



## Snack, Meal or Both?

The once-clear line between snack time and mealtime will blur in 2024

According to Merriam-Webster, a meal is defined as an act or the time of eating a portion of food to satisfy appetite. A snack is defined as a light meal or food eaten between regular meals. In 2024, the once-clear line between snacks and meals will blur as Americans struggle with a lack of time to prepare, eat and enjoy meals, according to the fifth annual “U.S. Snack Index” released by PepsiCo Inc. divisions Frito-Lay North America and The Quaker Oats Co. The national survey of 2,000 U.S. adults aged 18 and older also found that:



The average American has only **52 minutes per day to prepare, eat and enjoy their meals.**

One-third of consumers say they have even less time — under 30 minutes.



**More Americans are integrating their favorite snack foods into meals, up 35% over previous years.** Men are just as likely as women to use snacks in meals — 92% vs. 93%, respectively.

More than half of consumers report proudly using snacks as a key ingredient in no-prep dinners at least once a week, while **more than a third seize this opportunity multiple times a week.**



**55%** When considering snacks at the store, **consumers cite protein as the most important nutritional attribute** they seek (55%). This is especially true among those most time-crunched.



Energy is also a top-rated attribute as **60% of consumers look to their favorite snack products to provide energy.**

Generationally, millennials (72%) are by far the group most likely to be looking for a pick-me-up, followed by Generation Z (62%).



Across all generations, nearly **three-quarters of Americans (74%) refuse to sacrifice taste** when selecting their snacks. Baby boomers are the most unwilling to compromise on taste (84%), followed by Generation X (75%).



**2024 is expected to see the continued rise of the self-proclaimed “Snack Savant,” who embraces all things food, adventure and community.** Millennials (83%) and Gen Z (82%) embrace this title most of all — and the majority of Snack Savants are city dwellers (77%).