

THOMSON REUTERS-NPR HEALTH POLL FOOD SAFETY

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THOMSON REUTERS-NPR HEALTH POLL

Each month, the Thomson Reuters-NPR Health Poll surveys approximately 3,000 Americans to gauge attitudes and opinions on a wide range of healthcare issues. Poll results are reported by NPR's Scott Hensley on the health blog Shots (<http://www.npr.org/blogs/health/>) and on air.

Complete survey results are posted here:
<http://healthcare.thomsonreuters.com/npr/>

NPR's reports on the findings are archived here:
http://www.npr.org/templates/archives/archive.php?thingId=137038712&ps=sh_sttag

The Thomson Reuters-NPR Health Poll is powered by the Thomson Reuters PULSE™ Healthcare Survey, an independently funded telephone poll which collects information about health behavior, attitudes and utilization from more than 100,000 U.S. households annually.

The results depicted below represent responses from 3,017 survey participants interviewed from July 1-13, 2011. The margin of error is 1.8 percent.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The survey, repeated from 2010, asked respondents about the safety of the country's food supply. Paradoxically, the poll found less concern than it did a year ago, even though the number of respondents who reported suffering from a serious food-borne illness nearly doubled.

- Among those polled, the majority (57.4%) said they are concerned about the safety of food — a decline from the 2010 level of 61.2%.
- 10.7% of respondents said they are not at all concerned with the safety of their food, up from 6.6% in 2010.
- 11.2% of those polled said they had become sick from something they ate in the last three months, up from 10.5% in 2010. Respondents 65 years or older became ill the least, with only 4.5% reporting a food-derived sickness in 2011.
- The severity of food illness increased from 2010. A year ago, 12.1% of respondents said they became seriously ill due to something they ate. That number climbed to 21.5% in 2011.
- Meat generated more concern than any other type of food: 44.1% of those polled said they had concerns over the safety of meat, followed by fresh produce (30.2%), seafood (20.1%), and dairy products (5.5%).
- Socio-economics appear to play a role in food safety concerns: 53% of respondents who earn less than \$25,000 per year were very concerned with the safety of their food. This far outweighs the level of concern among respondents with higher income.



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SURVEY DATA

Responses in **RED** show inter-year significance
 Responses in **BOLD** show intra-year significance

QUESTION 1: Using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is “Not at all Concerned” and 5 is “Very Concerned” in general how concerned are you about the safety of our food?

2011

| | 1: Not At All Concerned | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5: Very Concerned |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|----------|--------------|----------|--------------------------|
| Age | | | | | |
| <35 | 10.7% | 9.6% | 23.6% | 16.4% | 39.6% |
| 35 – 64 | 10.0% | 8.5% | 21.3% | 19.7% | 40.5% |
| 65+ | 12.6% | 12.1% | 24.6% | 18.8% | 32.0% |
| Total | 10.7% | 9.5% | 22.5% | 18.9% | 38.5% |
| Income | | | | | |
| < \$25k | 10.4% | 6.8% | 15.2% | 14.7% | 53.0% |
| \$25k – \$49.9k | 10.9% | 8.5% | 25.4% | 19.6% | 35.6% |
| \$50k – \$99.9k | 9.9% | 10.6% | 24.1% | 24.6% | 30.8% |
| \$100k+ | 11.3% | 12.4% | 27.2% | 17.6% | 31.5% |
| Total | 10.7% | 9.5% | 22.5% | 18.9% | 38.5% |
| Education | | | | | |
| High School or Less | 13.0% | 9.1% | 17.7% | 14.2% | 46.0% |
| Some College | 9.2% | 7.0% | 25.7% | 19.8% | 38.3% |
| College+ | 10.1% | 11.5% | 23.6% | 21.4% | 33.4% |
| Total | 10.7% | 9.5% | 22.5% | 18.9% | 38.5% |

2010

| | 1: Not At All concerned | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5: Very Concerned |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|--------------------------|
| Age | | | | | |
| <35 | 5.5% | 7.3% | 22.2% | 19.2% | 45.7% |
| 35 – 64 | 6.6% | 9.5% | 24.2% | 19.6% | 40.2% |
| 65+ | 8.4% | 7.3% | 25.0% | 18.7% | 40.6% |
| Total | 6.6% | 8.5% | 23.7% | 19.3% | 41.9% |
| Income | | | | | |
| < \$25k | 7.2% | 4.8% | 24.4% | 17.3% | 46.3% |
| \$25k – \$49.9k | 5.9% | 8.5% | 22.8% | 20.0% | 42.8% |
| \$50k – \$99.9k | 5.1% | 11.1% | 22.4% | 21.4% | 40.0% |
| \$100k+ | 5.5% | 10.5% | 26.4% | 16.3% | 41.2% |
| Total | 6.6% | 8.5% | 23.7% | 19.3% | 41.9% |
| Education | | | | | |
| High School or Less | 8.9% | 5.1% | 21.8% | 16.5% | 47.8% |
| Some College | 6.3% | 7.8% | 21.7% | 20.1% | 44.2% |
| College+ | 5.8% | 10.4% | 25.7% | 20.2% | 37.9% |
| Total | 6.6% | 8.5% | 23.7% | 19.3% | 41.9% |



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QUESTION 2: What type of food do you believe poses the greatest risk for food-borne illness?

2011

| Age | Meat | Seafood | Dairy Products | Fresh Produce |
|---------------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| <35 | 49.2% | 21.1% | 5.0% | 24.8% |
| 35 – 64 | 44.3% | 18.5% | 5.9% | 31.3% |
| 65+ | 39.1% | 24.0% | 5.0% | 31.9% |
| Total | 44.1% | 20.1% | 5.5% | 30.2% |
| Income | | | | |
| < \$25k | 49.9% | 23.4% | 5.6% | 21.0% |
| \$25k – \$49.9k | 45.6% | 18.8% | 6.5% | 29.1% |
| \$50k – \$99.9k | 44.1% | 23.2% | 4.4% | 28.3% |
| \$100k+ | 33.1% | 12.6% | 5.1% | 49.2% |
| Total | 44.1% | 20.1% | 5.5% | 30.2% |
| Education | | | | |
| High School or Less | 49.4% | 21.1% | 5.8% | 23.7% |
| Some College | 41.3% | 21.7% | 4.3% | 32.7% |
| College+ | 42.3% | 18.3% | 6.2% | 33.1% |
| Total | 44.1% | 20.1% | 5.5% | 30.2% |

2010

| Age | Meat | Seafood | Dairy Products | Fresh Produce |
|---------------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| <35 | 65.2% | 10.7% | 3.3% | 20.9% |
| 35 – 64 | 45.9% | 25.0% | 4.3% | 24.8% |
| 65+ | 43.7% | 28.5% | 4.8% | 23.0% |
| Total | 51.0% | 21.5% | 4.1% | 23.4% |
| Income | | | | |
| < \$25k | 59.2% | 18.4% | 3.3% | 19.1% |
| \$25k – \$49.9k | 47.3% | 23.6% | 6.2% | 22.9% |
| \$50k – \$99.9k | 46.5% | 23.4% | 3.4% | 26.6% |
| \$100k+ | 52.6% | 14.7% | 4.6% | 28.2% |
| Total | 51.0% | 21.5% | 4.1% | 23.4% |
| Education | | | | |
| High School or Less | 54.2% | 23.0% | 2.9% | 19.9% |
| Some College | 53.2% | 23.2% | 5.5% | 18.1% |
| College+ | 48.6% | 19.9% | 3.8% | 27.7% |
| Total | 51.0% | 21.5% | 4.1% | 23.4% |



QUESTION 3: What do you think would be the best approach for industry to use to reduce the risk of food-borne illness?

2011

| Age | More Inspections | Better Quality Controls | Stiffer Penalties | Increase FDA Oversight | Better Consumer Education |
|---------------------|------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| <35 | 21.7% | 33.3% | 13.6% | 14.0% | 17.4% |
| 35 – 64 | 18.8% | 34.0% | 13.8% | 13.4% | 20.0% |
| 65+ | 24.8% | 36.9% | 8.0% | 13.4% | 16.8% |
| Total | 20.6% | 34.5% | 12.5% | 13.5% | 18.8% |
| Income | | | | | |
| < \$25k | 26.6% | 32.7% | 11.4% | 12.9% | 16.4% |
| \$25k – \$49.9k | 22.1% | 32.7% | 12.6% | 11.7% | 20.9% |
| \$50k – \$99.9k | 17.6% | 35.5% | 12.7% | 14.4% | 19.8% |
| \$100k+ | 14.5% | 34.5% | 14.9% | 17.0% | 19.1% |
| Total | 20.6% | 34.5% | 12.5% | 13.5% | 18.8% |
| Education | | | | | |
| High School or Less | 26.8% | 37.1% | 11.2% | 9.8% | 15.1% |
| Some College | 19.0% | 33.7% | 14.4% | 14.3% | 18.6% |
| College+ | 17.4% | 33.2% | 12.1% | 15.6% | 21.6% |
| Total | 20.6% | 34.5% | 12.5% | 13.5% | 18.8% |

2010

| Age | More Inspections | Better Quality Controls | Stiffer Penalties | Increase FDA Oversight | Better Consumer Education |
|---------------------|------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| <35 | 18.9% | 33.4% | 16.1% | 8.4% | 23.2% |
| 35 – 64 | 20.5% | 37.4% | 10.7% | 13.2% | 18.2% |
| 65+ | 24.0% | 39.7% | 7.1% | 11.4% | 17.8% |
| Total | 20.6% | 36.7% | 11.6% | 11.6% | 19.5% |
| Income | | | | | |
| < \$25k | 24.2% | 35.8% | 12.0% | 14.3% | 13.6% |
| \$25k – \$49.9k | 20.7% | 37.8% | 8.8% | 11.7% | 21.0% |
| \$50k – \$99.9k | 19.4% | 34.2% | 16.2% | 8.6% | 21.6% |
| \$100k+ | 19.9% | 38.8% | 9.1% | 14.4% | 17.9% |
| Total | 20.6% | 36.7% | 11.6% | 11.6% | 19.5% |
| Education | | | | | |
| High School or Less | 30.5% | 28.8% | 13.5% | 8.4% | 18.7% |
| Some College | 18.2% | 40.2% | 11.5% | 12.0% | 18.0% |
| College+ | 18.0% | 37.7% | 10.9% | 12.6% | 20.7% |
| Total | 20.6% | 36.7% | 11.6% | 11.6% | 19.5% |



QUESTION 4: In the past 3 months, have you become ill from something that you ate?

2011

| Age | Yes | No |
|--------------|-------------|-----------|
| <35 | 19.6% | 80.4% |
| 35 – 64 | 11.1% | 88.9% |
| 65+ | 4.5% | 95.5% |
| Total | 11.2% | 88.8% |

| Income | | |
|-----------------|-------|-------|
| <\$25k | 14.4% | 85.6% |
| \$25k – \$49.9k | 8.8% | 91.2% |
| \$50k – \$99.9k | 8.8% | 91.2% |
| \$100k+ | 16.3% | 83.7% |
| Total | 11.2% | 88.8% |

| Education | | |
|---------------------|-------|-------|
| High School or Less | 7.6% | 92.4% |
| Some College | 13.2% | 86.8% |
| College+ | 12.3% | 87.7% |
| Total | 11.2% | 88.8% |

2010

| Age | Yes | No |
|--------------|-------------|-----------|
| <35 | 14.8% | 85.2% |
| 35 – 64 | 10.1% | 89.9% |
| 65+ | 4.6% | 95.4% |
| Total | 10.5% | 89.5% |

| Income | | |
|-----------------|-------|-------|
| <\$25k | 12.9% | 87.1% |
| \$25k – \$49.9k | 14.0% | 86.0% |
| \$50k – \$99.9k | 8.6% | 91.4% |
| \$100k+ | 9.3% | 90.7% |
| Total | 10.5% | 89.5% |

| Education | | |
|---------------------|-------|-------|
| High School or Less | 10.4% | 89.6% |
| Some College | 15.1% | 84.9% |
| College+ | 8.1% | 91.9% |
| Total | 10.5% | 89.5% |



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QUESTION 5: Did you seek medical treatment?

2011

| Age | Yes | No |
|--------------|--------------|-------|
| <35 | 34.7% | 65.3% |
| 35 – 64 | 27.2% | 72.8% |
| 65+ | 36.2% | 63.8% |
| Total | 30.4% | 69.6% |

| Income | Yes | No |
|-----------------|-------|-------|
| <\$25k | 49.3% | 50.7% |
| \$25k – \$49.9k | 11.2% | 88.8% |
| \$50k – \$99.9k | 22.9% | 77.1% |
| \$100k+ | 17.2% | 82.8% |
| Total | 30.4% | 69.6% |

| Education | Yes | No |
|---------------------|-------|-------|
| High School or Less | 46.6% | 53.4% |
| Some College | 42.6% | 57.4% |
| College+ | 14.3% | 85.7% |
| Total | 30.4% | 69.6% |

2010

| Age | Yes | No |
|--------------|--------------|-------|
| <35 | 32.2% | 67.8% |
| 35 – 64 | 21.2% | 78.8% |
| 65+ | 30.2% | 69.8% |
| Total | 26.2% | 73.8% |

| Income | Yes | No |
|-----------------|-------|-------|
| <\$25k | 53.3% | 46.7% |
| \$25k – \$49.9k | 18.9% | 81.1% |
| \$50k – \$99.9k | 10.8% | 89.2% |
| \$100k+ | 23.7% | 66.3% |
| Total | 26.2% | 73.8% |

| Education | Yes | No |
|---------------------|--------------|-------|
| High School or Less | 65.1% | 34.9% |
| Some College | 13.8% | 86.2% |
| College+ | 18.3% | 81.7% |
| Total | 26.2% | 73.8% |



QUESTION 6: Using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is “Not Very Serious” and 5 is “Very Serious”, how serious was the illness?

2011

| | 1: Not Very Serious | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5: Very Serious |
|---------------------|----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|------------------------|
| Age | | | | | |
| <35 | 11.2% | 43.1% | 2.6% | 21.5% | 21.5% |
| 35 – 64 | 21.3% | 24.2% | 21.1% | 8.4% | 25.0% |
| 65+ | 9.2% | 8.1% | 56.4% | 22.5% | 3.8% |
| Total | 16.3% | 29.5% | 18.0% | 14.7% | 21.5% |
| Income | | | | | |
| < \$25k | 25.6% | 18.4% | 12.7% | 19.0% | 24.2% |
| \$25k – \$49.9k | 0.0% | 16.6% | 46.9% | 14.1% | 22.4% |
| \$50k – \$99.9k | 0.0% | 73.6% | 5.5% | 20.8% | 0.0% |
| \$100k+ | 10.1% | 55.2% | 27.8% | 6.9% | 0.0% |
| Total | 16.3% | 29.5% | 18.0% | 14.7% | 21.5% |
| Education | | | | | |
| High School or Less | 46.0% | 30.1% | 15.8% | 7.1% | 1.0% |
| Some College | 2.3% | 22.8% | 15.2% | 19.9% | 39.8% |
| College+ | 6.4% | 43.4% | 27.4% | 13.6% | 9.2% |
| Total | 16.3% | 29.5% | 18.0% | 14.7% | 21.5% |

2010

| | 1: Not Very Serious | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5: Very Serious |
|---------------------|----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|------------------------|
| Age | | | | | |
| <35 | 0.0% | 24.5% | 75.5% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| 35 – 64 | 9.2% | 18.6% | 34.9% | 14.0% | 23.3% |
| 65+ | 10.5% | 5.3% | 31.6% | 26.3% | 26.3% |
| Total | 4.8% | 20.4% | 54.6% | 8.1% | 12.1% |
| Income | | | | | |
| < \$25k | 4.5% | 12.9% | 67.5% | 6.1% | 9.0% |
| \$25k – \$49.9k | 6.3% | 46.3% | 34.9% | 1.9% | 10.7% |
| \$50k – \$99.9k | 0.0% | 10.7% | 74.0% | 4.7% | 10.7% |
| \$100k+ | 7.7% | 15.4% | 18.8% | 31.2% | 26.9% |
| Total | 4.8% | 20.4% | 54.6% | 8.1% | 12.1% |
| Education | | | | | |
| High School or Less | 2.7% | 1.9% | 76.1% | 6.3% | 12.9% |
| Some College | 2.1% | 82.4% | 10.8% | 0.0% | 4.7% |
| College+ | 10.9% | 7.3% | 47.4% | 18.0% | 16.4% |
| Total | 4.8% | 20.4% | 54.6% | 8.1% | 12.1% |

