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DETERMINING MILLENNIAL FOOD BUYING PREFERENCES:
BASED ON PRODUCT MARKETING WITH “BUZZWORDS”

THESIS

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science in Community and Leadership Development
in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment
at the University of Kentucky

By

Victoria Nicole Hamilton

Lexington, Kentucky

Director: Dr. Lorraine Garkovich, Professor of Community and Leadership Development

Lexington, Kentucky

2018

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

DETERMINING MILLENNIAL FOOD BUYING PREFERENCES: BASED ON PRODUCT MARKETING WITH “BUZZWORDS”

This research focuses on the importance on the Millennial Generation and their perceptions of food buzzwords. Since the Millennial Generation is the largest group purchasing and preparing their own foods, the food industry is becoming dependent on their buying preferences. A survey reflected the participants’ demographics and their buying preferences based on a series of food buzzwords when they are purchasing foods. Results show the Millennial Generation prefers “local” buzzwords. As the Millennial Generation continues to purchase foods for themselves and their families, it can be expected their choices will encourage others to do the same based on their family shopping factors, social interaction, and relationship building traits.

KEYWORDS: Buzzword, Millennial Generation

Victoria Nicole Hamilton

March 2018

DETERMINING MILLENNIAL FOOD BUYING PREFERENCES:
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March 2018

Dedicated to my Dad, who taught me to never give up. I love you.

*To my brother, thank you for always believing in me,
encouraging me and motivating me to be successful.
I am so lucky to have you as a little brother to look up to.*

To Maggie, for being my inspiration to keep going!

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

We are surrounded with brands like Nike, Apple, Microsoft, Starbucks, Ford, Chevy, etc. but have we looked at the words surrounding us in the grocery store? Organic, GMO Free, Gluten Free, Free Range, All-Natural, Grass-fed, Heritage, etc... Do we even know what these words mean? Research has shown many consumers are drawn to brand names, they prefer purchasing more familiar items. On the other hand, consumers have shown they can make new decisions about certain products (Kucuk, S. 2011). The brand creates a relationship with the consumer and they continue to buy, especially in the presence of an emotional bond (Nowak, Thach, Olsen, 2011).

Storytelling is used to further an emotional connection with consumers. In the food marketing industry, we use “health” as a way to tell the story to consumers. Health has become very important to consumers, not only do consumers want great tasting food, but also food to address nutritional needs; food of “premium quality and affordable; that are fresh and convenient” (Gilbert, 2000). A marketing idea of promoting “Food as Medicine” successfully connected to these consumers. This is a group of consumers who read and compare nutrition labels, appreciate health and content claim labels, select products with “fresh”, “grown without pesticides”, “high calcium”, “high fiber”, etc. on the label (Gilbert, 2000). There is a difference between reading and understanding nutrition labels and there is evidence society has a problem with unhealthy food consumption (Northup, 2014). Since health risks of becoming overweight and unhealthy are very high, the need to “examine how food manufacturers communicate nutrition and health information to consumers” is very important.

Many consumers know that not all foods are healthy; accordingly consumers look for “cues” to help determine if a food product is healthy or not (Northup, 2014). Today’s food industry is flooded with these “cues” we call buzzwords: Organic, Grass-fed, Non-GMO, etc. The purpose of the buzzword listed on a product is to create an impression the particular food is better than a product without the listed buzzword (Northup, 2014). This relays information about the product to the consumer. We do not question why one buzzword may be healthier than the other, because as a consumer “we want to be healthy and feel better about not taking the stairs, driving instead of walking, or eating gluten free cake instead of moderating our food intake.” We all have been there. Marketers know the consumers’ wants, they want good foods and to spend less time shopping. The buzzwords initially make shopping easier by using a few words to tell the consumer if the food is healthier than others.

For this study, the Millennial Generation was the focus to determine whether or not buzzwords really do have an impact in their food shopping habits. Since 2015, Millennials are among the largest group of consumers, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. They are the generation with the most control of food trends and marketing, since they are making the most purchases among all generations. A Millennial is described to live a fast-paced, multi-tasking, social lifestyle (Paquette, Moore, Claveria, 2014). Buzzword marketing fits within the millennial lifestyle. Buzzwords have become social “cues” to relay information about a food product being healthier than others.

Buzzwords also are becoming a group for millennials to self-identify with while shopping at grocery stores and a connecting topic among relationships.

Social Construction Theory is the process of associating one thing to many values, meanings, etc. For buzzword marketing, words like “Organic,” “Free Range,” “All-Natural” connect the buzzword to a meaning outside of the word. The buzzword, in this case, can have many different meanings to the consumer. The value of the word is given by the individual and generalized among society. Millennials are curious about the world around them and want to quickly learn the meaning of buzzwords on their foods.

However, during this quick transaction of information, millennials can get lost in a bunch of information. They constantly have distractions and if poor messages, experiences, or ideas reach them before the correct information – they will move on and not realize there are two sides of the buzzword’s meaning.

Constructionist theory suggests there is a strong connection between design and learning, which involves making, building, or programming. Each of these theories differ, however they can work together. Design theorists focus on the final product, while learning theorists focus on the process, (Kafai and Resnick, 2011).

My theory is consumers focus on the final product and not the process. In the food system, we are concerned about the process of the food, but we only look at the final “buzzword” to tell us the information. Consumers are not taking the time to see or understand the process because the marketing has already done the work for them. In this

study, I will ask participants survey questions to see what foods they are buying at grocery stores and compare these choices to their beliefs in a secondary set of questions referring to buzzwords associated with the environment, animal health and personal health. These categories allow the selected buzzwords to be classified into real world groups the participants can reflect on each word. Since some buzzwords overlap with the categories, this allows a single buzzword's value in consumer shopping to be compared against their value on the environment, animal health and personal health.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

Prior to analyzing the results of this study, it is important to review previous research to fully understand marketing towards the Millennial Generation. Minimal research has been reported about millennials connecting to food buzzwords, however there is much research about marketing trends, brand identification, and consumer interests. For this study, Social Construction Theory will be used as a theoretical framework to connect theories of marketing to the Millennial Generation and constructed meanings of buzzwords.

Social constructionism is based on knowledge of how a society communicates as a way to seek common understanding (Zaltman, 1997). The process constructs “shared assumptions about reality” (Zaltman, 1997). Since society is constantly changing and expanding, social constructs are challenged and modified when different meanings become relevant. (Zaltman, 1997). Social constructionism reflects human behavior, cultural symbols and meanings, understanding of relationships, social interactions, physical objects or symbols with multiple meanings (Zaltman, 1997).

Figure 1: Social Construction Theory



Social constructionism relates to how buzzwords give meaning to words like organic, free range, all-natural – to represent images, ideals, values, etc. to the consumer. These meanings facilitate the creation of an identity among groups. Social consciousness and peer pressure approval or disapproval impacts consumers' food choices (Almerico, 2014). If groups favor a certain food choice, it is more likely for a consumer to choose the food as their favorite (Almerico, 2014). Food can also become an expression of identity (Almerico, 2014). Food choice decisions are considered to be a part of everyday life (Sobal, M.P.H., & Bisogni, 2009). These decisions can become challenging because there are many different attributes to foods in general, however social constructs on buzzwords serve as a different way to analyze food decisions. Temple Northup, professor at the University of Houston, conducted a study among college students to determine if certain foods with buzzwords were healthier than others. Students selected between two food labels to select a healthier option based on the meaning of the buzzwords appearing on the labels (Northup, 2014).

The Millennial Generation may well be the most health conscious generation ever. Buzzwords have been around for years, but are becoming more of a social “cue” for consumers to connect with over a food product. Marketers and food manufacturers rely on the fact that consumers are aware of the word, and the ones who have a positive experience with the product will continue to purchase more in the future. The concept of framing has many meanings, but is commonly known as “shaping” messages based on cognitive psychology (Van Gorp, 2007). Some approaches analyze how media

represents a topic to determine a message, while others change phrasing to reflect a new message (Van Gorp, 2007).

In terms of buzzwords, social constructs give “free-range” the meaning birds weren’t raised in a cage. The belief can be translated to: “eggs from birds raised cages are bad” and therefore “cage-free and free-range” eggs *must* be better. Consumers who connect with this message, choose to buy the “free-range” eggs because it *sounds* like it was better for the bird. The marketing frame is designed to relay the message “eggs are better from birds not in a cage” and the eggs without the “free-range” label are assumed to be worse eggs to the consumer.

The second part of the “why” is not explained in this message. Consumers do not think about the other question, “Why were the birds raised in a cage in the first place?” Monitoring disease control, laying production, feed intake and egg conversion, predator and bird safety control, etc. are not glamorous or easily understood topics to educate the consumer. In the “free-range” buzzword example, it is easy to see the more information that is shared, the more confusion for those who do not know the process of food production. Thus, framing consumer food choices with buzzwords helps consumers make decisions without much additional information.

Why millennials?

Congratulations, Millennial Generation! You are the largest consumer group as of 2015.

For years, the Millennial Generation or Gen Y, stood as the second largest group only to the “Baby Boomer” generation, the largest group of people born from 1946 to 1964. Each of the figures below illustrates the different characteristics of each generational group.

Figure 2: Generation Ages Values

Characteristics	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Millenials	Generation Z
Born*	1945 - 1964	1961 - 1981	1975 - 1995	1995 - 2015
Avg. US National Population*	71.2 Million	63.7 Million	83.1 Million	86.6 Million
Family Values & Situations	Strong family values Multi-child families Strong respect towards elders	First latchkey children Increased divorce rates Redefinition of family values	Single-parented children Divorce becomes common Loss of traditions	Single or same sex parents Little attachment to traditional values Perceives family as support
Values & Attributes	Redefinition of traditional values Independent, liberal, experimental, free-spirited	Ethical, independent, adaptable, open to diversity	Optimistic, independent, adventurous, conservative, open-minded, entrepreneurial	Internet savvy, conservative, impatient, creative, innovative, social, visual, adventurous, hyper-aware
Workforce Values	Strong work ethic Loyal to their job Strong group workforce	Loyal to their job Increasing female workforce More individually focused	Seek good work/life balance Strong sense of entitlement	Multitaskers, adventurous Seek flexibility, reality & openness Creative, innovative, entrepreneurial
Global Events	Post-WWII Peace & Love Movement Rock & Roll Assassinations of JFK, RFK & MLK	Berlin Wall Watergate scandal Moon landing Vietnam War Civil Rights Movement	Rise of technology Environmental issues Financial crisis Terrorism	Rise of social media Same sex marriage Climate change Terrorism
Icons	JFK Mickey Mantle	Madonna Michael Jackson	Steve Jobs Mark Zuckerberg	Taylor Swift Roger Federer
Communication Mediums	Face-to-face Radio TV Print & direct mail	Email Mobile Face-to-face TV	Mobile / Smartphones Email Digital Instant messaging	Mobile / Smartphones Digital Facetime, Skype, Hangouts Instant messaging

* Estimate

Figure 2.1: Generation Ages in the Workplace

GENERATION	WORK STYLE	AUTHORITY/ LEADERSHIP	COMMUNICATION	RECOGNITION/ REWARD	WORK/FAMILY	LOYALTY	TECHNOLOGY
Traditionalists	By the book - "how" is as important as "what" gets done	Command/control; rarely question authority	Formal and through proper channels	Personal acknowledgement and compensation for work well done	Work and family should be kept separate	To the organization	"If it ain't broke, don't fix it"
Baby Boomers	Get it done - whatever it takes - nights/weekends	Respect for power/ accomplishment	Somewhat formal - through structured network	Public acknowledgement and career advancement	Work comes first	To the importance and meaning of work	Necessary for progress
Generation X	Find the fastest route to results; protocol secondary	Rules are flexible; collaboration is important	Casual and direct; sometimes skeptical	A balance of fair compensation and ample time off as reward	Value work/life balance	To individual career goals	Practical tools for getting things done
Millennials	Work to deadlines - not necessarily to schedules	Value autonomy; less inclined to pursue leadership positions	Casual and direct; eager to please	Individual and public praise; opportunity for broadening skills	Value blending personal life into work	To the people involved with the project	What else is there?

The Millennial Generation is defined as an educated group of young adults between the ages of 18 to 36 years old, according to the 2015 U.S. Census Bureau. 83.1 million millennials born around the early 1980s to the early 2000s are shifting how companies market their products and services. Millennials are unique since they grew up in a digital world and make many decisions given their relationships within this digital world.

The Millennials, like other generations, establish a community persona with core traits, values and beliefs. According to Howe and Strauss there are seven core millennial traits: Special, Sheltered, Confident, Team Oriented, Conventional, Pressured and Achieving (Emeagwali, 2011). Howe and Strauss are social researchers who named the “Millennial Generation” and established a set of common traits, which set the generation apart from prior generations (Bennett, Maton and Kervin, 2008). The seven core traits, are the values adapted to millennials: “They have a strong importance to their parents and to the nation; they have become the focus of the youth-protection movement; they are optimistic and trusting of a better future; have a desire to build group community and form strong peer connections; they are interested in developing new rules; they feel great pressure to succeed and meet increasing demands; and they are focused on achievement and meeting high expectations” (Emeagwali, 2011).

Target: Meet the Millennials

According to Bridgette Croke, Vice President of MyActions - a social platform focusing on consumer behavioral change, “To best mobilize the millennial generation, we need to understand what core values and trends drive behavior change” (Croke, 2014). In the article, “How to engage millennials? Appeal to 3 Core Values, 3 Core Traits,” Croke

breaks down the values and traits of the millennial generation. When marketing to this generation, it is important to remember millennials grew up in a digital world. Digital tools have surrounded Millennials and finding information has always been at their fingertips. Millennials are becoming strong critical decision makers over time (Croke, 2014). Millennials have become “riders on the information superhighway” (Brown, 2011). They prefer information associated with the Internet and continue to use e-mail as a strong form of communication (Brown, 2011). Croke believes the three millennial core values circulate around Belonging, Recognition and “Need for Ease.”

Belonging

The Millennial Generation responds well to feeling a sense of “belonging” to a group, campaign and classroom (Nowak, Thach, and Olsen, 2006). Developing social interaction opportunities and relationships with millennials is key for consumer buy-in.

Understanding their wants and needs is imperative to building these relationships and a sense of belonging with the Millennial Generation (Nowak, Thach, and Olsen, 2006).

Recognition

The Millennial Generation appreciates recognition, especially in the workforce.

Millennials seek recognition through titles, praise, promotions and pay (Gursoy, Maier, Chi, 2008). Millennials will share ideas in the workforce, but still look for recognition.

This recognition seeking is looking for an immediate response (Gursoy, Maier, Chi, 2008). The marketing world plays on the millennial need for immediate recognition.

Enabling millennials to feel recognized and appreciated strengthens the producer-consumer relationship.

Strong marketing companies and causes create opportunities for millennials to contribute to their messages, which appear as a “Cool Factor” (Croke, 2014). The Millennial Generation seeks new “cool factor” ideas to join and be recognized for their participation. Marketers position their brand and products to appear “cool” to encourage millennial participation. Companies use social media as a “cool factor” to develop relationships with millennial consumers. Companies encourage the group to get involved by participating in sharing posts, photos and even contests. The millennials can promote companies by using specific #hashtags; a word or phrase preceded by the # symbol that can be categorized or classified over social media and has accompanying text (Merriam-Webster, 2008) and company social networking handles; a username on an online forum or social media site (Oxford, n.d.), which drives other viewers to companies’ social media pages and websites. While the company produces one item for marketing, the need to be recognized is so powerful among millennials that it is shared at a quick pace on a mass media scale. This allows millennials to participate, by giving them a “voice” in company marketing actions, messages and other “cool factors”. Through social media, everything is shareable, likable and provides easy opportunities for participation to be applauded and recognized.

Need for Ease

Similar to keeping the Millennial Generation involved, it is important to develop quick and easy ways for millennials to participate in marketing efforts. Since they grew up in a digital and fast paced world, they want to receive limited, quick and easy information. This way they can quickly decide “yes” or “no” to participate and continue with their heavily planned schedules. They live a lifestyle of multitasking, accelerated communication, constant connection and immediate gratification (Paquette, Moore, Claveria, 2014).

According to Croke’s three values, establishing trust with millennial consumers is important to not only sell products or ideas, but to develop strong consumer-producer relationships and trust and confidence in the brand. Even though the majority of consumers desire trust, relationships and confidence in brands; the level of belonging, recognition seeking, and easy processing is imperative to millennial consumers.

Millennial Lifestyle

Millennial lifestyle is said to be one that contradicts traditional marketing and research methods (Paquette, Moore, Claveria, 2014). They are always multitasking, staying connected while on the move and prefer to “Google it” prior to making purchases. Millennials, it is claimed, have very short attention spans due to communicating concisely through texting, “Tweeting” and #hashtaging; which is believed to have developed and defined the short attention span trait (Paquette, Moore, Claveria, 2014).

Millennials prefer a lifestyle of group collaboration and teamwork; they want to participate and have their ideas heard (Paquette, Moore, Claveria, 2014).

Millennial Marketing Mistakes

Marketing has picked up on the traits of millennials, but some marketers forget about the variation within the Millennial Generation (Fromm, 2014). Millennials are a diverse group who fall within a wide range of differences in taste, behaviors and income levels (Fromm, 2014). However, millennials not only want to be engaged in company brands, they also want brands to be functional and incorporate actions for the public good and take a stance on world-views (Fromm, 2014). This generation believes they can make a difference in the world and they relate to brands which promote the same values (Nowak, Thach, and Olsen, 2006).

Brand Equity and Food Marketing

The food marketing industry has really focused on creating branding opportunities to appeal more to the Millennial Generation. The wine industry has focused on establishing brand loyalty through emotional marketing to millennials. Wineries targeted millennials sooner than many other types of firms, in fact as soon as the group reached a target wine consuming age between 21-29 years (Nowak, Thach, and Olsen, 2006). Emotional marketing, which is measured by loyal customers spending more money on certain brands of wine, established “emotional bonds with customers by showing they cared for customers as people and incorporated lifestyle-based persuasion to build up their winery’s brand equity” (Nowak, Thach, and Olsen, 2006). Brand equity is “the added

value with which a given brand endows a product” (Edell & Moore, 1993, p.196).

Positive emotional marketing develops a sense of belonging, which is a priority to millennials (Nowak, Thach, and Olsen, 2006). Wineries reached out to the millennials to establish strong consumer-producer relationships to develop brand loyalty, which not only increased cash flow, but also their consumer base; millennials shared their experiences with their friends and introduced new customers to the brand. In a study by Matthew C. H. Yeung, there is a direct linear relationship between consumer satisfaction and profitability (Nowak, Thach, and Olsen, 2006), the higher the happiness of customers the higher economic returns.

Word of Mouth and Brand Loyalty

Keywords like “word of mouth” and “brand loyalty” are important in the food industry because they drive millennials buying preferences. Brands develop an “extension of the consumer’s self-concept to offer value as a method of self-expression and self definition” (Ruane & Wallace, 2015). This allows brands to promote group membership for millennials to identify with the brand.

Advertising and Brand Equity:

According to Rossolatos, (2014) “brand equity is a function of the level or depth and scale of brand awareness and the strength, favorability and uniqueness of brand associations.” The concept itself is multidimensional and encompasses brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived quality, brand association and particular brand assets (Nowak, Thach, & Olsen, 2006). Consumers’ attitudes and “memory structure for a

brand” are both influenced by advertising and established brand equity (Edell & Moore, 1993, p.196). “Memory structure for a brand” influences consumers’ processing, reinforcing images and accessibility of brands (Mitchell, 2013, p. 205). Typically, over time consumers establish a memory with the brand through multiple exposures and experiences. Advertising is powerful and persuasive; it traditionally delivers messages of the brand’s values through different forms of media.

Summary

Commonly known as a “Buzzword,” food movement marketers have adapted the one word phrase to promote brand values and publicize world views. A “buzzword,” is a word or a phrase; it is fashionable at a particular time or in particular context (Oxford, n.d.). Similar to the #hashtag, the “buzzword” depicts the intended message in a quick, concise manner. The buzzwords in food marketing send cues that relay quick information to millennials, which conveniently reflects millennial marketing preferences. Millennials are always on the go, therefore quick and concise informative messages are more preferable (Paquette, Moore, Claveria, 2014). Food health buzzwords have become the easiest way to advertise because millennial shoppers will look for “cues” to help them determine if a product is healthier (Northup, 2014).

Food buzzwords have surged from US organizations with Certified Food Labeling Programs, which have grown dramatically over the years. Food labeling programs like the USDA, Food Alliance, Certified Angus, to name a few - are group based and have specific rules and regulations producers must follow in order to partake in the marketing

efforts. Simply, all producers who join and qualify for the program can be associated with the program's label. The label allows products to be grouped with the same buzzword, which make shopping decisions much easier for millennial consumers. Buzzwords such as USDA Organic, GMO Free, Certified Black Angus Beef, USDA Choice, etc. act as "cues" to convey the determined message for consumers.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

Research Design

In order to effectively analyze the relationship between millennial consumers and their purchasing of food products associated with buzzwords, the researcher utilized an Exploratory Design Survey using primarily Likert scales and open questions. The Exploratory Survey was conducted using a two-part online questionnaire. The first part of the survey focused on quantitative questions to gather data and the second part asked the participants to respond to open-ended questions.

The survey entitled, “Determining Millennial Food Buying Preferences Based on Product Association with Buzzwords”, provided a quantitative data overview of buzzword preferences and priorities placed on food products by millennial consumers. 2,498 surveys were electronically distributed to students in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment. Qualtrics Survey Software housed the survey’s design, creation and export of results. SPSS software was utilized to analyze the survey responses.

Participants were allotted a one-week period, April 14th to April 21st to complete the survey. The survey was initially delivered to participants via private e-mail through the University of Kentucky, College of Agriculture, Food and Environment Listserv on Tuesday, April 14, 2015. Students were reminded to complete the survey seven days later on Monday, April 20, 2015.

To ensure survey verification, there was a pilot test sent to the thesis committee and supporting researchers to test possible electronic error, prior to the survey going live for participants. The open-ended portion of the survey asked participants to reflect on the buzzwords and purchasing questions and design a “Twitter” post to show their perspective on food buzzwords. Twitter was selected as the media outlet method because the responses would be short and reflect the importance of their ideas in the shortest amount of words.

Sample Population

The study was designed to appeal to College of Agriculture, Food and Environment students. All students in CAFE, that is, all undergraduate and graduate students in the College represent the study population. The study population is a direct sample of the millennial generation, by age and reflecting the diversity of the agriculture, food and environmental concerns of today’s society. As students in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, their professional opinions are connected to their education. This group is among the next generation whom will be entering the career and job field, furthering their education and/or finalizing their “on their own” survival skills as they begin their journey into established careers after college education.

Survey Design

The sections in the survey begin with the an overview of the survey participants demographics. This allowed the reseacher to sort the data into groups. The demographics section is followed by questions addressing the shopping ideals of the participants. This

section outlines where the participants grocery shop and what kind of foods they prefer to purchase. The second half of the survey is the Buzzword section. This is the main focus of the study and survey. This Buzzword section is broken into three sub-groups: Environmental, Animal Health, and Personal Health. After survey participants completed the 3 sub-sections, participants were asked to select their top five most important buzzwords from all three groups together. The final section of the survey is the media portion. One question asks participants about food advertisements. The final section asks participants to be creative and design their own “Twitter” post to promote their own buzzword preferences. This allows participants to contribute to the research in a creative way. Prior to sending the survey live to participants, a pilot test involved sending the survey to the committee chair, fellow graduate students, and experts in the research field. This allowed the researcher to check for survey format error, the clarity of the questions, overall survey appearance and reliability, etc.

Survey Implementation

2,498 total surveys were sent through the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment student listserv. 156 surveys were completed prior to an email reminder and 68 surveys were completed after the reminder. There were 224 total surveys completed and analyzed for this study.

Due to incomplete surveys, missing information, or other reasons, only 224 responses were valid, providing a response rate of 9.76 percent.

Using an online survey

Surveys are among the most popular methods used to gather data (Cobanoglu &

Cobanoglu, 2003). However, web-based surveys are only acceptable if the entire population has access and confidence using the Internet (Cobanoglu & Cobanoglu, 2003). Since the millennial population is known for their involvement in technology, a web-based survey best appealed to the sample population. Qualtrics also supports mobile devices and allows participants to complete the survey on the go. However, with online surveys there is the possibility for error due to technology problems, incorrect email address, unfinished surveys, unopened emails. There were no incentives to complete this survey.

Chapter 4 - Results

The purpose of this study is to explore the impact of food marketing buzzwords in terms of social “buy-in” and shopping purchases made by the millennial generation. The initial analysis considers participants' food purchasing habits based on their age, geographic location, gender, educational status and degree, and current residence. The researcher divided the buzzwords into three categories: Environmental Health, Animal Health and Personal Health. But first, it is important to describe the characteristics of the entire sample. Below is an overview of the frequency and descriptive numbers and percentage distribution of the responses to the survey, “Determining Millennial Food Buying Preferences Based on Food Buzzword Marketing.” The millennial generation encompasses people born between the years 1980 – 1997.

Of the 224 survey participants, 93.7% represent the millennial generation and the remaining 6.3% are older than the millennial generation. Initially, the study was designed to compare the older population to the millennial generation, but there was not a sufficient sample size to compare the two groups. However, there is sufficient data within the millennial population to make comparisons and trends within the group.

Table 4.1 Ages of Survey Participants

Year of Birth	Frequency	Percent
Before 1980	14	6.3
1980-1984	12	5.4
1985-1989	38	17.0
1990-1994	110	49.1
1995-1997	50	22.3
Total	224	100.0

Where are the survey participants from? The majority (63.8%) of the survey participants are from the southeast region, 27.7% of the participants are from outside of the southeast region, and 8.5% are from outside of the US. Based on this analysis of the survey participants' home region, the comparison of regional home of the student participants will be from inside and outside of the southeast region.

Table 4.2 Home Regions of Survey Participants

Home Region	Frequency	Percent
Midwest - IA, IL, IN, KS, MI, MN, MO, ND, NE, OH, SD, WI	36	16.1
Northeast - CT, DC, DE, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT	19	8.5
Southeast - AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV	143	63.8
Southwest - AZ, NM, OK, TX	2	.9
West - AK, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY	5	2.2
Outside of the US, (If not listed, please add)	19	8.5
Total	224	100.0

What gender are the survey participants? 76.3% of the participants are female, 22.8% are males and 0.9% chose not to answer.

Table 4.3 Genders of Survey Participants

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	51	22.8
Female	171	76.3
Prefer not to answer	2	.9
Total	224	100.0

What education level are the survey participants? 38.4% of the participants are in graduate school or equivalent and 61.6% of the participants are undergraduates.

Table 4.4 Education Level of Survey Participants

Education Level	Frequency	Percent
Freshman	24	10.7
Sophomore	30	13.4
Junior	33	14.7
Senior	51	22.8
Graduate Student	82	36.6
Other: Post-Bac, Post Doc	4	1.8
Total	224	100.0

What major do the survey participants represent? This table shows the grouping of the majors into four disciplinary areas: Family and Food Science, Social Science, Ag Science, and Environment/Natural Resources. This recoding of majors will be used to determine if there are differences in the influence of marketing buzzwords and purchasing habits of students within academic programs at the University of Kentucky, College of Agriculture, Food and Environment.

Table 4.5 Major Classifications of Survey Participants

Degree	Frequency	Percent
1-Family and Food Science: Dietetics, Pre-dietetics, Food Science, Nutrition, Family Science	60	26.8
2-Social Sciences: Agricultural Education, Career and Technical Education, Community and Leadership Development, Agricultural Economics	59	26.3
3-Ag Sciences: Animal Science, Pre-Vet, Equine, Dairy, Entomology, Agricultural Engineering and Biotechnology	51	22.8
4-Environment and Natural Resources: Plant and Soil Sciences, Sustainable Ag, Natural Resource Management, Forestry, Landscape Architecture	54	24.1
Total	224	100.0

Where do the millennials in this study buy most of their food? The majority of the survey participants (75%), shop at conventional, corporate-chain grocery stores, like Kroger, Meijer, etc. Given the high proportion of respondents who shop at the same type of grocery store, this variable will not be examined further as a factor in respondents' purchasing habits.

Table 4.6 Millennials Preferred Food Shopping Locations

Store	Frequency	Percent
Conventional, Corporate-Chains: (Kroger, Meijer, Safeway, Lucky)	168	75.0
Super-Centers: (Wal-Mart, Target, K-Mart)	20	8.9
Membership Based, Wholesale: (Costco, Sam's Club)	3	1.3
Discounted Supermarkets-Chains: (Aldi, Save-A-Lot)	6	2.7
Corporate Specialty-Food Chains: (Whole Foods, Trader Joe's, The Fresh Market)	14	6.3
Service Provided Restaurants, Cafeteria, Café's, Fast Food: (Subway, Campus Dining, Panera, BWW's, Mad Mushroom)	6	2.7
Co-ops, Locally Owned: (Good Food's Market & Cafe, Farmer's Markets)	5	2.2
Other: (Kroger and Walmart, Local and Conventional Chains)	2	.9
Total	224	100.0

Do millennial groups differ in their choice of food shopping location? Within the millennial sample population, at least 74% from each of the four age groups selected "Kroger" as their preferred grocery store. 12% of the youngest millennial age: born 1995-1997 selected Super-Centers as their preferred grocery; compared to the 35.7% of the oldest group, born before 1980. This group also selected "Kroger" at a 50% preference level.

Table 4.7 Millennials Preferred Food Shopping Locations, Based on Age

Store	Before 1980	1980-1984	1985-1989	1990-1994	1995-1997	Total
Conventional, Corporate-Chains: (Kroger, Meijer, Safeway, Lucky)	7 (50.0%)	9 (75.0%)	31 (81.6%)	84 (76.4%)	37 (74.0%)	168 (75.0%)
Super-Centers: (Wal-Mart, Target, K-Mart)	5 (35.7%)	1 (8.3%)	1 (5.3%)	7 (6.4%)	6 (12.0%)	20 (8.9%)
Membership Based, Wholesale: (Costco, Sam's Club)	0	0	2 (5.3%)	1 (0.9%)	0	3 (1.3%)
Discounted Supermarkets-Chains: (Aldi, Save-A-Lot)	0	0	1 (2.6%)	4 (3.6%)	1 (2.0%)	6 (2.7%)
Corporate Specialty-Food Chains: (Whole Foods, Trader Joe's, The Fresh Market)	1 (7.1%)	1 (8.3%)	3 (7.9%)	7 (6.4%)	2 (4.0%)	14 (6.3%)
Service Provided Restaurants, Cafeteria, Café's, Fast Food: (Subway, Campus Dining, Panera, BWW's, Mad Mushroom)	0	0	0	2 (1.8%)	4 (8.0%)	6 (2.7%)
Co-ops, Locally Owned: (Good Food's Market & Cafe, Farmer's Markets)	1 (7.1%)	0	0	4 (4.6%)	0	5 (2.2%)
Other: (Kroger and Walmart, Local and Conventional Chains)	0	1 (8.3%)	0	1 (0.9%)	0	2 (0.9%)
Total	14 100%	12 100%	38 100%	110 100%	50 100%	224 100%

Does gender influence grocery shopping locations? 168 of the male and female participants or 75% selected Conventional, Corporate-Chains such as Kroger, Meijer, etc.

as their main grocery store – which was expected. Interestingly, the next most popular choices were Super-Centers and Corporate Specialty-Food Chains. Both were closer in numbers, while stores favoring membership and price discounts, like Costco and Sam’s Club were not as popular.

Table 4.8 Preferred Food Shopping Locations by Gender of Survey Participants

Store	Male	Female	Total
Conventional, Corporate-Chains: (Kroger, Meijer, Safeway, Lucky)	37 (72.5%)	129 (75.4%)	168 (75.0%)
Super-Centers: (Wal-Mart, Target, K-Mart)	5 (9.8%)	15 (8.8%)	20 (8.9%)
Membership Based, Wholesale: (Costco, Sam’s Club)	2 (3.9%)	1 (0.6%)	3 (1.3%)
Discounted Supermarkets-Chains: (Aldi, Save-A-Lot)	1 (2.0%)	5 (2.9%)	6 (2.3%)
Corporate Specialty-Food Chains: (Whole Foods, Trader Joe’s, The Fresh Market)	5 (9.8%)	9 (5.3%)	14 (5.3%)
Service Provided Restaurants, Cafeteria, Café’s, Fast Food: (Subway, Campus Dining, Panera, BWW’s, Mad Mushroom)	0	6 (3.5%)	6 (2.3%)
Co-ops, Locally Owned: (Good Food’s Market & Cafe, Farmer’s Markets)	0	5 (2.9%)	5 (2.2%)
Other: (Kroger and Walmart, Local and Conventional Chains)	1 (2.0%)	1 (0.6%)	2 (0.9%)
Total	51 100%	171 100%	224 100%

Is there a relationship between the survey participants academic major and where they prefer to grocery shop? Interestingly, there is some variation among academic majors.

Participants with Ag Science classifications are more likely to shop at Conventional and Corporate-Chains at 86.2% compared to 68.3% of the Family and Food Science participants. In terms of Super-Centers, the majority of shoppers are 15.2% of the Social Science classification. 13.3% of the Family and Food Science participants prefer

Corporate Specialty Food Chains, like Whole Foods, but less than 5.5% of the other majors shop at this type of food store.

Table 4.9 Preferred Food Shopping Locations, Based on Academic Major

	Family and Food Science	Social Science	Ag Science	Environment/ Natural Resources	Total
Conventional, Corporate-Chains: (Kroger, Meijer, Safeway, Lucky)	41 (68.3%)	43 (72.8%)	44 (86.2%)	40 (74.0%)	168 (75.0%)
Super-Centers: (Wal-Mart, Target, K-Mart)	5 (8.3%)	9 (15.2%)	3 (5.8%)	3 (5.5%)	20 (8.9%)
Membership Based, Wholesale: (Costco, Sam's Club)	0	2 (3.3%)	0	1 (1.8%)	3 (1.3%)
Discounted Supermarkets-Chains: (Aldi, Save-A-Lot)	2 (3.3%)	1 (1.6%)	1 (1.9%)	2 (3.7%)	6 (2.6%)
Corporate Specialty-Food Chains: (Whole Foods, Trader Joe's, The Fresh Market)	8 (13.3%)	1 (1.6%)	2 (3.9%)	3 (5.5%)	14 (6.2%)
Service Provided Restaurants, Cafeteria, Café's, Fast Food: (Subway, Campus Dining, Panera, BWW's, Mad Mushroom)	2 (3.3%)	3 (5.0%)	0	1 (1.8%)	6 (2.6%)
Co-ops, Locally Owned: (Good Food's Market & Cafe, Farmer's Markets)	1 (1.6%)	0	1 (1.9%)	3 (5.5%)	5 (2.2%)
Other: (Kroger and Walmart, Local and Conventional Chains)	1 (1.6%)	0	0	1 (1.8%)	2 (0.8%)
Total	60 100%	59 100%	51 100%	54 100%	224 100%

What factors influence the food purchasing decisions of millennials as a group? To answer this question, the next table presents the mean response rate for 7 factors that could influence the decision to purchase a food item. Price is the most influential factor in

purchasing products from the grocery store with an average mean of 3.5 on a scale of 0 – 4. Purchasing “Locally Grown and Kentucky Proud” foods is the next most influential items with a mean of 2.0. US Grown: 1.8, Environmental Impact and Greener: 1.58, Humane Production and Cage Free: 1.57, Low Fat and Gluten Free and Sugar Free and Low Carb 1.5, Certified Organic: 1.2. Given that the respondents are all college students, it is not surprising that price is the most important factor in their purchasing decision. What is surprising is that none of the other characteristics rose above a mean of 2.05. This suggests that the limited income of millennials may trump any other value that might influence their buying decisions.

Table 4.11 Influences on Millennials' Food Purchasing Decisions

Categories	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Price	222	3.5077	.72623
Locally Grown, Kentucky Proud Products, Family Farm Producers	212	2.0547	1.20167
U.S. Grown	206	1.8612	1.23251
Environmental Impact, Greener	193	1.5803	1.21759
Humane Production, Free Range, Cage Free	192	1.5750	1.25289
Low Fat, Gluten Free, Sugar Free, Low Carb, 100 Calories	193	1.5088	1.29485
Certified Organic	189	1.2905	1.15598
Valid N (listwise)	171		

When purchasing groceries, what types of food do the respondents primarily purchase? 61.6% of the survey participants purchase mostly raw and fresh foods, 36.6% purchase mostly packaged, boxed, or bagged food items, and 1.8% purchase mostly takeaway prepared food items. For future researchers - this question should have been written as:

“What percentage of the following food items make up your grocery store purchases?”

This would enable researchers to see what the participants were purchasing in a comparative manner, not just what they mostly buy.

Table 4.12 Types of Foods Purchased by Survey Participants

Food Categories	Frequency	Percent
Raw, Fresh (Ex: Fresh Fruits, Vegetables and Meats - Not Frozen, No Processed Preservatives)	138	61.6%
Packaged, Boxed, Bagged (Ex: Cereals, Lunch Meats, Frozen Meats or Meals)	82	36.6%
Take Away, Prepared, Ready to Go (Ex: Rotisserie Chicken, Deli Salads or Sandwiches)	4	1.8%
Total	224	100.0%

Based on age, what are the participants purchasing at grocery stores? The majority of all participants purchase raw and fresh food. However, when you examine each age group within the millennial sample, the youngest group purchases the least amount of raw and fresh food at 46%. More than half (52%) of this group, who are born between 1995-1997, purchases packaged, boxed or bagged food items. The oldest group of millennials, those born between 1980-1984, report the highest rate (8.3%) of purchasing of takeaway and ready made food items.

Table 4.13 Foods Mostly Purchased at Stores by Millennial Age Group

Food Categories	Before 1980	1980-1984	1985-1989	1990-1994	1995-1997	Total
Raw, Fresh (Ex: Fresh Fruits, Vegetables and Meats - Not Frozen, No Processed Preservatives)	10 (71.4%)	9 (75.0%)	30 (78.9%)	66 (60.0%)	23 (46.0%)	138 (61.6%)
Packaged, Boxed,	4	2	7	43	26	82

Table 4.13 Foods Mostly Purchased at Stores by Millennial Age Group (continued)

Bagged (Ex: Cereals, Lunch Meats, Frozen Meats or Meals)	(28.5%)	(16.6%)	(18.4%)	(39.0%)	(52.0%)	(36.6%)
Take Away, Prepared, Ready to Go (Ex: Rotisserie Chicken, Deli Salads or Sandwiches)	0	1 (8.3%)	1 (2.6%)	1 (0.9%)	1 (2.0%)	4 (1.7%)
Total	14 100%	12 100%	38 100%	110 100%	50 100%	224 100%

Pearson Chi-Square Asymptotic Significance is .034 (8 df). 6 cells (40.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .21.

What types of foods do male and female millennials purchase at stores? The table below shows there is no significant difference by gender in the types of foods purchased at stores. Even given the lack of significance, the results raise some interesting questions. For example, do the responses reflect actual behavior or, what respondents thought of as the “socially acceptable” response? In other words, millennials are supposed to be health conscious, so did they choose the response that most fit the stereotype of their generation?

Table 4.14 Foods Mostly Purchased at Stores by Millennials' Gender

Food Categories	Male	Female	Total
Raw, Fresh (Ex: Fresh Fruits, Vegetables and Meats - Not Frozen, No Processed Preservatives)	32 (62.7%)	105 (61.4%)	138 (61.6%)
Packaged, Boxed, Bagged (Ex: Cereals, Lunch Meats, Frozen Meats or Meals)	18 (35.2%)	63 (36.8%)	82 (36.6%)
Take Away, Prepared, Ready to Go (Ex: Rotisserie Chicken, Deli Salads or Sandwiches)	1 (1.9%)	3 (1.7%)	4 (1.7%)
Total	51 100%	171 100%	224 100%

Is academic major related to what participants purchase at the grocery? 75.9% of Environmental/Natural Resources participants purchase mostly raw and fresh foods,

followed by 66.7% of the Family and Food Sciences participants. 45.7% of the Social Science and 45% of the Ag Science participants mostly purchase packaged and boxed food items.

Table 4.15 Foods Mostly Purchased at Stores, Based on Major Classification

	Family and Food Science	Social Science	Ag Science	Enviro/ Natural Resources	Total
Raw, Fresh (Ex: Fresh Fruits, Vegetables and Meats - Not Frozen, No Processed Preservatives)	40 (66.7%)	30 (50.8%)	27 (52.9%)	41 (75.9%)	138 (61.6%)
Packaged, Boxed, Bagged (Ex: Cereals, Lunch Meats, Frozen Meats or Meals)	19 (31.6%)	27 (45.7%)	23 (45.0)	13 (24.0%)	82 (36.6%)
Take Away, Prepared, Ready to Go (Ex: Rotisserie Chicken, Deli Salads or Sandwiches)	1 (1.6%)	2 (3.3%)	1 (1.9)	0	4 (1.7%)
Total	60 100%	59 100%	51 100%	54 100%	224 100%

In summary, the participants in this study seem to prefer purchasing raw, fresh foods from their stores of choice. In an initial research hypothesis, it was assumed this group would purchase mostly packaged and ready-made foods to follow their “on the go” lifestyle. This data suggests the group is more interested in health and buying fresher foods.

Food-related buzzwords and millennials' purchasing habits

The second half of the survey focuses on the evaluation of food buzzwords and their influence on food purchasing habits at stores. Participants were asked to rank the following buzzwords within their designated categories. Here is the breakdown from each category, based on mean: Environmental Health, Animal Health, and Personal Health.

Environmental Health

When asking millennials to think about buzzwords in connection to the environment, “locally grown” was the buzzword that had the most influence on their food purchases. The top three most influential buzzwords listed on a scale of 0 to 4.0: Locally Grown at a mean value of 2.4, Kentucky Proud at 2.3, and No Pesticides/Herbicides at 2.0. GMO Free ranked as the lowest at 1.4. Thus, it can be said that for these respondents, GMO Free products are not an influential buzzword to their purchasing habits. Participants had the option to write additional buzzwords in each buzzword section. The Environmental Buzzword write-ins were: All Nature and Natural Ingredients, Cage Free, Fair Trade Certified, Fresh, Gluten Free, Halal Food, Heirloom, No Artificial Sweeteners, Non-Organic, and 10 for 10, Sale.

Animal Health

In the Animal Health Buzzword category, the highest ranked buzzword on a scale of 0 to 4.0 is No Antibiotics/Hormones with a mean of 2.3; USDA Beef was ranked at 2.2 and Fresh Poultry was averaged at 2.0. The three lowest ranked buzzwords are Heritage Breeds at .90, Corn-Finished at .80, and Kosher (.71). In terms of variation among the

means, No Antibiotics/Hormones had the most variance in standard deviation at 1.4, which suggests that participants disagreed in ranking the importance of this buzzword. Corn-Finished has the smallest standard deviation from the mean of .95, which means most participants agreed the Corn-Finished was not as important as other buzzwords when selecting groceries and does not impact their purchasing habits. The Animal Health Buzzword write-ins were: Kentucky Raised, Halal Meat, Locally Produced, and Grass-Finished.

Personal Health

In the Personal Health Buzzword section, Fresh is the most influential buzzword for millennials. Fresh with a mean of 2.5 on a scale of 0.0 to 4.0, was followed by Whole Wheat at 2.4 and No Preservatives at 2.2. The two lowest ranked buzzwords were Gluten Free ranked at .9 and Lactose-Free at .7. No Preservatives has a high variance with a standard deviation of 1.4, which suggests that many participants disagreed on the level of importance this buzzword has on their food purchases, even though No Preservatives was listed with the third highest average mean. The Personal Health Buzzword write-ins were: Healthy, No Added Nitrates, No Added Sugars or Sweeteners, Soy Free, and No High Fructose Corn Syrup.

Table 4.16 All Buzzwords Sorted Based on Mean: Grouped in One Table (N = 224)

Buzzwords	Valid N	Percent selected scale value < 0	Mean	Std. Deviation
Environmental Health Buzzwords				
Locally Grown	209	93.30%	2.4316	1.21729

Table 4.16 All Buzzwords Sorted Based on Mean: Grouped in One Table (continued)

Certified Kentucky Proud	207	92.40%	2.3802	1.30419
No Pesticides / No Herbicides	191	85.30%	2.0157	1.2868
Sustainably Grown	186	83.00%	1.728	1.20682
Eco-Friendly	185	82.60%	1.6071	1.30843
Grass-Fed	183	81.70%	1.5557	1.10703
Certified Organic	183	81.70%	1.5519	1.2656
Green	178	79.50%	1.5073	1.18465
GMO Free	168	75.00%	1.4946	1.33548
Other 1	42		1.1286	1.68498
Other 2	31		0.3419	1.06701
Animal Health Buzzwords				
No Antibiotics, Steroids or Hormones	190	84.80%	2.3184	1.4404
USDA Graded Beef	184	82.10%	2.2924	1.36712
Pasture Raised	183	81.70%	2.0164	1.34249
Humanely Slaughtered	180	80.40%	1.9561	1.36616
Free Range or Cage Free	179	79.90%	1.8709	1.36598
Fresh Poultry	177	79.00%	1.7886	1.30339
Family Farm Raised	175	78.10%	1.7378	1.29729
Grass-Fed	172	76.80%	1.6623	1.239
Certified Branded Beef (Angus, Hereford, Harris Ranch)	169	75.40%	1.5556	1.23794
Naturally Raised	165	73.70%	1.5297	1.2327
Heritage Breeds	162	72.30%	1.0819	1.24819
rBGH-free	155	69.20%	0.9753	1.05801
Corn Finished	154	68.80%	0.8675	0.95861
Kosher	149	66.50%	0.7074	1.02279
Other 1	35		0.7086	1.49634
Other 2	29		0.1552	0.72633
Personal Health Buzzwords				
Fresh	204	91.10%	2.5961	1.37346
Whole Wheat, Multigrain	195	87.10%	2.459	1.29721
No Preservatives	187	83.50%	2.2348	1.41133
Low-fat, Light	178	79.50%	1.864	1.33728
Low Sodium, Low Cholesterol	177	79.00%	1.7859	1.35983
Fat Free	173	77.20%	1.7525	1.34258

Table 4.16 All Buzzwords Sorted Based on Mean: Grouped in One Table (continued)

Lean, Extra Lean	170	75.90%	1.6655	1.33278
Fortified, Enriched	169	75.40%	1.585	1.36207
Certified Organic	167	74.60%	1.5737	1.3757
All-Natural	165	73.70%	1.5429	1.49368
100 Calories!	160	71.40%	1.3739	1.39036
GMO Free	157	70.10%	1.2728	1.19571
Tastes Great!	154	68.80%	1.1981	1.25725
Gluten-free	148	66.10%	0.9973	1.29751
Lactose Free	145	64.70%	0.7897	1.21328
Other 1	30		0.68	1.41065
Other 2	22		0.2545	0.83251

However, when compared back to the group as a whole there seems to be a pattern among a few buzzwords: Grass-Fed, Certified Organic, GMO Free, All-Natural and Naturally Raised were all in multiple categories. This was designed to see if the participants selected words based on a general buzzword or if thinking about a category made a difference. Grass-Fed, Certified Organic and GMO Free all had different values to the participants based on the category in which they appeared. However All-Natural and Naturally Raised were ranked with the same values and are not significant to this sample population. Here is a table to show the comparison of all the buzzwords by the most selected across all categories combined.

Table 4.17 All Buzzwords Compared by Mean

Buzzword	Buzzword Category	N	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation	Missing N	Percent
Fresh	PB	204	91.10%	2.5961	1.37346	20	8.90%
Whole Wheat, Multigrain	PB	195	87.10%	2.459	1.29721	29	12.90%
Locally Grown	EB	209	93.30%	2.4316	1.21729	15	6.70%
Certified Kentucky Proud	EB	207	92.40%	2.3802	1.30419	17	7.60%
No Antibiotics, Steroids or	AB	190	84.80%	2.3184	1.4404	34	15.20%

Table 4.17 All Buzzwords Compared by Mean (continued)

Hormones							
USDA Graded Beef	AB	184	82.10%	2.2924	1.36712	40	17.90%
No Preservatives	PB	187	83.50%	2.2348	1.41133	37	16.50%
Pasture Raised	AB	183	81.70%	2.0164	1.34249	41	18.30%
No Pesticides / No Herbicides	EB	191	85.30%	2.0157	1.2868	33	14.70%
Humanely Slaughtered	AB	180	80.40%	1.9561	1.36616	44	19.60%
Free Range or Cage Free	AB	179	79.90%	1.8709	1.36598	45	20.10%
Low-fat, Light	PB	178	79.50%	1.864	1.33728	46	20.50%
Fresh Poultry	AB	177	79.00%	1.7886	1.30339	47	21.00%
Low Sodium, Low Cholesterol	PB	177	79.00%	1.7859	1.35983	47	21.00%
Fat Free	PB	173	77.20%	1.7525	1.34258	51	22.80%
Family Farm Raised	AB	175	78.10%	1.7378	1.29729	49	21.90%
Sustainably Grown	EB	186	83.00%	1.728	1.20682	38	17.00%
Lean, Extra Lean	PB	170	75.90%	1.6655	1.33278	54	24.10%
Grass-Fed	AB	172	76.80%	1.6623	1.239	52	23.20%
Eco-Friendly	EB	185	82.60%	1.6071	1.30843	39	17.40%
Fortified, Enriched	PB	169	75.40%	1.585	1.36207	55	24.60%
Certified Organic	PB	167	74.60%	1.5737	1.3757	57	25.40%
Grass-Fed	EB	183	81.70%	1.5557	1.10703	41	18.30%
Certified Branded Beef (Angus, Hereford, Harris Ranch)	AB	169	75.40%	1.5556	1.23794	55	24.60%
Certified Organic	EB	183	81.70%	1.5519	1.2656	41	18.30%
All-Natural	PB	165	73.70%	1.5429	1.49368	59	26.30%
Naturally Raised	AB	165	73.70%	1.5297	1.2327	59	26.30%
Green	EB	178	79.50%	1.5073	1.18465	46	20.50%
GMO Free	EB	168	75.00%	1.4946	1.33548	56	25.00%
100 Calories!	PB	160	71.40%	1.3739	1.39036	64	28.60%
GMO Free	PB	157	70.10%	1.2728	1.19571	67	29.90%
Tastes Great!	PB	154	68.80%	1.1981	1.25725	70	31.30%
Heritage Breeds	AB	162	72.30%	1.0819	1.24819	62	27.70%
Gluten-free	PB	148	66.10%	0.9973	1.29751	76	33.90%
rBGH-free	AB	155	69.20%	0.9753	1.05801	69	30.80%
Corn Finished	AB	154	68.80%	0.8675	0.95861	70	31.30%
Lactose Free	PB	145	64.70%	0.7897	1.21328	79	35.30%

Table 4.17 All Buzzwords Compared by Mean (continued)

Kosher	AB	149	66.50%	0.7074	1.02279	75	33.50%
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*EB: Environmental Buzzwords, *AB: Animal Health Buzzwords, *PB: Personal Health Buzzwords

The following table reports the frequency of buzzwords on a 0 to 4 Likert Scale. Each buzzword is sorted into a category. No Change reflects the numerical value of true zero, the buzzword had no impact on participants (scale selector was not moved). The rest represent the listed value: 0, 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Table 4.18 Frequency Rate of Buzzwords

Buzzwords	No Change	0	1	2	3	4
Environmental Health Buzzwords						
Locally Grown	15 6.7%	14 6.3%	28 12.5%	34 15.2%	64 28.6%	69 30.8%
Certified Kentucky Proud	17 7.6%	15 6.7%	32 14.3%	38 17.0%	52 23.2%	70 31.3%
No Pesticides / No Herbicides	33 14.7%	26 11.6%	35 15.6%	40 17.9%	43 19.2%	47 21.0%
Sustainably Grown	38 17.0%	27 12.1%	46 20.5%	44 19.6%	38 17.0%	31 13.8%
Eco-Friendly	39 17.4%	22 9.8%	63 28.1%	50 22.3%	32 14.3%	18 8%
Grass-Fed	41 18.3%	38 17.0%	51 22.8%	34 15.2%	36 16.1%	24 10.7%
Certified Organic	41 18.3%	38 17.0%	43 19.2%	40 17.9%	30 13.4%	32 14.3%
Green	46 20.5%	34 15.2%	46 20.5%	42 18.8%	31 13.8%	25 11.2%
GMO Free	56 25.0%	41 18.3%	41 18.3%	29 12.9%	31 13.8%	26 11.6%
Animal Health Buzzwords						

Table 4.18 Frequency Rate of Buzzwords (continued)

No Antibiotics, Steroids or Hormones	34 15.2%	27 12.1%	24 10.7%	32 14.3%	35 15.6%	72 32.1%
USDA Graded Beef	40 17.9%	20 8.9%	26 11.6%	33 14.7%	44 19.6%	61 27.2%
Pasture Raised	41 18.3%	32 14.3%	40 17.9%	52 23.2%	30 13.4%	29 12.9%
Humanely Slaughtered	44 19.6%	26 11.6%	37 16.5%	42 18.8%	33 14.7%	42 18.8%
Free Range or Cage Free	45 20.1%	32 14.3%	30 13.4%	43 19.2%	35 15.6%	39 17.4%
Fresh Poultry	47 21.0%	28 12.5%	19 8.5%	44 19.6%	39 17.4%	47 21.0%
Family Farm Raised	49 21.9%	30 13.4%	31 13.8%	49 21.9%	30 13.4%	35 15.6%
Grass-Fed	52 23.2%	35 15.6%	25 11.2%	42 18.8%	41 18.3%	29 12.9%
Certified Branded Beef (Angus, Hereford, Harris Ranch)	55 24.6%	33 14.7%	34 15.2%	43 19.2%	38 17.0%	21 9.4%
Naturally Raised	59 26.3%	38 17.0%	35 15.6%	41 18.3%	28 12.5%	23 10.3%
Heritage Breeds	62 27.7%	51 22.8%	57 25.4%	30 13.4%	17 7.6%	7 3.1%
rBGH-free	69 30.8%	57 25.4%	40 17.9%	27 12.1%	15 6.7%	16 7.1%
Corn Finished	70 31.3%	54 24.1%	50 22.3%	37 16.5%	5 2.2%	8 3.6%
Kosher	75 33.5%	68 30.4%	46 20.5%	20 8.9%	7 3.1%	8 3.6%
Personal Health Buzzwords						
Fresh	20 8.9%	20 8.9%	18 8.0%	36 16.1%	30 13.4%	100 44.9%
Whole Wheat, Multigrain	29 12.9%	21 9.4%	16 7.1%	37 16.5%	51 22.8%	70 31.3%
No Preservatives	37 16.5%	27 12.2%	26 11.6%	33 14.7%	32 14.3%	69 30.8%
Low-fat, Light	46 20.5%	32 14.3%	32 14.3%	39 17.4%	35 15.6%	40 17.9%

Table 4.18 Frequency Rate of Buzzwords (continued)

Low Sodium, Low Cholesterol	47 21.0%	38 17.0%	28 12.5%	35 15.6%	39 17.4%	37 16.5%
Fat Free	51 22.8%	40 17.9%	37 16.5%	34 15.2%	28 12.5%	34 15.2%
Lean, Extra Lean	54 24.1%	38 17.0%	25 11.2%	33 14.7%	38 17.0%	36 16.1%
Fortified, Enriched	55 24.6%	48 21.4%	43 19.2%	33 14.7%	27 12.1%	18 8.0%
Certified Organic	57 25.4%	43 19.2%	31 13.8%	33 14.7%	27 12.1%	33 14.7%
All-Natural	59 26.3%	38 17.0%	25 11.2%	36 16.1%	36 16.1%	30 13.4%
100 Calories!	64 28.6%	53 23.7%	36 16.1%	32 14.3%	25 11.2%	14 6.3%
GMO Free	67 29.9%	49 21.9%	35 15.6%	26 11.6%	23 10.3%	24 10.7%
Tastes Great!	70 31.1%	41 18.3%	36 16.1%	28 12.5%	15 6.7%	34 15.2%
Gluten-free	76 33.9%	59 26.3%	47 21.0%	14 6.3%	8 3.6%	20 8.9%
Lactose Free	79 35.3%	72 32.1%	33 14.7%	19 8.5%	8 3.6%	13 5.8%

After participants ranked all of the buzzwords presented in each category, they were asked to select the top five buzzwords influencing their food purchasing habits. The most important buzzwords to the survey participants are Certified Kentucky Proud: selected by 99 participants, Locally Grown: also selected by 99 participants, and Whole Wheat/Multigrain: selected by 85 participants. The three least important buzzwords to the survey participants are Corn Finished: selected by 3 participants, Kosher: selected by 3 participants, and Heritage Breeds: selected by 2 participants.

Table 4.19 Buzzwords: Top 5 Selected

Buzzwords	Frequency	Percent
Certified Kentucky Proud	99	44.2
Locally Grown	99	44.2

Table 4.19 Buzzwords: Top 5 Selected (continued)

Whole Wheat, Multigrain	85	37.9
Fresh	79	35.3
No Preservatives	58	25.9
No Antibiotics, Steroids or Hormones	56	25
Low-fat, Light	52	23.2
All-Natural	46	20.5
Certified Organic	45	20.1
USDA Graded Beef	44	19.6
Low Sodium, Low Cholesterol	38	17
Lean, Extra Lean	37	16.5
No Pesticides / No Herbicides	37	16.5
Family Farm Raised	30	13.4
Fat Free	27	12.1
Certified Branded Beef (Angus, Hereford, etc.)	26	11.6
Humanely Slaughtered	26	11.6
100 Calories!	25	11.2
Tastes Great!	22	9.8
Free Range or Cage Free	20	8.9
Grass-Fed	16	7.1
Eco-Friendly	14	6.3
Naturally Raised	14	6.3
GMO Free	11	4.9
Gluten-free	10	4.5
Lactose Free	9	4
Pasture Raised	9	4
Green	7	3.1
Fortified, Enriched	6	2.7
rBGH-free	4	1.8
Corn Finished	3	1.3
Kosher	3	1.3
Heritage Breeds	2	0.9

Television is the most common location where participants have seen food advertisements. The least common location for food advertisements is emails or websites and in newspapers. Participants were given the option to write in other forms of media and these responses included: in store ads, coupon mailers, flyers and billboards, inside grocery stores, and word of mouth.

Table 4.20 Media and Food Advertising

Media Outlet	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Television	197	2.3371	1.28892
Magazines	167	1.3317	1.13164
Social Media	182	1.2462	1.16290
Radio	163	1.1129	1.12503
E-mail / General Websites	164	1.0683	1.04920
Newspaper	161	1.0385	1.05392

In conjunction with the quantitative survey, participants were asked to create a drafted Twitter Post with these instructions.

Create a (Drafted) Twitter Post:

Using the fewest amount of words (140 characters), create a post to promote your own food Buzzword preferences. (This is where you can be creative!)

EXAMPLES:

1. RT “USDA, Certified Black Angus steaks, on sale @Kroger. #KyProud #TastesGreat!”
2. Local farmers showcasing their Organic tomatoes @KYFarmersMarket in Downtown Lexington!

The Twitter Posts below represent the creative and “millennial” portion of this survey. Each Twitter Post was categorized into sections to reflect the following marketing and framing structures constructed by millennials: Price, Environmental Health, Animal Health, Personal Health.

Table 4.21 Twitter Posts Categorized

Price
Broke college kid ? There's a huge #10for10 sale @kroger Stock up on that ramen and Mac n cheese !
Store wide sale @Kroger
Fresh-Water Fish on sale at Kroger this week!
Less fat and calories, the cheapest products @ Kroger
Cheap fresh produce available now!
NEW! Low sodium Simply Organic frozen pizza on sale now @Kroger Take \$1.00 off with Kroger Plus card
KY Proud / Farmer's Markets/Local
@KYProud rocks!
Fresh produce on sale @Kroger! Locally grown #KyProud
Farmers Market showcasing original #KentuckyProud recipes by UK Dietetics Students. #eatlocal #healthy
#kyproud
Visited the Farmers Market in downtown Lex to get some fresh food #buylocal #KYproud #KYProud
Local farmers raise cage free, farm fresh eggs #KYProud @KYFarmersMarket #comegetem
Meet the #KYProud local farmers at the Lexington Kroger
@Kroger is now selling so many #KYProud products and I love it! #locallygrown
All-natural preservative-free chicken on sale @Kroger. #KyProud
moo alert udderly KY milk@walmart#gotmilk#itsgood
eat fresh #local
Local, cage-free eggs @KYFarmersMarket #KyProud
Support your local #familyfarms! #buylocal and be #KentuckyProud when buying your produce!
Locally grown, cherry tomatoes @lexingtonfarmersmarket #fresh #nopreservatives #kyproud #tastesgreat!
Locally grown=locally loved
Support your local farmers!#FarmersMarket #Fresh
Kentucky farmers selling humanely slaughtered, cage free chicken @KYFarmersMarket
"Extra lean Certified Black Angus fresh beef, on sale @Kroger. #KyProud #buylocal
@kyfarmersmarket is open from 8-12 today. Fresh fruit, veggies, meats and arts! #KyProud #ShareTheLex #EatLex
Local farmers showcasing their Fresh, Organic berries @KYFarmers Market in Downtown Lexington.
Save a farm! Go local! Save biodiversity, choose heirloom varieties!
Fresh veg! #KyProud #Nopackaging #lowimpact
Best burgers in the bluegrass. #kentuckyproud

Table 4.21 Twitter Posts Categorized (continued)

Naturally raised chicken...@KY FARMERSMARKET
Local farms offering CSA shares for produce and meat #KeepitLocal
#KnowYourFarmerKnowYourFood
Locally grown #kyproud produce on sale at #goodfoodscoop
Local farmers showcasing their Organic tomatoes @KYFarmersMarket in Downtown Lexington!
#KYProud products now available @Kroger !! #BuyLocal #FromFarmToFork
Go local. Go Critchfield's Meats. #kyproud
Grill-ready meats on sale @Kroger. #KYProud #funsaturday
Nothing better than some #udderlykyproud milk!
KY proud family farm raised beef #taste great
Fresh, certified organic produced locally grown on family farms @GoodFoodsMarket
Family farm raised beef @familyname
In-season, locally grown vegetables now at Kroger!
@KYFarmersMarket best food in town #TastesGreat
Can't wait to get local, fresh, and organic food at the farmers market!
Locally grown fresh cucumber @Kroger #kyproud #healthy
KY proud food is the way to go!!!!
USDA Certified, Local, Organic turnip greens available now @KyFarmersMarket #KyProud
Supporting local agriculture, sustainable products, benefiting our community.
#FoodForThought @farmersmarket
Local, fresh produce available @KYFarmersMarket! Come support your neighbors!
"Local Kentucky Proud milk on Walmart shelves! #KYProud #KentuckyDairy
Support local farmers at the Farmers Market!
Be sure to shop local and help your small farmers by purchasing your favorite meats and veggies at the farmers market this Saturday! #KYProud
KY Proud products are the only way to go! #KYProud #KYFRESH
@tablethreeten Special of the day features #Organic Whole Wheat pasta dish with Local Grass-Fed Beef #GMOfree #KYProud
Many fresh and Kentucky Proud products are now lean and good for you! Find them at your local Farmers market! #KentuckyProud
Kyproud
Local farmers gathering at @KYFarmersMarket by Rupp on Tuesday; look for their
Fresh off our families farm and into your families kitchen, come to Paul's fruit market today for the best local produce around!
Organic, Kentucky Proud cucumbers!
Kentucky Proud products introduced in Kroger throughout Kentucky
Visit your local farmers market for a taste of #locallyproduced #wholewheatmultigrain bread! #familyfarmraised #certifiedkentuckyproud
UK farms selling #locallygrown and #allnatural produce on campus for students!

Table 4.21 Twitter Posts Categorized (continued)

Get to know your farmer! #supportlocal
Fresh, locally grown Honey now for sale! Pick up @KYFarmersMarket in New Castle! #TastesGreat!
Heading down to the @KYFarmersMarket for some fresh and locally grown produce!
UK Butchery #GOMEAT #Gocats , Family Farm product sale #eatitup #familyfarming #veggiegood #pickyourn
Local fresh Organic potato #KyProud
Marksbery Farms local angus meat #kyproud #familyfatmraised
#KY Proud, #grass-fed meats, now available at the Co-op! Free of hormones, antibiotics and steriods!
Fresh, Farm-Raised, Beef @Krogers
#Locallygrown squash on sale at Kroger! Today only!
Certified Organic
"All natural, certified organic, extra lean meat on sale!"
Free range, cage free, certified organic, fresh eggs #kyproud
Organic, no preservatives, & GMO free groceries are available HERE! Best bargain prices are HERE. We don't lie. We sell healthy foods.
Organic gluten free at Kroger! #food
sale on certified organic, healthy, fresh food at krogers #eatright #nohormones
@WholeFoodsMarket has all of the certified #nonGMO products you love!
Hot dogs belong in a bun, just like organic food belongs in your tummy! #eatfresh #certifiedorganic
Environmental Health
Go Green! Support local farmers!
Low fat, keep fit
Extra lean beef on sale at Kroger #TastesGreat
100 Calorie cookies on stale @Kroger! #LowCalorie #LowFat
Lean, fat free, free range chicken meat
Local vegetable producers selling products that have not had herbicide or pesticide applications!
Animal Health
Local USDA graded beef, humanely slaughtered, and in a store near you! #USDA #certifiedblackangus #animals
Grass-fed beef with no antibiotics, steroids, or hormones on sale now at Good Foods Co-op! #yum #burgers #locallygrown
Grass fed, humanely slaughtered steaks on sale at Kroger! #no-preservatives #no-antibiotics #no-steroids #loveybeef
USDA certified lean black Angus steaks on sale now!
Hormone antibiotic free grass fed chicken @thefreshmarket #fresh
Local USDA Certified Poultry (antibiotic and steroid free) on sale @Kroger #staylocal #eatfresh

Table 4.21 Twitter Posts Categorized (continued)

Local cage free eggs for sale @Whole Foods #KyProud #PerfectProtein #NotAllCoopedUp
Humanely slaughtered! (cause that actually means something unlike other buzzwords)
Personal Health
100 calories! packs are low fat with no preservatives. #allnatural
Eat healthy! #allnature
eating healthy #tastesgreat #healthyliving
So excited my favorite all natural, gluten-free granola is on sale @Kroger. #yummy #finallyonsale #excited
They finally have #glutenfree biscuits @Kroger!
Fresh, local, and good for you! @UKCSA #fresh
#shop smart / #eat healthy
Eat less, eat Always
Have health dietary restrictions? Kroger has low carb items with no preservatives that are lactose-free and gluten-free. #TastesGreat!
Wholesome is awesome! Check out the new book on the E2 diet and you will be hooked.
New Enriched, multigrain Wheat bread on sale @Walmart. #TastesGreat
healthy food
RD "Low cholesterol, Lean Chicken with no preservatives, on sale @ Kroger. #TastesGreat #LocallyGrown
New Gluten free chips at your local Kroger! It's time to go all natural!
Buy #wholegrains for #hearthealth!!!
Health foods galore @Kroger. #multigrain #low fat #low sodium
All-Natural cookies made with fresh ingredients!

The following is a visual representation, called a Wordle, of all of the Twitter Posts created by the participants. The Wordle is an online website and creates the image by evaluating the number of words used with content. The size of the word is dependent on the number of times the word was used in the text selection. The larger the word in the image, the more counts of the particular word.

Chapter 5 - Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary of the study and its conclusions

This study analyzes the connection between the millennial generation and food preferences, based on buzzwords. Through a survey, participants were asked a series of questions about their food purchasing habits. Participants answered questions based on the influence of buzzwords creating a value on their food. Interestingly enough, the group had a few differences.

Before explaining the results, it was important to understand the millennial generation and theory behind the study. Social Constructionism was the theoretical framework to support this study. It is believed, consumers select a healthier food item based on the meaning of a buzzword appearing on food labels (Northup, 2014). Social constructs, for example of buzzwords, are created as a way to seek common understanding of social reality, and then become a shared assumption about that reality (Zaltman, 1997).

The millennial generation thrives on a sense of belonging to a group, recognition and ease (Croke, 2014). Research suggests consumers' food choices can be swayed by social consciousness and peer pressure approval or disapproval (Almerico, 2014). If groups favor a certain food choice, it is more likely for a consumer to choose the food as their favorite (Almerico, 2014). Food can also become an expression of identity (Almerico, 2014). This helps the researcher analyze why some results are grouped in certain ways. Even though this research only reviews a sample from the College of Agriculture, Food

and Environment at the University of Kentucky, the group still demonstrated some important differences.

When participants were asked about their grocery purchases, 61.6% of participants stated they purchase raw and fresh foods. However, when you review each age group within the millennial sample, the youngest group of millennials (those born between 1995-1997) purchases the least amount of raw and fresh food at 46% and are most likely to purchase packaged, boxed or bagged food items (52%). The oldest group of millennials (those born between 1980-1984), report the highest rate of purchasing takeaway and ready-made food items (8.3%).

Interestingly, academic major also seems to have an influence on the types of foods purchased by millennials. For example, 75.9% of the Environmental/Natural Resources majors purchase mostly raw and fresh foods, followed by 66.7% of the Family and Food Sciences majors. But Social Science majors (45.7%) and Ag Science majors (45%) are most likely to purchase packaged and boxed food items.

The millennial generation is interested in their health, especially its relationship to the food they consume. But, this is a sample of college students who typically eat on the run and rarely have as much money as they would like. Given this, I would have assumed participants would purchase mostly packaged or take away foods. Yet, at least in their responses, the majority of them purchase raw and fresh foods. Of course, it is possible

that they were simply responding with what they assumed was the socially acceptable answer.

Research found in the literature review shows the millennial generation enjoys making active decisions about their lifestyle and brands play a huge role in communicating information to them. It was interesting in the results the millennial respondents agreed that price was the number one influencer about their food purchasing habits. Yet, they do not shop at discount or buy-in-bulk stores, in fact, 75% of the participants shop at Kroger. In a follow up for future research, I would be interested in a qualitative study to see why these millennials shop at Kroger when price is so important to them. Perhaps it is more convenient or it is where their parents shopped and so a familiar food store. Or, perhaps since Kroger is a conventional, corporate-chain, it tends to have everything millennials might prefer in their stores: Eat Local, All-Natural, price discounts, USDA, etc. Diving deeper into how millennials mesh their concerns about price with their stated tendency to purchase raw and fresh foods may help define the social reality of food-related buzzwords.

Limitations

The limitations of this study could have impacted results. The sample population was directly from the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, different colleges at the University of Kentucky could have reflected different ideas, as well as other universities across the US surveying the same age of respondents. To reach this group, I worked with the university to send the survey of the CAFE Student Listserv, students may have not

been as inclined to open the email. Other limitations: time of year, length of the survey, technology options for students and CAFE students. These limitations must be kept in mind as the results are considered.

Future research

I believe it's important to think about the foods we put in our bodies and how they are marketed to us every day. My interest in this topic began from living with roommates and each of us had different styles of selecting our foods. For example, we each purchased different types of eggs. One with farm fresh eggs from her family home, one with all natural cage free eggs: \$6 plus, and mine: Kroger brand, the cheaper ones. I realized each buzzword on our cartons had a story we each were being sold. I wanted to see if there was a theme among others my age at the collegiate level. After many meetings and numerous articles, I developed my research and survey to analyze millennial food buying preferences, based on buzzwords.

After reviewing the results, I realize the results raise more questions than they answered. My main focus was the buzzwords, but after seeing participants' answers to where they shop and what types of foods they purchase, I want to know more of the why. I think a follow up focus group would have helped answer the questions that emerged after the survey results were analyzed. I also would recommend expanding the results by surveying students in other colleges at the University of Kentucky or, millennials at other universities. I also think the results of this study and others like it could be useful for grocery stores, like Kroger, to understand the factors that influence millennials'

purchasing patterns. Since millennials like to be involved in brands, a grocery store could develop more ways to attract the millennials, based on a better understanding of their motivations and preferences.

The concept of a healthy lifestyle is changing. Fast food restaurants, coffee shops, Starbucks, Panera and many more all add these buzzwords to their menus. Subscription memberships, like Hello Fresh and Blue Apron also have buzzwords added to their menus and marketing. The growing use of buzzwords is designed to appeal to all shoppers, but especially millennials, who are motivated by a desire to share a sense of belonging to a group combined with eating healthy and making cooking a fun experience in a few simple steps. There is a need to understand buzzwords, especially in this time of marketing a diversifying food system. Hopefully this research will spark interest in others to investigate the millennial market.

IRB Approval 15-0134
THIS FORM VALID
3-27-15 - 3-11-16

To Participant:

You have been selected to participate in a survey entitled, "*Determining Millennial Food Buying Preferences.*" This survey will measure food buying preferences and trends in buzzword marketing. This research will evaluate the relationship between University of Kentucky, College of Agriculture, Food and Environment senior students (whom have completed 90 or more credit hours) and food buying practices and shall provide insight to millennial preferences in future marketing and buzzwords. This study is strictly focused on seeing the connection between college seniors buying practices and buzzword marketing.

Although you will not obtain a personal benefit from taking part in this research study, your responses may help us understand more about the millennial generation perceptions of food marketing. Your responses are greatly valued for this study.

We hope to receive completed online surveys from about 300 students, so your answers are very important to us. Of course, you have a choice of whether or not to complete the survey.

The questionnaire will take about 15 minutes to complete.

Your response to the survey is anonymous which means no names will appear or be used on research documents, or be used in presentations or publications. The research team will not know that any information you provided came from you, nor even whether you participated in the study.

If you have questions about the study, please feel free to ask; my contact information is given below. If you have complaints, suggestions, or questions about your rights as a research volunteer, contact the staff in the University of Kentucky Office of Research Integrity at 859-257-9428 or toll-free at 1-866-400-9428.

Thank you in advance for your assistance with this important project.

Sincerely,

Victoria Hamilton
Graduate Student
Community and Leadership Development
College of Agriculture, Food and Environment
Environment
University of Kentucky
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ONLINE SURVEY LETTER – THIS WILL BE EMAILED TO THE STUDENTS IN A PRIVATE
LISTSERV.

SUBJECT LINE:

IRB Approval
15-0134
THIS FORM VALID
3-27-15 - 3-11-16

To Participant:

You have been selected to participate in a survey entitled, “*Determining Millennial Food Buying Preferences.*” As part of my graduate research project, this survey measures “Millennial” food buying preferences and trends in buzzword marketing. A “buzzword” is a word or a phrase; they are considered to be fashionable at a particular time or in particular context (CITE). This research will evaluate the relationship between University of Kentucky, College of Agriculture, Food and Environment senior students (whom have completed 90 or more credit hours) and their food buying practices. It focuses on the connection between college seniors’ buying practices, use of buzzword marketing; to provide insight to millennial marketing preferences.

Your responses will provide important information about the Millennial Generation perceptions of food marketing. Your input is greatly valued and appreciated.

We hope to receive above a 35% return of completed questionnaires, so your answers are very important to us.

Your responses to the survey are anonymous, which means no names will appear or be used on research documents, or be used in presentations or publications.

If you have questions about the study, please feel free to ask; my contact information is given below. If you have any comments, suggestions or questions about your rights as a research volunteer, contact the staff in the University of Kentucky Office of Research Integrity at 859-257-9428 or toll-free at 1-866-400-9428.

The questionnaire should take less than 15 minutes to complete. Thank you in advance for your assistance with this study.

Sincerely,

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Determining Millennial Food Buying Preferences Based on Product Association with Buzzwords

Default Question Block

As a College of Agriculture, Food and Environment student, your input will represent the college as a whole and infer information about how you will continue to shop in the future. For my Master's Research, I am implementing this survey to determine if "buzzwords" and trends in millennial buyers' preferences are connected. A "buzzword" is a word or a phrase; it is fashionable at a particular time or in particular context (Oxford, n.d.). Your participation will provide input to develop new marketing techniques for your generation.

Throughout this survey, you will see highlighted words referring to "Food Buzzword" marketing in grocery stores.

1. What year were you born?

Before 1980

1980-1984

1985-1989

1990-1994

1995-1997

After 1997

2. If you are from the US, which region have you lived in the longest?

If you are not from the US, refer to "Outside of the US."

Midwest - IA, IL, IN, KS, MI, MN, MO, ND, NE, OH, SD, WI

Northeast - CT, DC, DE, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT

Southeast - AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV

Southwest - AZ, NM, OK, TX

West - AK, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY

Outside of the US, (If not listed, please add)

3. What country do you identify with the most, prior to your enrollment at the University of Kentucky?

Canada

United States

Mexico

Brazil

Spain

France

Japan

Other, (If not listed, please add)

4. What is your Gender?

Male

Female

Other

5. What is your classification?

Freshman

Sophomore

Junior

Senior

Graduate Student

Other, (If not listed, please add)

6.

What is your major? (Fill in the Blank)

7. Are you an Exchange Student at the University of Kentucky?

Yes

No

8. **Do you currently live:**

In a dorm

In an apartment or house with other students/roommates

In your own apartment or house

With your parents or guardian(s)

Other, (If not listed, please add)

9.

What type of store do you buy most of your food?

Conventional, Corporate-Chains: (Kroger, Meijer, Safeway, Lucky)

Super-Centers: (Wal-Mart, Target, K-Mart)

Membership Based, Wholesale: (Costco, Sam's Club)

Discounted Supermarkets-Chains: (Aldi, Save-A-Lot)

Corporate Specialty-Food Chains: (Whole Foods, Trader Joe's, The Fresh Market)

Convenience Stores: (Rite-Aid, CVS, Walgreen's, Speedway, Thornton's)

Service Provided Restaurants, Cafeteria, Cafés, Fast Food: (Subway, Campus Dining, Panera, BWW's, Mad Mushroom)

Co-ops, Locally Owned: (Good Food's Market & Cafe, Farmer's Markets)

Other: (If not listed, please add)

10.

When shopping at the market you selected above, what influences your purchases?

Use the sliding scale to record your answers for each category.

Less Important

Very Important

0

1

2

3

4

Certified Organic

Low Fat, Gluten Free,
Sugar Free, Low
Carb, 100 Calories

Locally Grown,
Kentucky Proud
Products, Family
Farm Producers

U.S. Grown

Price

Humane Production,
Free Range, Cage
Free

Environmental
Impact, Greener

11.

What kind of food do you buy at the store mostly?

Raw, Fresh (Ex: Fresh Fruits, Vegetables and Meats - Not Frozen, No Processed Preservatives)

Packaged, Boxed, Bagged (Ex: Cereals, Lunch Meats, Frozen Meats or Meals)

Take Away, Prepared, Ready to Go (Ex: Rotisserie Chicken, Deli Salads or Sandwiches)

S2. Buzzword Categories: Environmental, Animal Health and Personal Health**Buzzwords**

The last few questions will reflect the Buzzword portion of this study.



12.

Rate the following "Environmental" Buzzwords to reflect their importance when purchasing your groceries.

Use the sliding scale to record your answers.

(If Buzzwords are not listed, please add.)

Less Important

Very Important

0

1

2

3

4

Eco-Friendly

Grass-Fed

No Pesticides / No
Herbicides

Green

Certified Kentucky Proud

Certified Organic

Locally Grown

Sustainably Grown

GMO Free

Other, if not listed please
add.

Other, if not listed please
add.

13.

Rate the following "Animal Health" Buzzwords to reflect their importance when purchasing your groceries.

Use the sliding scale to record your answers.

(If Buzzwords are not listed, please add.)

Less Important

Very Important

0

1

2

3

4

Pasture Raised

Humanely Slaughtered

No Antibiotics, Steroids
or Hormones

Free Range or Cage Free

Heritage Breeds

Certified Branded Beef
(Angus, Hereford, Harris
Ranch)

Corn Finished

Grass-Fed

USDA Graded Beef

Fresh Poultry

Kosher

rBGH-free

Family Farm Raised

Naturally Raised

Other, if not listed please
add.

Other, if not listed please
add.

14.

Rate the following "Personal Health" Buzzwords to reflect their importance when purchasing your groceries.

Use the sliding scale to record your answers.

(If Buzzwords are not listed, please add.)

	Less Important			Very Important	
	0	1	2	3	4
Gluten-free					
Low-fat, Light					
No Preservatives					
Fresh					
Fat Free					
Fortified, Enriched					
Low Sodium, Low Cholesterol					
Lactose Free					
Whole Wheat, Multigrain					
100 Calories!					
GMO Free					
Lean, Extra Lean					
Certified Organic					
All-Natural					
Tastes Great!					
Other, if not listed please add.					
<input type="text"/>					
Other, if not listed please add.					
<input type="text"/>					

15.

What Buzzwords are most important to you? Please, select up to 5 Buzzwords from the entire list.

Selected your top 5 Buzzwords by clicking on your choices.

100 Calories!	Humanely Slaughtered
All-Natural	Kosher
Certified Branded Beef (Angus, Hereford, Harris Ranch)	Lactose Free
Certified Kentucky Proud	Lean, Extra Lean
Certified Organic	Locally Grown
Corn Finished	Low Sodium, Low Cholesterol
Eco-Friendly	Low-fat, Light
Family Farm Raised	Naturally Raised
Fat Free	No Antibiotics, Steroids or Hormones
Fortified, Enriched	No Pesticides / No Herbicides
Free Range or Cage Free	No Preservatives
Fresh	Pasture Raised
Gluten-free	rBGH-free
GMO Free	Tastes Great!
Grass-Fed	USDA Graded Beef
Green	Whole Wheat, Multigrain
Heritage Breeds	

16.

Rate the following to reflect where you see the **most** food advertisements for livestock and fish protein products?

(ie: eggs and poultry, beef, pork, lamb, dairy, fish, etc.)

Use the sliding scale to record your answers.

	Less Common		Very Common
	0	1	2
			3
			4
Social Media			
E-mail / General Websites			
Television			
Magazines			
Newspaper			
Radio			
Other, if not listed please add.			
<input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/>			

17.

Create a (Drafted) Twitter Post:

Using the fewest amount of words (140 characters), create a post to promote your own food Buzzword preferences.

(This is where you can be **creative!**)

EXAMPLES:

RT "**USDA, Certified Black Angus** steaks, on sale @Kroger. **#KyProud #TastesGreat!**"

Local farmers showcasing their **Organic** tomatoes @KYFarmersMarket in Downtown Lexington!

18.

Would you be willing to **participate in a follow-up discussion (Focus Group)** on the topic for this study?

If so, please email me directly at **vhamilton@uky.edu** to express your interest in participating in the Focus Group.

If not, thank you again for participating in the survey!

Have a wonderful day!

Please feel free to leave comments below. Thank you again for your time!

Block 1

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