FOOD ACCESS AND INSECURITY DURING COVID-19- EVIDENCE FROM FRANCE

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- RESULTS

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GLOBAL TASK FORCE

This project includes the following colleagues. We thank them for providing feedback on the data collection instrument, and for joining this global effort to assess food access and food insecurity during the COVID-19 crisis :

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FOOD ACCESS AND INSECURITY DURING COVID-19

Overview

Do individuals have access to food during the current COVID-19 crisis? The current crisis provides a unique (albeit unfortunate) circumstances to investigate how risk, uncertainty, and preparedness of individuals and communities impact food access. The purpose of this study is to investigate how the current COVID-19 pandemic is impacting food access and food security. Furthermore, this study also highlights factors that will reassure consumers of the uncertainty during the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak. Our study will contribute to an understanding of these issues in the midst of such an event to help communities respond to food access needs, and also to more reliably assess revival of consumer demand post this crisis.

Approach and Methods

The survey instrument for this study was developed by referencing past literature. The following is a summary of the relevant constructs that were operationalized to in the survey instrument: consumer confidence (Jonge et al., 2010; Fetzer et al., 2020), risk perceptions (Seo et al., 2015), and measures of switching intentions (Antón, Camarero, & Carrero, 2007). Questions that inquired about individuals' food access and insecurity were all adapted using the US Association of International Development's (USAID) Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS) for Measurement of Food Access (Coates, Swindale, & Bilinsky, 2007). The reliability of HFIAS has been validated globally (Knueppel, Demment, & Kaiser, 2010) and therefore, it provided a reliable approach to measure food insecurity during the COVID-19 crisis.

Once the survey instrument was developed, it was reviewed by a task force of international researchers. A list of these colleagues is presented earlier in this report. Feedback from the Task Force was incorporated into the survey. Survey was then pilot tested. Data for this report was collected between April 27 – May 11th 2020, resulting in n=259 usable observations. Results presented in this report is a descriptive analysis of the responses.

Call for Action

This study has been launched as a global effort to assess the level of food access and security during the crisis so as to provide relevant information for policy makers and local action groups. We understand the data collected so far is not entirely representative of even the French population, let alone to in anyway provide generalizable findings for other nations. As a consequence, we are inviting other colleagues to join this effort to add to this database. For further details on how to participate in this effort and join the global Task Force, please contact Amit Sharma at aus22@psu.edu . Your contribution to the database will result in several potential outcomes, including separate country, regional, and city level reports on this crucial topic of public and community importance.

MAIN FINDINGS AND HIGHLIGHTS

(French population, 259 respondents, confinement period related to the COVID-19 epidemic)

- The majority of respondents (53%) went to the supermarket (or grocery store) "once" a week, and only 14% went "more than three times". These frequencies are comparable to the situation in the United States[1] (55% and 12% respectively).
- Nearly 70% of respondents have never purchased from grocery online, compared to 50% in the US.
- Nearly 70% of respondents have never ordered food from restaurants, and 20% have ordered food once a week, compared to 32% and 32% in the US, respectively.

➔ **These results indicate that individuals went preferentially to shops to stock up while preferring a limited number of outings.**

- Respondents rated the response of food industry (supermarkets, grocery stores, restaurants) to making food accessible as "satisfactory" (53%) or "very satisfactory" (17%), respectively 43% and 15% in the United States.
- 97% of respondents said they never had to eat fewer meals per day (79% in the United States).
- No food products were unavailable for 72% of respondents, while 12% said they had difficulty obtaining starchy foods.

➔ **These results indicate that individuals did not encounter any major difficulties in buying and consuming their usual products.**

- 86% of respondents agreed that they washed their hands more frequently during confinement.
- 53% of respondents reported cleaning and sanitizing risk surfaces (dining table, handles) much more often than before (respectively 82% and 84% in the United States).

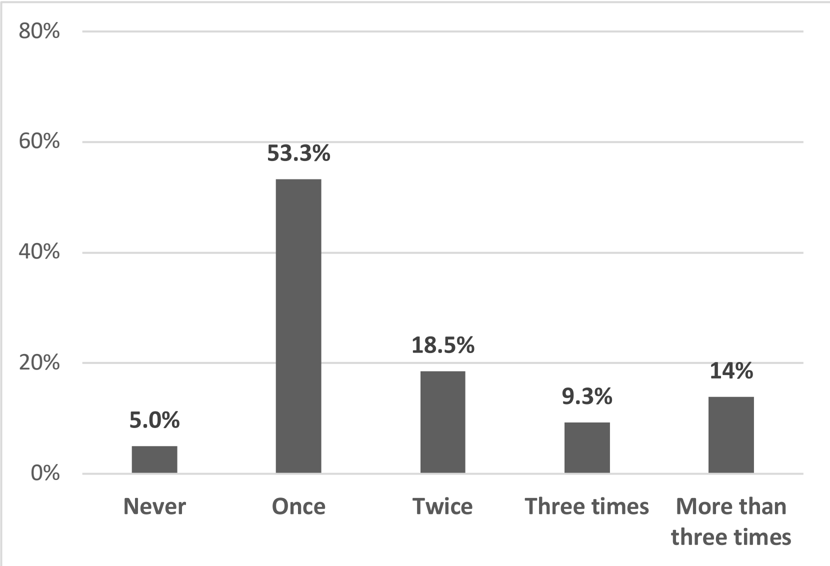
➔ **These results indicate that individuals have adapted their hygiene practices.**

[1] see Sharma *et al.* (2020). *Food Access and Insecurity During COVID-19: Evidence from US During April and May 2020*. ScholarSphere. https://doi.org/10.26207/EZX7-3K02

DESCRIPTIVE RESULTS

Section 1 : Food Accessibility Away From Home

Frequency of visiting grocery store to purchase food for yourself or your family per week during the COVID-19 crisis (N=259)

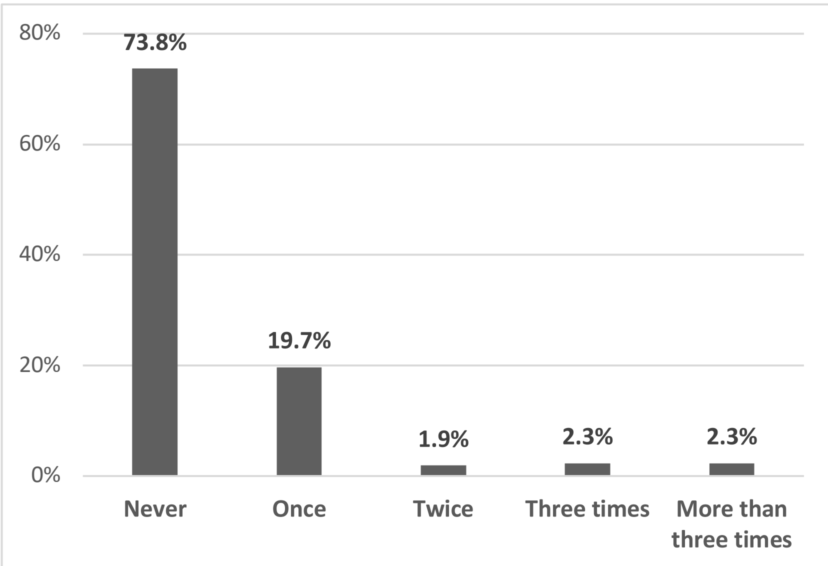


Over 50% of respondents said they visited grocery stores "Once", 18,5% visited them "Twice" and 14%, "more than three times".

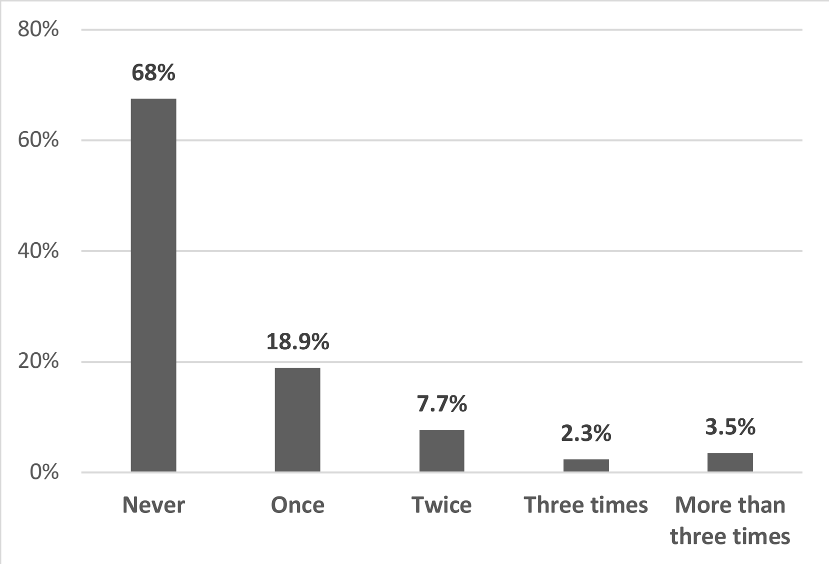
Only 5% said they never visited grocery stores.

Frequency of purchasing grocery online for yourself or your family per week during the COVID-19 crisis (N=313)

More than 70% of respondents never purchased food from grocery store online, suggesting that most of the sample went to grocery stores to buy food for the household.



Frequency of ordery food from restaurants for yourself or your family per week during the COVID-19 crisis (N=259)



Almost 70% of respondents never ordered food from restaurants.
Almost 20% ordered once a week.
Respondents obtained food in restaurants less frequently than purchasing food from grocery stores.

Section 2 : Food Security From Other Sources

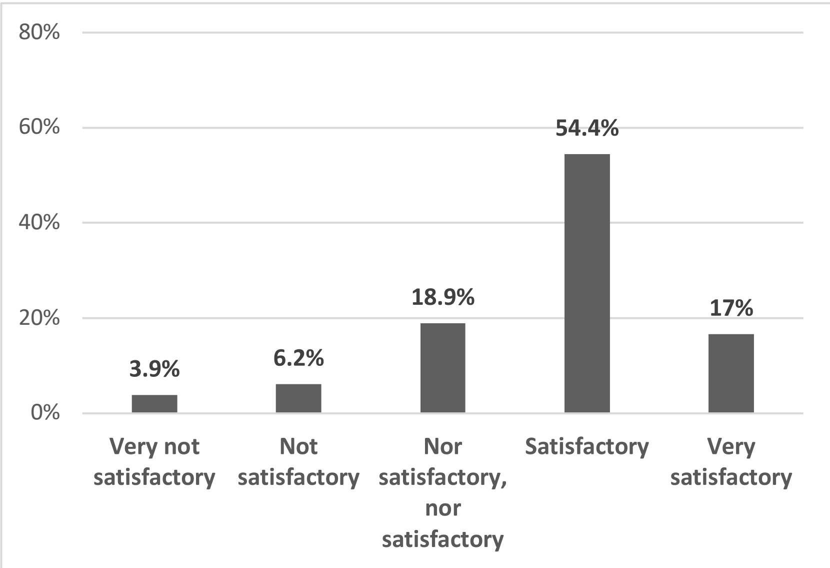
Access to free (donated) food from any of the following (N=256)

Sources of free (donated) food	Frequency en %
No need	98 %
Meals from family	1,6%
Food bank	0,4%
Free meals from restaurants	0%
Free meals from places of religion	0%
Meals from friends	0%

Only 2% of respondents needed food donations, either meals prepared by the family or from food banks.

Section 3 : Trust in Food Industry

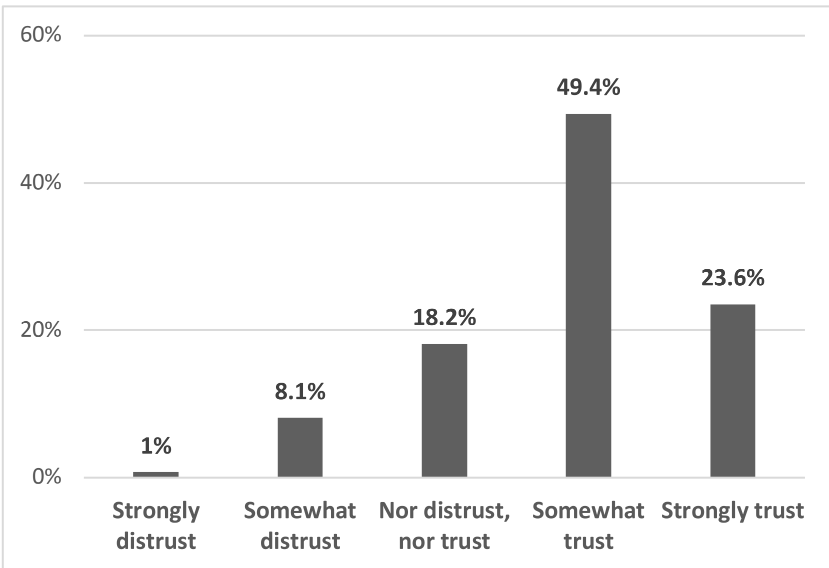
Response of food industry (such as grocery, retails and restaurants) to make food accessible for its consumers during the coronavirus outbreak is … (N=259)



The majority of respondents rated the response of professionals as "satisfactory" to "very satisfactory".
The results show that respondents assessed the response from the food sector positively.

Level of trust that the food industry (such as grocery, retails and restaurant) will take care of its citizens' food access needs during the coronavirus outbreak (N=259)

The majority of respondents indicated that they "somewhat trusted" (49.4%) or "very trusted" (23.6%) the professionals.



Section 4 : Preparedness to Ensure Food Access

Ways in which (you) could have been better prepared to make sure you (and your family) have better access to food during the coronavirus (N=259)

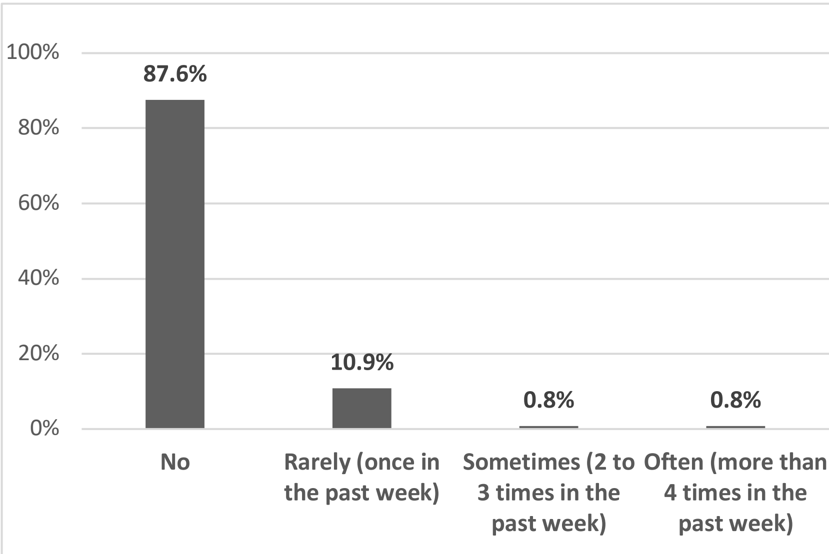
Way to have better access to food during COVID-19	Frequency
I did not feel the need to be better prepared	57,1%
I need to know more about food safety when bringing food from grocery stores and restaurants.	26,3%
I need to know how much quantity of food is appropriate for us to survive during such a crisis.	18,5%
I need to know more about how much I spend on food per week.	14,7%
I need to know all that is needed in a well-stocked pantry.	10,4%
I need to know how to better cook from scratch.	9,7%
I need to better stock my kitchen with appropriate cooking ustensils and appliances.	5,8%
Others	3,8%

More than half of the respondents did not feel the need to be better prepared to ensure access to food during confinement.
One quarter of the sample would have liked to "learn more about food hygiene and safety" when food is brought home.

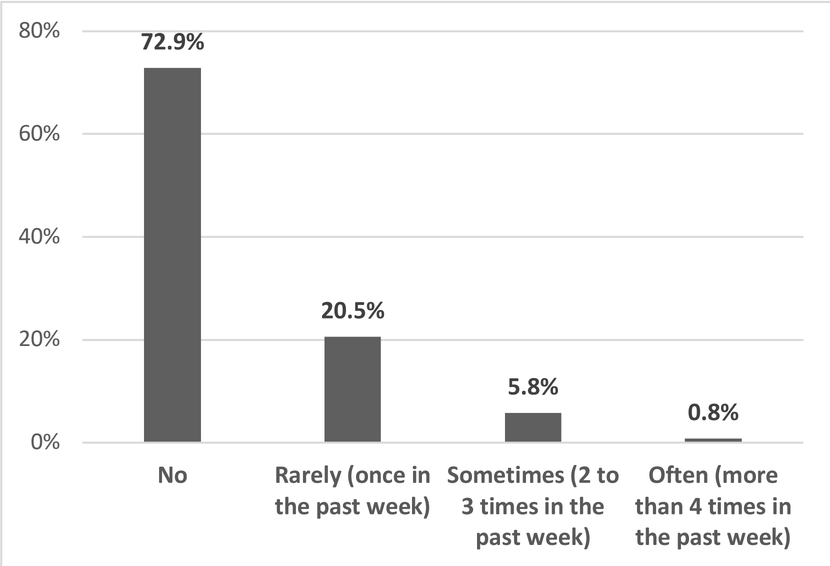
Worried that (your) household would not have enough food (N=258)

The majority of respondents indicated that they were not concerned that the household would run out of food (87.5%).

11% said they "rarely" worried this phenomenon.

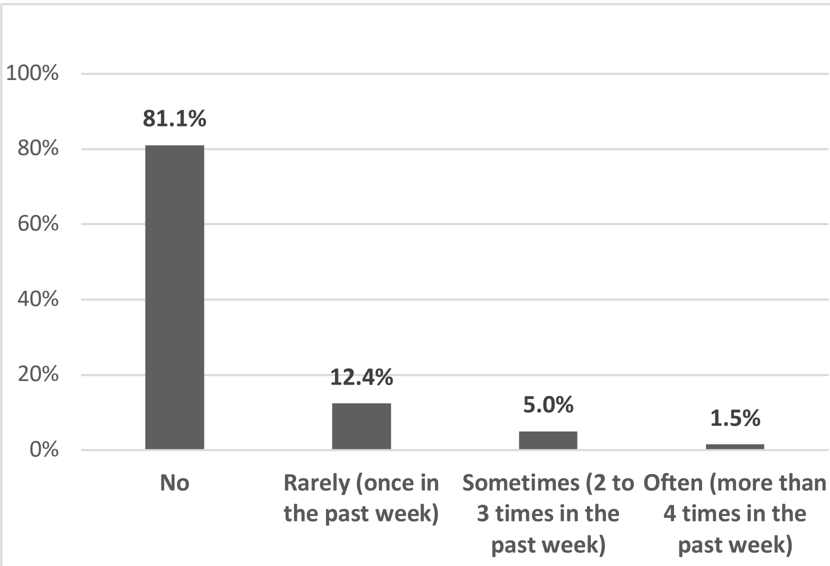


(You or any) household member unable to eat the kinds of foods you preferred (N=258)



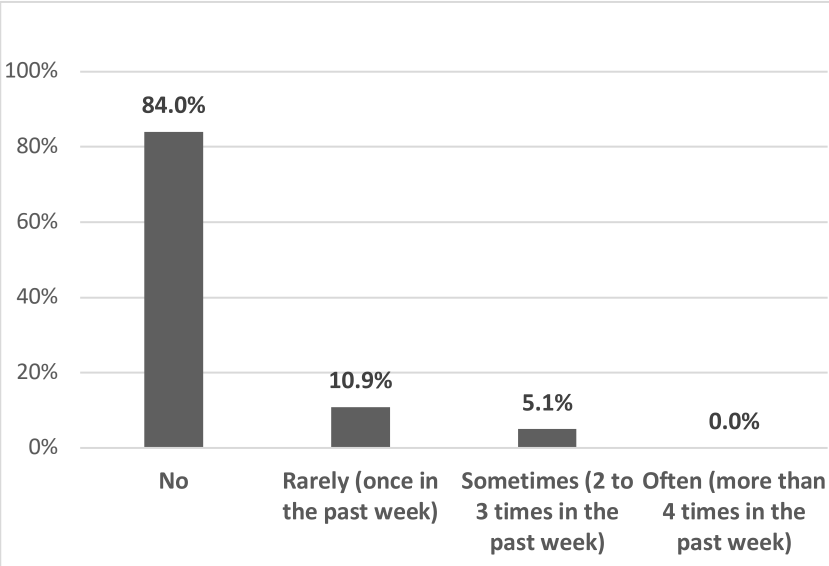
The vast majority of the sample reported being able to access the food they preferred (73%), while 25% of the sample reported that they "rarely" or "sometimes" could not eat the food they preferred.

(You or any) household member have to eat a limited variety of foods (N=259)



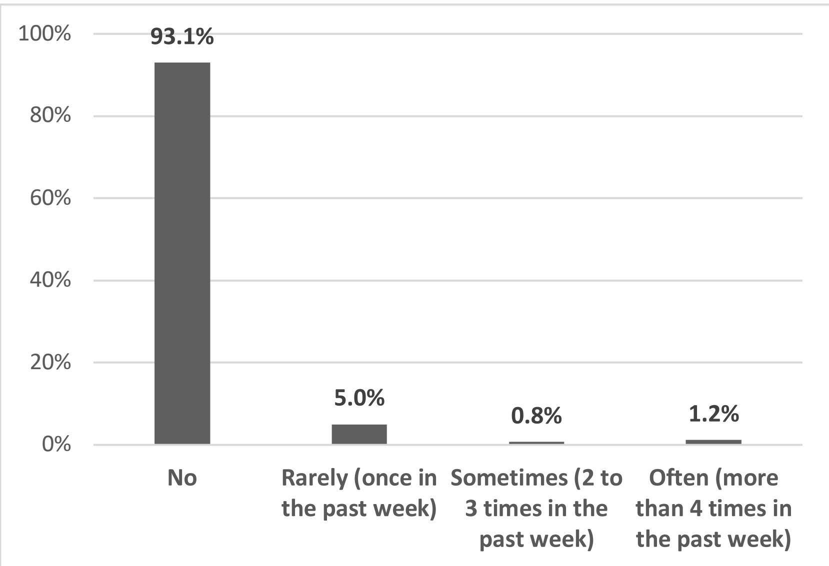
Consistent with the results of the last question, 80% of the sample indicated that they did not have to consume a limited variety of foods. About 20% of the sample said that they "rarely" and "sometimes" had to eat a limited variety of foods.

(You or any) household member have to eat some foods that you really did not want to eat (N=257)



The vast majority of the sample indicated that they did not have to eat food they did not want to eat (85%).
In addition, 15% of respondents indicated that they "rarely" and "sometimes" had to eat foods they did not want to eat.

(You or any) household member have to eat a smaller meal than you felt you needed (N=259)

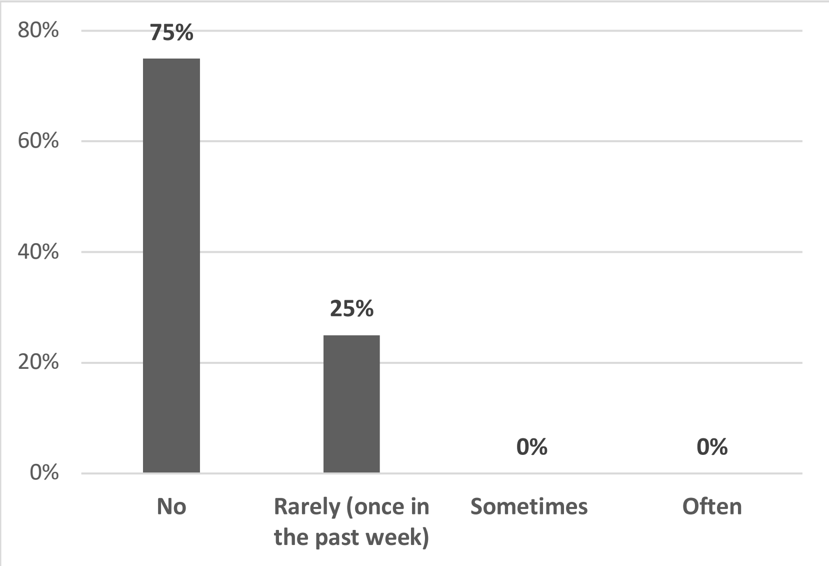


Less than 10% of the sample indicated that they had to eat a smaller meal than they needed.

The remaining respondents did not have to do so.

Section 5 : Impact of Food Access & Insecurity

Unable to find special food items for restricted diet due to health reasons (gluten intolerance, food sensitivity, diabetes, hypertension) (N=16)

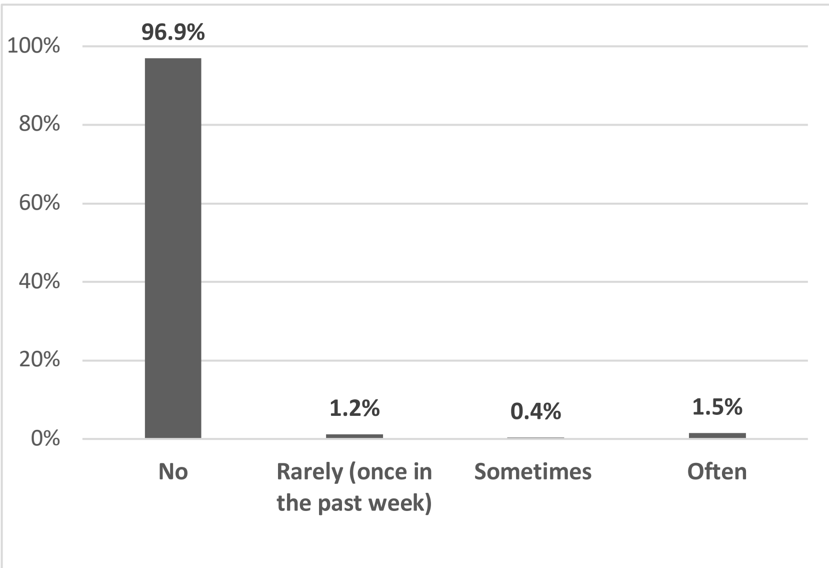


Among respondents with a restricted diet 75% were able to find specific foods, while 25% were "rarely" unable to do so.

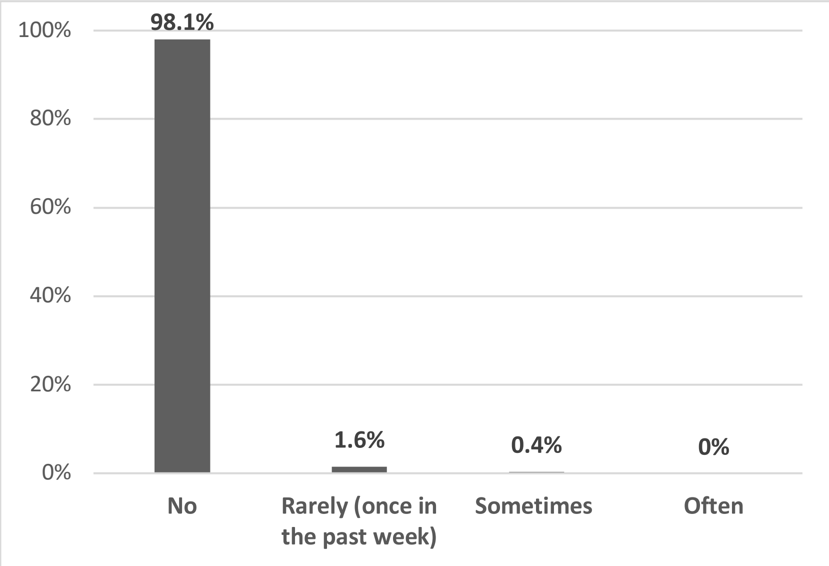
(You or any) household member had to eat fewer meals in a day (N=259)

Almost the entire sample indicated that they do not have to eat fewer meals per day.

3% reported having 'rarely', 'sometimes' or 'often' forced to do so.



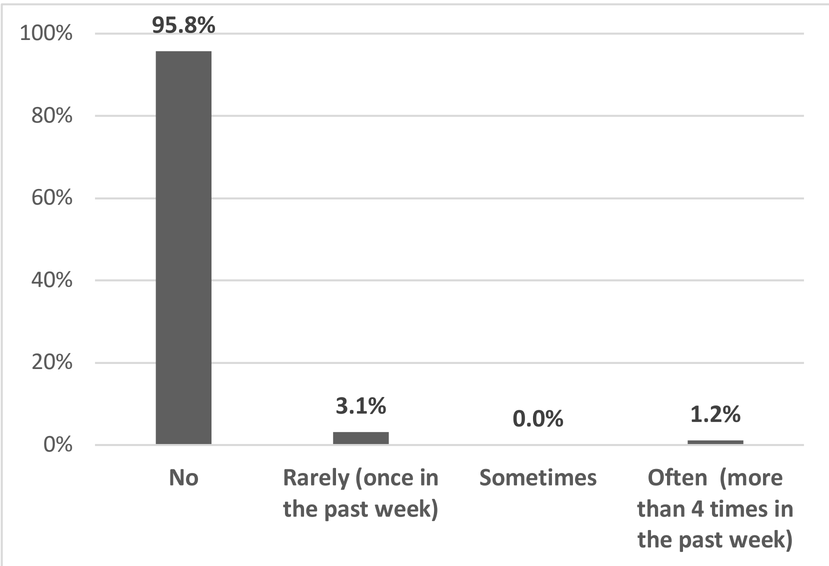
Ever a situation with no food to eat of any kind in your household (N=258)



Similarly, the entire sample reported having nothing to eat in the household, except for less than 2% who "rarely" or "sometimes" had nothing to eat in the household.

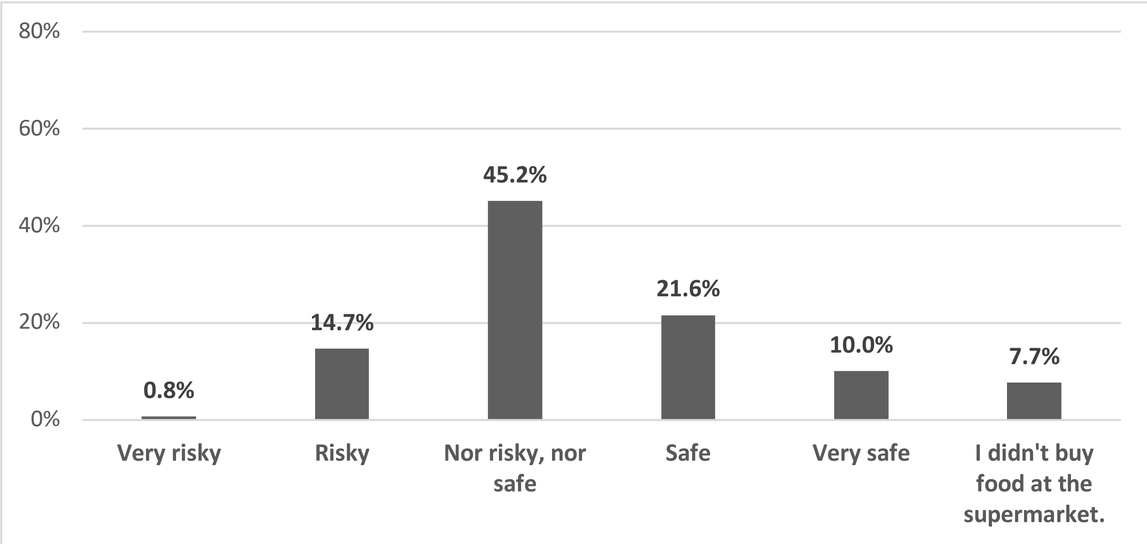
You (or a member of your household) may have fallen asleep at night hungry (N=259)

Similarly, almost the entire sample indicated that they did not fall asleep while hungry, with the exception of 3% who "rarely" fell asleep while hungry.



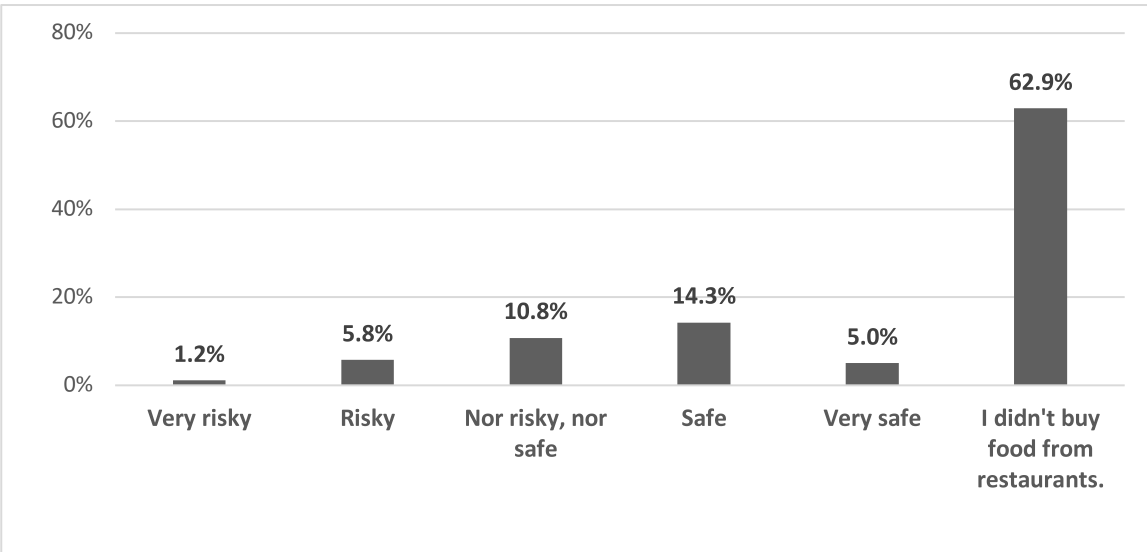
Section 6 : Financial Well-Being and Food Access

Safety of food purchased from grocery stores in the past week (N=259)



The results show that about one-third of respondents rated food purchased from grocery stores as "very safe" and "safe". About 15% described food purchased in grocery stores as "risky" and "very risky". Almost half could not position themselves.

Safety of food purchased from restaurants in the past week (N=259)



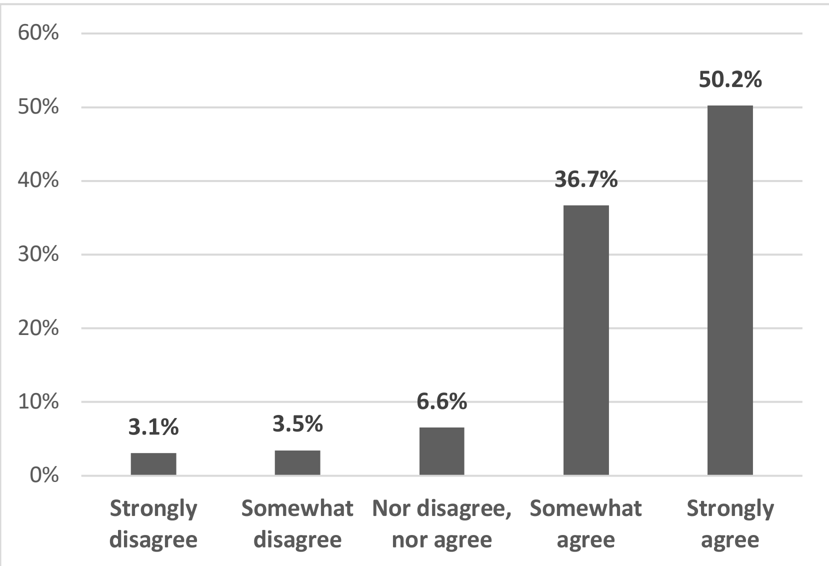
Of the 37% of respondents who bought food from restaurants "the week before", half considered it "(very) safe" and only 7% considered it "(very) risky".

Preference of ways to purchase food from restaurants (N=313)

Moyens	Fréquences en %
Drive-thru	46,7%
Delivery by the restaurant	30,1%
Delivery by another service (Deliveroo, Uber Eats, Just Eat...)	18,2%
Takeout/Carryout	49,4%
None	21,2%

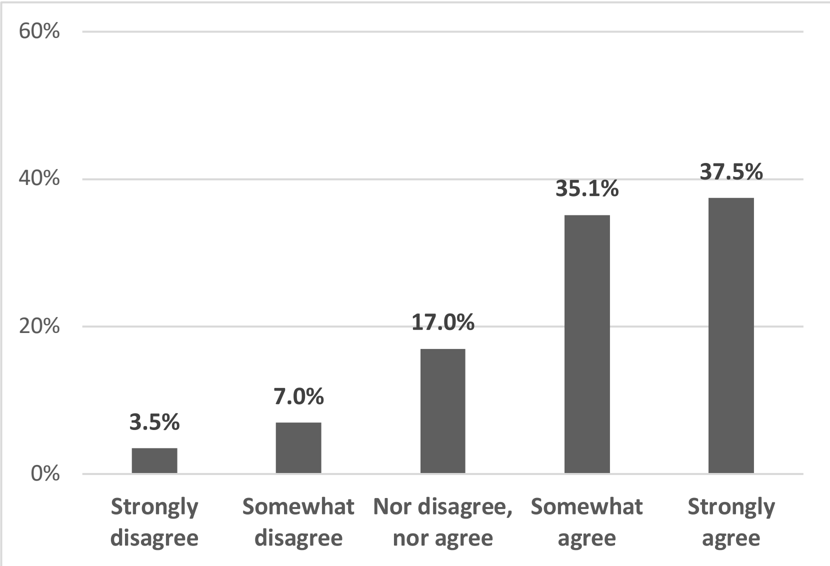
The results showed that take-out (49.4%), drive-thru (46.7%), and restaurant delivery (30%) were the preferred ways for respondents to buy food in restaurants during the crisis.

"I washed my hands much more frequently than I used to." (N=259)



Approximately 85% of respondents "strongly agreed" and "somewhat agreed" that they washed their hands more frequently during the COVID19 crisis..

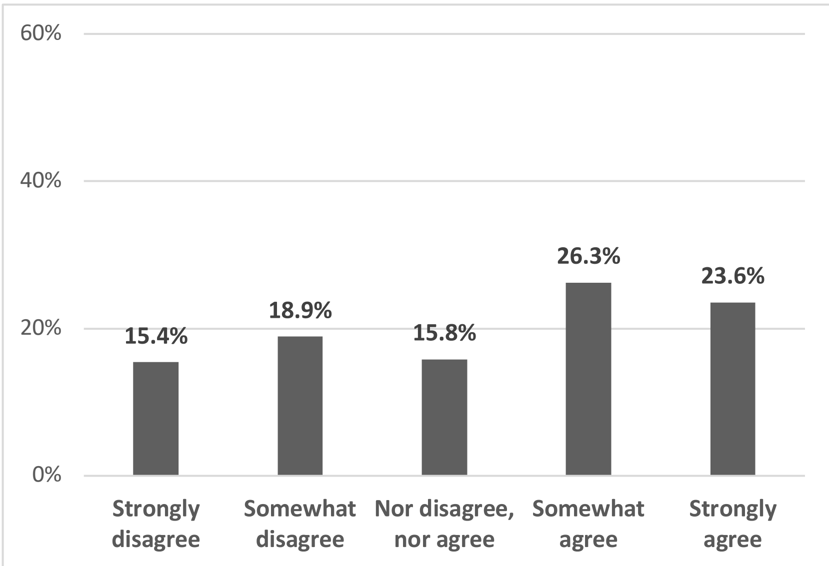
“When I washed my hands, I rubbed my hands with soap for a much longer time than I used to.” (N=259)



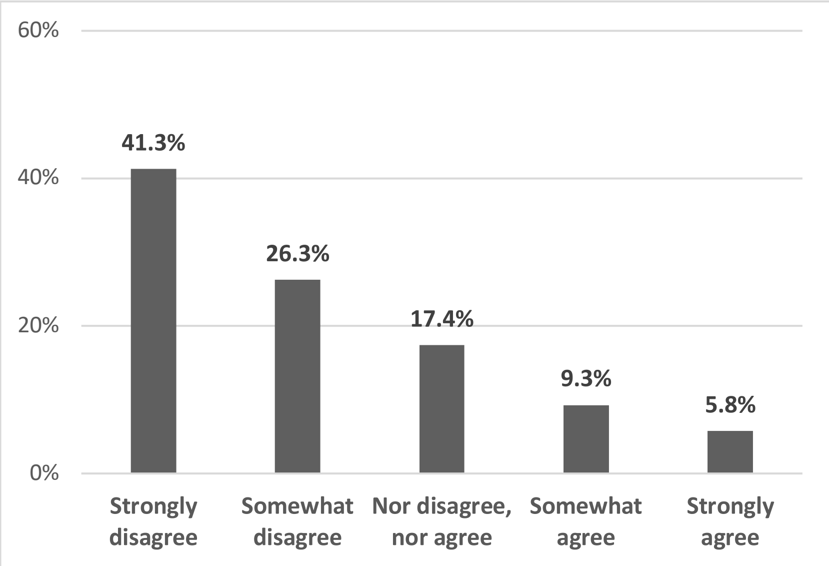
Consistent with the results of the last question, more than 70% of respondents "strongly agreed" and "agreed" with having rubbed their hands with soap for a longer period of time.

“I cleaned and sanitized the high-touch surfaces (e.g., doorknob, countertop, and diner table) much more frequently than I used to.” (N=259)

As another major approach to preventing virus infection, cleaning and sanitizing of risk surfaces was perceived differently by respondents. Results showed that more than half of the respondents "strongly agreed" or "somewhat agreed" that they cleaned and sanitized high-contact surfaces more frequently. But a third disagreed.



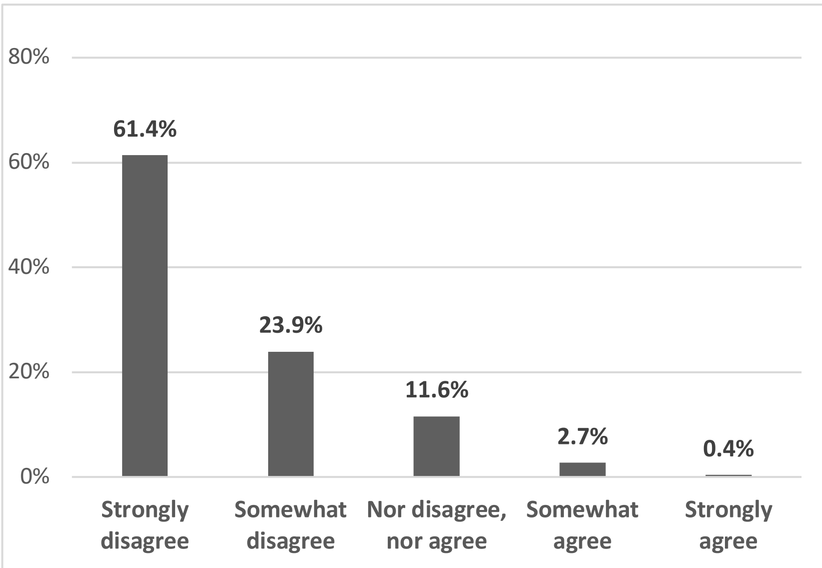
"I checked the expiration date written on the food packages much more frequently than I used to." (N=259)



Compared to handwashing, far fewer respondents paid attention to food expiration dates: about 2/3 of the sample said they did not check expiration dates much more often than before.

I check the temperature of my refrigerator much more frequently than I used to. (N=259)

The majority of respondents (61%) said they "strongly disagree" with checking the temperature of their refrigerator much more often.



Sample Demographic (N=259)

Age	Frequency	Education	Frequency
18-25 yo	54,4%	11 to 12 years	4%
26-35 yo	4,6%	12 years	14%
36-45 yo	11,6%	14 to 15 years	39%
46-55 yo	14,7%	17 to 20 years	42%
More than 55	14,7%		

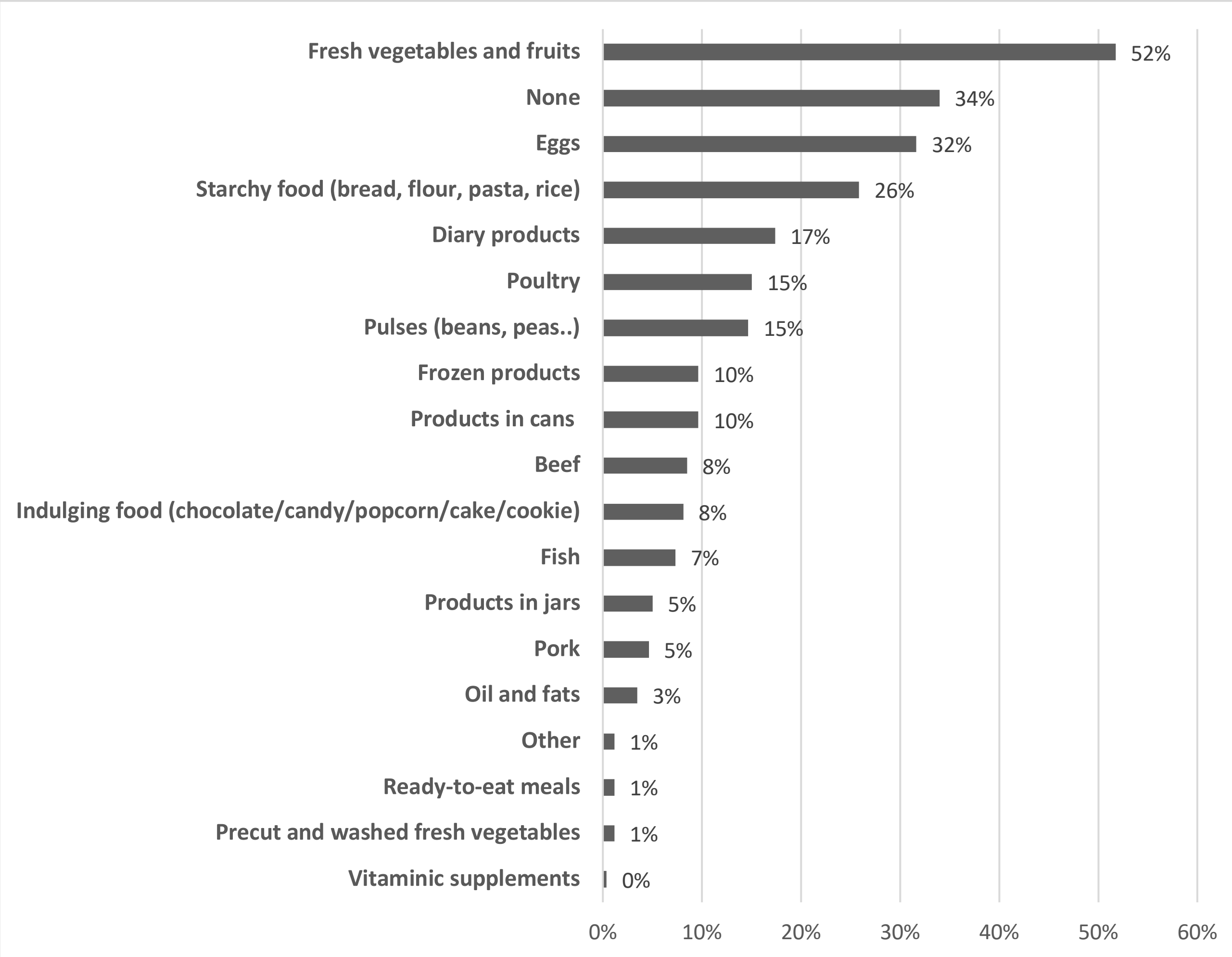
Number of adults	Frequency	Number of children	Frequency
1	13%	0	73%
2	36%	1	15%
3	27%	2	9%
4	15%	3	2%
5	6%	4	0%
6 or more	2%	5	0%
		6 ou plus	1%

Gender	Frequency	Marital status	Frequency
Female	72%	Married/Co-habitating	44%
Male	28%	Single/Divorced	56%

Santé	Frequency
Bad	0%
Passable	5%
Good	48%
Excellent	47%

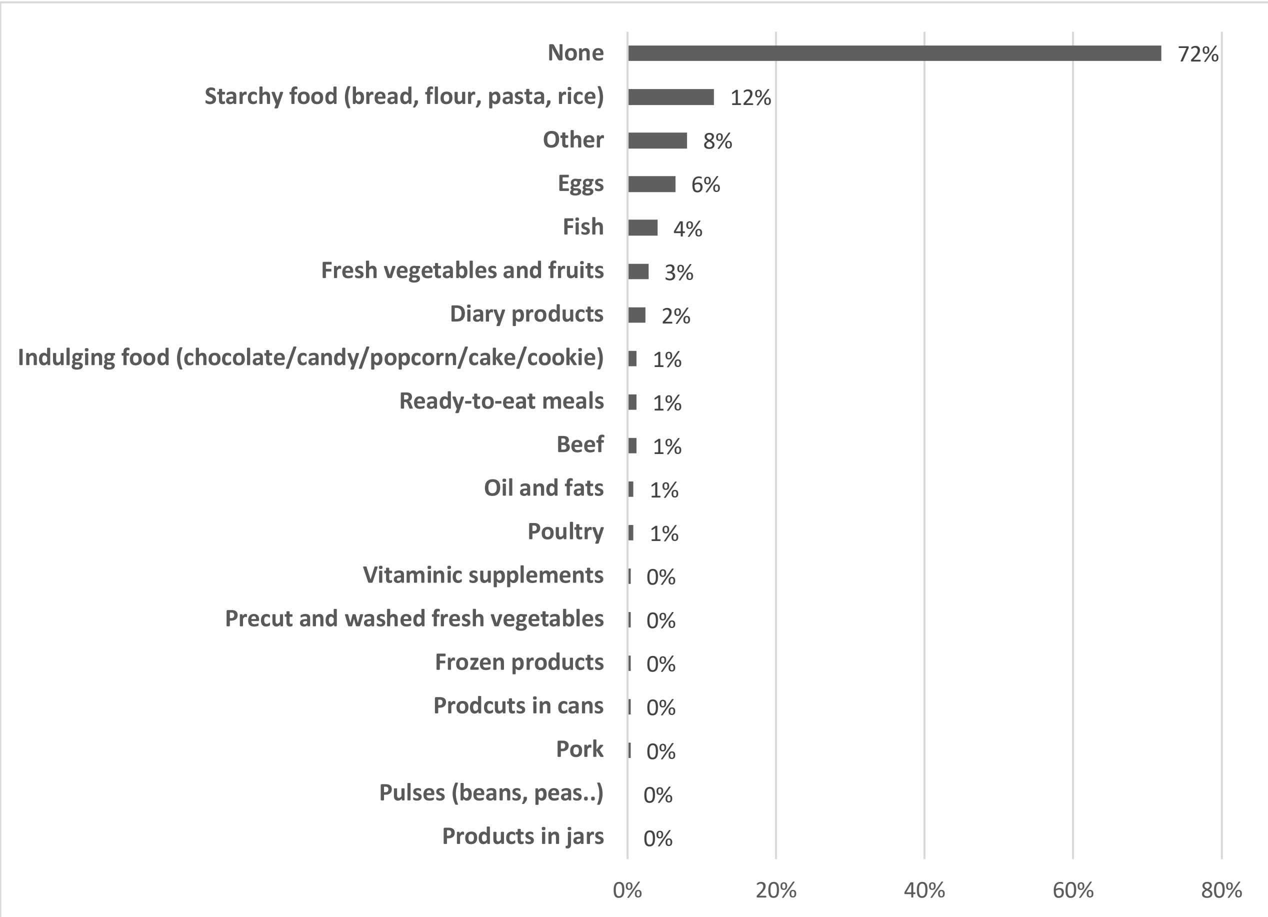
Section 7 : Food consumption

What food items are you planning to stock up more in the next two weeks? (N=259)



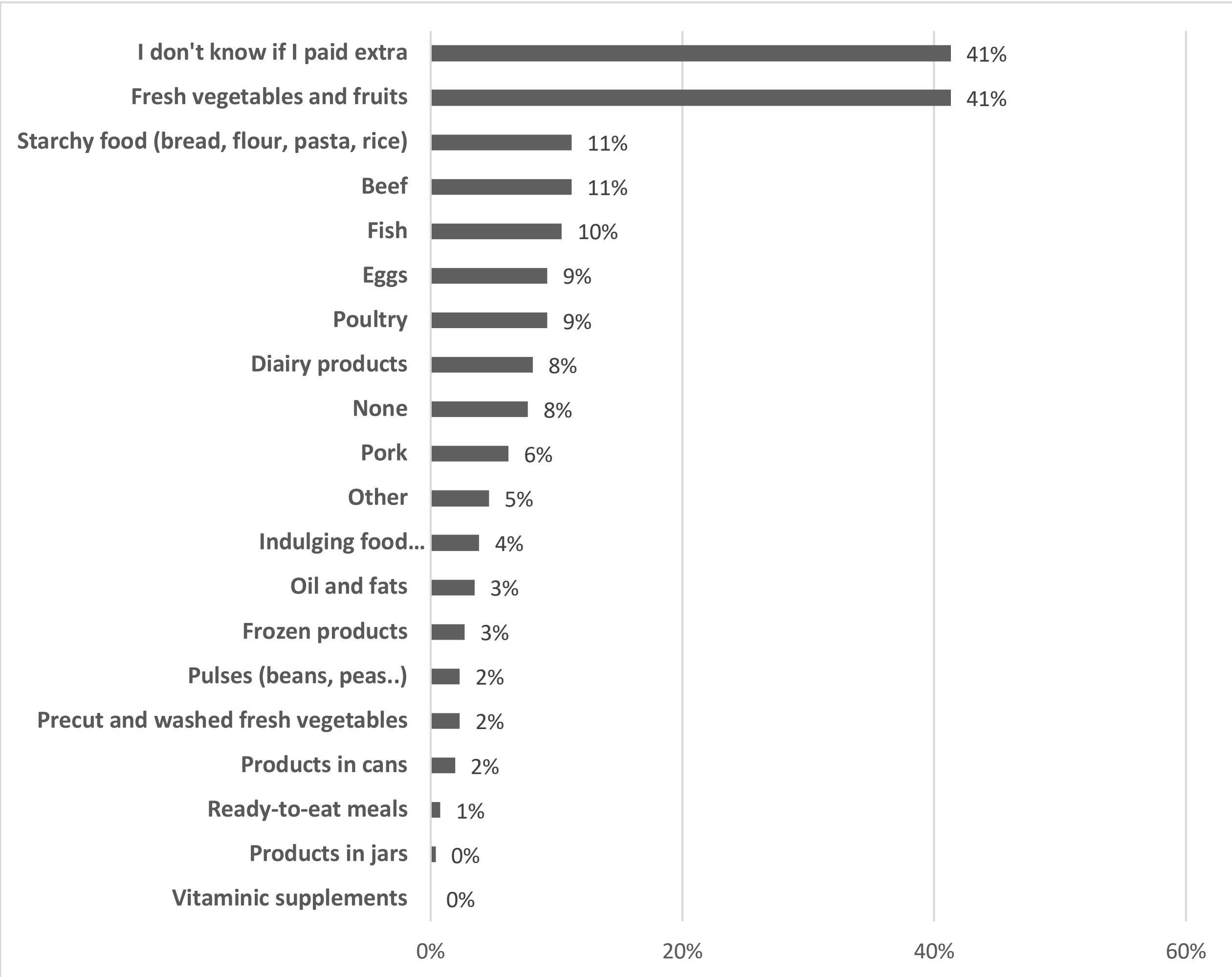
Respondents planned to buy more fresh vegetables and fruit (52% of respondents), eggs (32% of respondents), starchy foods (26%).
However, more than one-third of respondents did not plan to buy more food.

What food items do you wish you had in your pantry, but you cannot purchase due to the COVID-19 crisis? (N=259)



72% of respondents reported that they didn't have difficulty finding food item because of the crisis. The foods that could not be purchased were starchy foods (12% of respondents) and eggs (6% of respondents).

What food items did you pay extra during the COVID-19 crisis than otherwise you would have paid? (N=259)



40% of respondents could not say whether they had paid more for food because of the crisis. However, 40% of respondents thought they had paid more for fresh fruit and vegetables. Other foods that respondents thought they paid more were starchy foods (11%), beef, fish, poultry (10%) and eggs (9%).

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