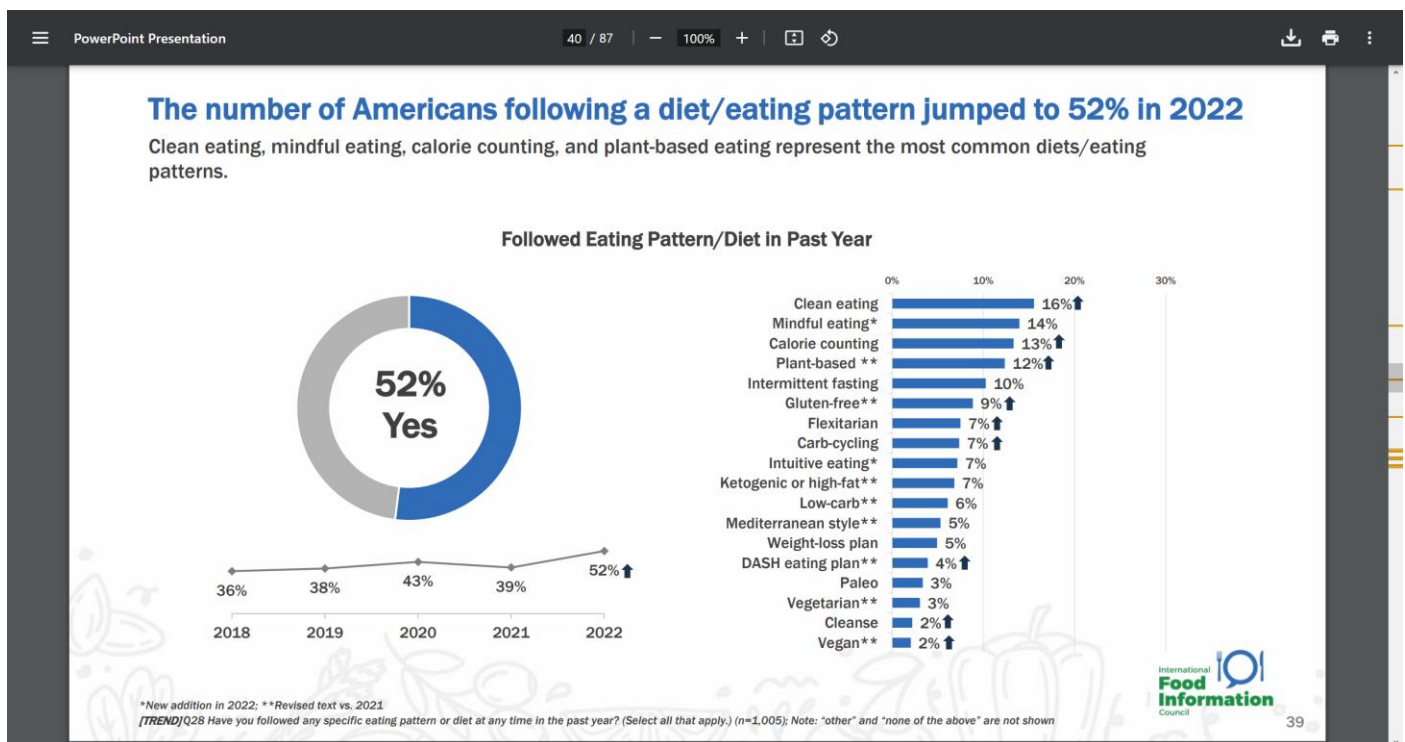
In 2022, 52% of Food and Health Survey participants reported following a specific **diet** or eating pattern, a sharp uptick from 39% in 2021. Of those who followed an eating pattern or diet, the most popular choices were **clean eating** (16%), mindful eating (14%), and calorie-counting (13%).

Overall, more consumers in younger age brackets (those ages 18–49) are following specific diets and eating patterns in 2022 (74%) than in 2021 (52%). More parents with kids under 18 also reported following a diet or eating pattern in 2022 (70%) versus 2021 (53%). Motivations for adopting a diet or eating pattern remain stable as in previous years, with wanting to protect long-term health and prevent future health conditions (35%) and wanting to lose weight (34%) as the top choices.

Maybe split this into 2 references, one for 2021, one for 2022.

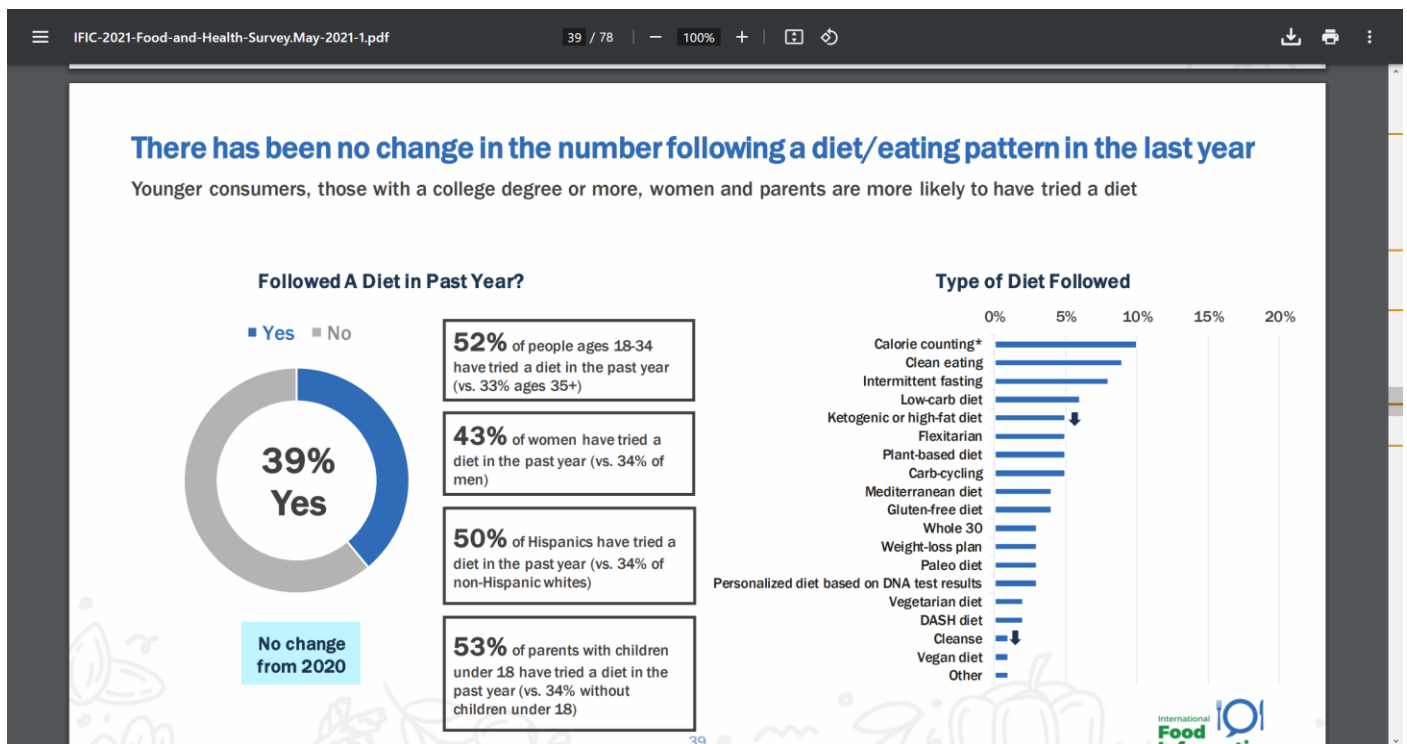
2022

<https://foodinsight.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/IFIC-2022-Food-and-Health-Survey-Report-May-2022.pdf>



2021

<https://foodinsight.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/IFIC-2021-Food-and-Health-Survey-May-2021-1.pdf>



Ref 2

[Removed]

Ref 3

The Guardian, Veganuary. (2022). *Number of people who signed up for Veganuary worldwide in 2022*. Statista.. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1266145/number-of-people-participating-in-veganuary-worldwide/>

Ref 4

https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?date=2004-01-01%202023-08-31&q=%2Fm%2F07_hy

Ref 5

["Why I started the Veganuary movement"](#). BBC News. 3 January 2020.

Ref 6

Religion, England and Wales: Census 2021 – Office for National Statistics

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/religion/bulletins/religionenglandandwales/census2021#:~:text=There%20were%20increases%20in%20the,%2C%201.5%25%20in%202011>

Ref 7

Paul Insel (2013), *Discovering Nutrition*, Jones & Bartlett Publishers, ISBN 978-1284021165, page 231

Ref 8

J. Gordon Melton (2011). *Religious Celebrations: L-Z*. ABC-CLIO. pp. 172–173. ISBN 978-1-59884-205-0.

Ref 9

<https://www.drgourmet.com/askdrgourmet/cooking/vinegar-alcohol.shtml>

Ref 10

"Estimates of Ethanol Exposure in Children from Food not Labeled as Alcohol-Containing" – *Journal of Analytical Toxicology* 2016.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5421578/>

Ref 11

<https://www.naturevalley.co.uk/product/protein-peanut-chocolate/#:~:text=No%20colours%20or%20preservatives,Suitable%20for%20vegetarians>