



American Experiences Survey:

A Nationally Representative Multi-Mode Survey

October 2023 Omnibus Results

Overview of Methodology

Each month, Consumer Reports fields the American Experiences Survey (AES) to track consumer attitudes and behaviors over time. October results are based on interviews conducted from October 6-16, 2023. This document includes the following sections of the omnibus survey for this month: food labels, pillows, broadband, refrigerator ice and water dispensers, and credit reports.

The survey was administered by NORC at the University of Chicago through its AmeriSpeak® Panel to a nationally representative sample. Interviews were administered both online and by phone. In total NORC collected 2,087 interviews, 1,974 by web mode and 113 by phone mode, 1,981 in English and 106 in Spanish. Final data are weighted by age, gender, race/Hispanic ethnicity, housing tenure, telephone status, education, and Census Division to be proportionally representative of the US adult population.

Key demographic characteristics (after weighting is applied) of this sample are presented below:

52% female; median age of 47 years old; 61% white, non-Hispanic; 36% 4-year college graduates; and 59% have a household income of \$50,000 or more.

The margin of error for results based on the total sample is +/-2.76 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Smaller subgroups will have larger error margins, and only those subgroups for which there are at least 100 unweighted cases are included.

TOPLINE RESULTS

The October omnibus contained five blocks of questions, one for each topic listed above. Respondents saw the blocks in a random order.

The questions presented below were shown to respondents in this order within sections unless otherwise noted. Where appropriate, question wording, response answer choices, or direction of scales were randomized or rotated and those instances are noted below. Also shown, where available, are trends over time.

Prepared by CR Survey Research Department, October 2023

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Survey Notes for Monthly Trends

May 2022 AES results are based on interviews conducted from May 9-19, 2022 with a nationally representative sample of 2,076 US adults.

Broadband 2021 results are based on interviews conducted from June 4-28, 2021 with a nationally representative sample of 2,565 US adults.

February 2021 AES results are based on interviews conducted from February 4-15, 2021 with a nationally representative sample of 2,514 US adults.

April 2020 AES results are based on interviews conducted from April 2-14, 2020 with a nationally representative sample of 2,164 US adults.

FOOD LABELS

FOOD1. [RESPONDENTS ARE PROMPTED ONCE TO ANSWER IF THEY DO NOT DO SO INITIALLY. ROTATE RESPONSE SCALE, HOLDING "NOT APPLICABLE" AT END.]

Seals and claims on food packaging can communicate information about issues such as which pesticides are used and how animals raised for food are treated. Some examples are USDA Organic, Fair Trade, and Non-GMO Project Verified.

How often, if at all, do you use seals or claims of this kind to help you make decisions about what foods to buy?

	Total
	%
Every time I shop for food	13
Sometimes, but not always	42
Rarely, or only on occasion	26
Never	18
Not applicable: I don't shop for food	1
Base: All respondents	2,086

FOOD2. [SHOW IF FOOD1 IS NOT "NOT APPLICABLE." RANDOMIZE RESPONSE OPTIONS, HOLDING "OTHER" AND "NONE OF THESE" AT END IN THAT ORDER. "NONE OF THESE" IS EXCLUSIVE. RESPONDENTS COULD SELECT UP TO TWO RESPONSE OPTIONS.]

Which, if any, of these sustainability issues would be most helpful to know about in deciding what foods to buy?

Select up to two.

	Total
	%
Reduced use of chemical fertilizers or pesticides	36
Reduced use of antibiotics or hormones in animals	36
Support for local farms	23
Humane treatment of animals	21
Avoiding GMOs	19
Fair conditions for farmers and farm workers	15
Protection of the environment, soil health, or climate	15
Other, please specify	1
None of these	10
Base: Respondents who did not say that they never shop for food	2,060

FOOD3. [SHOW IF FOOD1 = "EVERY TIME," "SOMETIMES," OR "RARELY." RANDOMIZE RESPONSE OPTIONS, HOLDING "NONE OF THESE" AT END. "NONE OF THESE" IS EXCLUSIVE.]

Below is a list of seals and claims that may appear on a food label. Please indicate which of these, if any, you have used in the past 12 months to help you decide what foods to buy.

Select all that apply.

	Total
	%
USDA Organic	57
Non-GMO Project Verified	36
Fair Trade	23
Certified Plant Based	18
Animal Welfare Approved	14
Vegan	14
Rainforest Alliance Certified	9
Carbon Neutral	6
Marine Stewardship Council	3
Regenerative	2
None of these	23
Base: Respondents who ever use seals or claims to help make food purchasing decisions	1,694

FOOD4. [RANDOMIZE RESPONSE OPTIONS, KEEPING TOGETHER "THE FOOD IS VEGAN" AND "THE FOOD IS VEGETARIAN," AND KEEPING TOGETHER "FARM ANIMALS ARE NOT GIVEN ANTIBIOTICS" AND "FARM ANIMALS ARE NOT GIVEN GROWTH HORMONES." "NONE OF THE ABOVE" AND "UNSURE" ARE HELD AT END IN THAT ORDER AND ARE EACH EXCLUSIVE.]

<p>Now we'd like to ask about the "USDA Organic" seal in particular. What do you think the "USDA Organic" seal means, as far as you know?</p> <p>Please select <u>all</u> that apply. Just make your best guess if you aren't sure.</p>	
	Total
	%
The food is produced without chemical fertilizers or pesticides	55
The food does not include synthetic or artificial ingredients	42
Farms are regularly inspected to ensure they are meeting organic standards	40
The food is made without genetically modified organisms (GMOs)	37
Farm animals are not given growth hormones	34
The government is responsible for making sure the food meets certain standards	31
Farm animals are not given antibiotics	28
Farms use practices that protect the environment and soil health	20
Farm animals are treated humanely	10
Farm workers are treated fairly	5
The food is vegetarian	3
The food is vegan	3
None of the above	3
Unsure	10
Base: All respondents	2,087

FOOD5. [ROTATE RESPONSE OPTIONS.]

<p>How much do you trust, if at all, that the USDA Organic seal is enforced well enough to make sure that foods with the seal reliably meet its standards?</p>	
	Total
	%
Trust completely	3
Trust a lot	26
Trust a little	60
Do not trust at all	11
Base: All respondents	2,062

FOOD6. [RANDOMIZE RESPONSE OPTIONS, HOLDING "OTHER" AND "I HAVE NO QUESTIONS" IAT END IN THAT ORDER. "I HAVE NO QUESTIONS" IS EXCLUSIVE.]

Below are some questions people may have about the USDA Organic seal. Please indicate which, if any, of these are questions you have about the seal.

Select all that apply.

	Total
	%
Who is responsible for making sure that the USDA Organic seal is only on foods that are truly organic?	49
How do I know if food labeled organic is really organic?	49
Are organic products free from pesticides and synthetic chemicals?	41
Why are organic foods often more expensive than non-organic foods?	35
Does organic food have more health or nutrition benefits than non-organic food?	32
Are GMOs (genetically modified organisms) allowed in organic food?	32
Is it safer to eat organic food than non-organic food?	27
Is organic food less highly processed than non-organic food?	25
Is organic food better for the environment?	24
Does the USDA Organic seal mean that animals are treated humanely?	24
Other, please specify	1
I have no questions about the USDA Organic seal	16
Base: All respondents	2,087

PILLOWS

PILLOWS_INTRO.

The next few questions are about bed pillows. We are interested in hearing about the pillow or pillows that you rest your head on while in bed, not about any other types of pillows.

PILLOWS1. [RESPONDENTS ARE PROMPTED ONCE TO RESPOND IF THEY DO NOT DO SO INITIALLY.]

When was the last time you bought new pillows to replace the old ones?	
	Total
	%
Less than 6 months ago	16
6 months to less than 1 year	17
1 year to less than 2 years	24
2 years to less than 5 years	24
5 years or longer	12
I have never replaced my pillows	1
Don't recall	5
Not applicable: I don't sleep with pillows	0.4
Base: All respondents	2,086

PILLOWS2. [SHOW IF PILLOWS1 IS NOT "I HAVE NEVER REPLACED MY PILLOWS" OR "NOT APPLICABLE."]

In general, how often do you replace your pillows?	
	Total
	%
At least twice a year	6
At least once a year	12
At least once every 2 years	20
At least once every 2 to 5 years	23
I replace them regularly, but less often than every 5 years	4
I replace them as needed, but not on a schedule	34
Base: Respondents who sleep with pillows and have ever replaced them	2,044

PILLOWS3. [SHOW IF PILLOWS1 IS NOT "I HAVE NEVER REPLACED MY PILLOWS" OR "NOT APPLICABLE." RANDOMIZE RESPONSE OPTIONS, KEEPING TOGETHER "I HAD BEEN WAKING UP WITH PAIN" AND "FOR OTHER HEALTH REASONS" IN THAT ORDER, AND HOLDING "OTHER" AT END. RESPONDENTS COULD SELECT UP TO THREE RESPONSE OPTIONS.]

Thinking about the last time you replaced your pillow or pillows, what were your main reasons for doing so?	
Select up to <u>three</u> .	
	Total
	%
The pillow became too flat	51
The previous pillow became uncomfortable	40
I wanted a different kind of pillow	27
I had been waking up with pain in my neck or head	23
The pillow was stained	20
It was time to replace it because I replace them regularly	14
The pillow was torn or the stuffing was coming out	9
The pillow had a smell	6
For other health reasons, such as to manage allergies	5
To manage bedbugs or other pests	2
Other, please specify	3
Base: Respondents who sleep with pillows and have ever replaced them	2,056

PILLOWS4. [SHOW IF PILLOWS1 IS NOT "NOT APPLICABLE." RANDOMIZE RESPONSE OPTIONS, HOLDING "OTHER" AND "NONE OF THESE" AT END IN THAT ORDER. "NONE OF THESE" IS EXCLUSIVE.]

Imagine that you were going to buy new pillows today. Which, if any, of the following sustainability issues are important to you when purchasing new pillows?	
Select <u>all</u> that apply.	
	Total
	%
Chemicals such as flame retardants, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), or anti-microbial agents	33
Avoiding non-sustainable materials, like foam or synthetic fabrics	24
Animal welfare, such as if the pillows contain feathers or down	18
How the pillows will eventually be disposed of, such as if they are biodegradable or recyclable	15
Excessive or non-recyclable packaging of pillows	13
The manufacturing process, such as energy consumption, waste, etc.	11
Other, please specify	3
None of these	42
Base: Respondents who sleep with pillows	2,078

BROADBAND

BROADBAND1. [RESPONDENTS ARE PROMPTED ONCE TO RESPOND IF THEY DO NOT DO SO INITIALLY. RESPONSE OPTIONS DISPLAYED IN THIS ORDER: "BROADBAND," "DSL OR DIAL-UP," "WIRELESS," "MY HOUSEHOLD DOES NOT HAVE INTERNET ACCESS."]

Which, if any, of the following services does your household use to access the internet?

Please select the one type of internet access that is used most often at home. Wireless should only be selected if your household does not have access to any other type of internet access.

	OCTOBER 2023 AES	MAY 2022 AES	BROAD- BAND 2021
	Total	Total	Total
	%	%	%
Broadband (such as high speed internet through a fixed cable or fiber connection)	74	73	77
Wireless (such as <u>only</u> having access to the internet through a smartphone data plan)	18	18	15
DSL or dial-up (such as internet through a phone line)	5	7	5
My household does not have internet access	3	3	3
Base: All respondents	2,079	2,071	2,557

BROADBAND2. [RESPONDENTS ARE PROMPTED ONCE TO RESPOND IF THEY DO NOT DO SO INITIALLY.]

In general, how many days a week do you rely on the internet?

By "rely on the internet" we mean, you need to access the internet, or use other services provided by your ISP (internet service provider), without disruption to carry out your daily activities. An ISP provides you with access to the internet and other related services, and may also give you access to cable TV, wireless, or telephone services.

	OCTOBER 2023 AES	FEBRUARY 2021 AES
	Total	Total
	%	%
0	1	2
1	1	1
2	1	2
3	2	3
4	2	4
5	4	6
6	2	4
7	85	75
Not applicable: I do not use the internet at all	1	3
Base: All respondents	2,084	2,511

BROADBAND3. [SHOW IF BROADBAND1 IS NOT "MY HOUSEHOLD DOES NOT HAVE INTERNET ACCESS" AND BROADBAND2 IS NOT "NOT APPLICABLE." ROTATE RESPONSE SCALE AND TERMS IN QUESTION STEM TO MATCH.]

How easy or difficult is it for you to afford your monthly internet costs?	
	Total
	%
Very easy	29
Somewhat easy	44
Somewhat difficult	23
Very difficult	4
Base: Respondents who have internet access at home and who ever use the internet	2,020

BROADBAND4. [SHOW IF BROADBAND1 = "BROADBAND," "DSL OR DIAL-UP," OR "WIRELESS."]

Approximately how much do you currently pay per month (including taxes and fees) for your internet service? If your internet is part of a bundle, please <u>only</u> tell us about the cost of the internet.	
	Total
	%
Less than \$50	18
\$50 to less than \$75	36
\$75 to less than \$100	26
\$100 or more	14
Unsure	7
Base: Respondents who have internet access at home	2,019

BROADBAND5.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

Internet service is as important as electricity or water service in today's world.

	OCTOBER 2023 AES	MAY 2022 AES	FEBRUARY 2021 AES	APRIL 2020 AES	NET NEUTRALITY 2017
	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total
	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree	43	39	40	46	38
Agree	35	32	35	33	23
Neither agree nor disagree	12	16	12	10	13
Disagree	7	10	10	9	17
Strongly disagree	2	3	3	2	8
Base: All respondents	2,077	2,062	2,506	2,149	1,005

BROADBAND6. [RESPONSE OPTIONS SHOWN IN THIS ORDER: "I HAVE HEARD OF IT," "I AM USING IT OR HAVE USED IT," "I KNOW SOMEONE ELSE WHO IS USING IT OR HAS USED IT," "I APPLIED FOR IT AND AM WAITING TO HEAR BACK," "I APPLIED FOR IT BUT I DID NOT GET IT," "I HAVE NEVER HEARD OF IT." "I AM USING IT OR HAVE USED IT," "I APPLIED FOR IT AND AM WAITING TO HEAR BACK," AND "I APPLIED FOR IT BUT I DID NOT GET IT" ARE EXCLUSIVE WITH EACH OTHER, I.E., RESPONDENTS COULD NOT SELECT MORE THAN ONE OF THOSE TOGETHER. "I HAVE NEVER HEARD OF IT" IS EXCLUSIVE WITH ALL OTHER RESPONSE OPTIONS.]

The federal government offers assistance through the Affordable Connectivity Program that provides a discount toward monthly internet service for eligible households.

Before taking this survey, how familiar were you with the Affordability Connectivity Program, if at all?

Select all that apply.

	Total
	%
I have heard of it	42
I am using it or have used it	14
I know someone else (not in my household) who is using it or has used it	6
I applied for it but I did not get it	2
I applied for it and am waiting to hear back	1
I have never heard of it	41
Base: All respondents	2,087

REFRIGERATOR ICE AND WATER DISPENSERS

FRIDGE1. [RESPONDENTS ARE PROMPTED ONCE TO RESPOND IF THEY DO NOT DO SO INITIALLY.]

How long ago did you get the refrigerator in your home?

If your home has more than one refrigerator, please answer for the one you use most often.

	Total
	%
It was here when I moved in	26
Within the past 12 months	10
At least 1 year but less than 5 years ago	25
At least 5 years but less than 10 years ago	19
10 years ago or longer	16
Don't recall	3
Not applicable, my home does not have a refrigerator	1
Base: All respondents	2,087

FRIDGE_INFO. [SHOW IF FRIDGE1 IS NOT "NOT APPLICABLE."]

For the rest of this section, if you have more than one refrigerator, please respond for the one you use most often.

FRIDGE2. [SHOW IF FRIDGE1 IS NOT "NOT APPLICABLE." RESPONSE OPTIONS SHOWN IN THIS ORDER: "YES, ON THE OUTSIDE," "YES, INSIDE WITH A PITCHER," "YES, INSIDE WITHOUT A PITCHER," "NO."]

Does the refrigerator in your home have a water dispenser?

A refrigerator with a water dispenser provides water directly from the refrigerator itself. This question is not referring to a setup where you fill a pitcher from the tap and keep it in the refrigerator.

	Total
	%
Yes, on the <u>outside</u> of the door	43
Yes, inside the refrigerator <u>without</u> a pitcher	5
Yes, inside the refrigerator <u>with</u> a pitcher	3
No, it doesn't	49
Base: Respondents who have a refrigerator at home	2,066

FRIDGE3. [SHOW IF FRIDGE1 IS NOT "NOT APPLICABLE." RESPONSE OPTIONS SHOWN IN THIS ORDER: "YES, WITH A DISPENSER ON THE OUTSIDE," "YES, WITH A BIN INSIDE THE FREEZER," "NO."]

Does the refrigerator in your home have an icemaker?	
<i>A refrigerator with an icemaker makes ice cubes or crushed ice automatically, without you having to fill ice cube trays.</i>	
	Total
	%
Yes, with a dispenser on the <u>outside</u> of the door	38
Yes, with a bin <u>inside</u> the freezer	28
No, it doesn't	34
Base: Respondents who have a refrigerator at home	2,065

FRIDGE4. [RESPONSE OPTIONS SHOWN IN THIS ORDER: "A WATER DISPENSER ON THE OUTSIDE," "A WATER DISPENSER INSIDE WITH A PITCHER," "A WATER DISPENSER INSIDE WITHOUT A PITCHER," "NONE."]

If you could have any kind of refrigerator you wanted, what type of <u>water</u> dispenser would you most want?	
	Total
	%
A water dispenser on the <u>outside</u> of the door	66
A water dispenser inside the refrigerator <u>with</u> a pitcher	9
A water dispenser inside the refrigerator <u>without</u> a pitcher	5
None: I would want a refrigerator <u>without</u> a water dispenser	20
Base: All respondents	2,071

FRIDGE5. [RESPONSE OPTIONS SHOWN IN THIS ORDER: "AN ICE DISPENSER ON THE OUTSIDE," "AN ICEMAKER WITH A BIN INSIDE THE FREEZER," "NONE."]

If you could have any kind of refrigerator you wanted, what type of <u>icemaker</u> would you most want?	
	Total
	%
An ice dispenser on the <u>outside</u> the door	62
An icemaker with a bin <u>inside</u> the freezer	28
None: I would want a refrigerator <u>without</u> an icemaker	10
Base: All respondents	2,073

CREDIT REPORTS

CR1. [RESPONDENTS ARE PROMPTED ONCE TO RESPOND IF THEY DID NOT DO SO INITIALLY.]

When was the last time you checked your credit report?	
	Total
	%
Less than a month ago	34
1 month to less than 3 months ago	15
3 months to less than 6 months ago	9
6 months to less than 1 year ago	11
1 year to less than 2 years ago	10
2 years to less than 5 years ago	7
5 or more years ago	4
I've never checked my credit report	6
Don't know	5
Base: All respondents	2,087

CR2. [SHOW IF CR1 INDICATES THEY HAVE EVER CHECKED THEIR CREDIT REPORT, I.E., ANY RESPONSE OTHER THAN "NEVER," DON'T KNOW," REFUSED, OR SKIPPED. ROTATE RESPONSE OPTIONS AND TERMS IN QUESTION STEM TO MATCH.]

When you last checked your credit report, how easy or difficult was it to understand the information you saw there?	
	Total
	%
Very easy	45
Somewhat easy	42
Somewhat difficult	11
Very difficult	2
Base: Respondents who have ever checked their credit report	1,850

CR3. [SHOW IF CR1 INDICATES THEY HAVE EVER CHECKED THEIR CREDIT REPORT, I.E., ANY RESPONSE FROM "LESS THAN A MONTH AGO" TO "5 OR MORE YEARS AGO." RESPONDENTS ARE PROMPTED ONCE TO RESPOND IF THEY DID NOT DO SO INITIALLY.]

When you last checked your credit report, did you spot any errors in the information, such as debts that were actually paid or incorrect personal information?	
	Total
	%
Yes	11
No	76
Don't recall	13
Base: Respondents who have ever checked their credit report	1,862

CR4. [SHOW IF CR3 = "YES." RESPONSE OPTIONS SHOWN IN THIS ORDER: "WRONG ADDRESS," "OLD ADDRESS," "THE CORRECT ADDRESS, BUT WITH MISTAKES IN IT," "WRONG NAME," "MY NAME MISSPELLED," "WRONG SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER," "OTHER," "NONE." "NONE" IS EXCLUSIVE.]

When you last checked your credit report, did you find any of the following types of incorrect personal information?	
Select <u>all</u> that apply.	
	Total
	%
Old address (an address where I used to live, but not anymore)	32
Wrong address (an address that is not mine)	24
My name misspelled, or with other mistakes in it	16
Wrong name (a name that is not mine)	10
The correct address, but with mistakes in it	7
Wrong social security number, or mistakes in my social security number	3
Other, please specify	14
None: I found no incorrect personal information on my credit report	31
Base: Respondents who found errors the last time they checked their credit report	208

CR5. [SHOW IF CR3 = "YES." RESPONSE OPTIONS SHOWN IN THIS ORDER: "AN ACCOUNT THAT I DIDN'T RECOGNIZE," "A DEBT THAT I DIDN'T RECOGNIZE," "ONE OR MORE PAYMENTS REPORTED AS LATE," "A MISSED PAYMENT THAT I MADE," "OTHER," "NONE." "NONE" IS EXCLUSIVE.]

When you last checked your credit report, did you find any of the following types of errors regarding debts?

Select all that apply.

	Total
	%
A debt reported to collections that I didn't recognize	36
An account that I didn't recognize	34
One or more payments reported as late that I made on time	21
A missed payment that I made	14
Other, please specify	10
None: I found no errors regarding debts on my credit report	24
No response	3
Base: Respondents who found errors the last time they checked their credit report	208

Note: "No response" was not a response option respondents saw, but is included because at least 2% did not answer.

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