

# NATURAL AND ANTIBIOTICS LABELS SURVEY

2018 NATIONALLY REPRESENTATIVE PHONE SURVEY  
MAY 1, 2018  
CONSUMER REPORTS® SURVEY GROUP

## INTRODUCTION

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In April 2018, the Consumer Reports Survey Group conducted a nationally representative phone survey to assess consumer opinion regarding natural and antibiotics food labels. Opinion Research Corporation (ORC) of Princeton, New Jersey administered the survey to a nationally representative sample of 1,014 U.S. residents through its CARAVAN Omnibus Survey. Respondents were selected by means of random-digit dialing and were interviewed via phone. The data were statistically weighted so that respondents in the survey are demographically and geographically representative of the U.S. population.

## REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

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- When given a list of criteria for the FDA definition of 'natural', most Americans say 'natural' should mean (1) no artificial ingredients were used (81% of Americans), no added hormones were used during food production (81%), no chemical pesticides were used during food production (79%), or no GMOs were used during food production (74%).
- The clear majority (88%) of Americans think that all companies should meet the same standard for the 'natural' label; less than one in 10 say each company should set its own standard.
- Over six out of 10 Americans would pay more for meat/poultry with the 'raised without antibiotics' label.
- Over half of Americans are aware that the practice of feeding antibiotics to farm animals may diminish the effectiveness of antibiotics in humans.
- When taking antibiotics for a bacterial infection, 44% of Americans have been concerned that the antibiotics would not be effective in treating the infection.
- Over four out of 10 Americans are either extremely (17%) or very (26%) concerned about the practice of feeding antibiotics to farm animals making these drugs less effective for humans; 34% are somewhat concerned about this.
- About a third of Americans know someone who had a bacterial infection where antibiotics were ineffective in curing the illness.
- When asked about the extent they agree or disagree with some statements about antibiotics, the majority of Americans (86%) say they *strongly agree/agree* that meat companies should be required to publicly disclose the amount and type of antibiotics they use.
- Nearly six out of 10 Americans would be willing to pay more for a burger made from meat 'raised without antibiotics'.
- The overwhelming majority (89%) of Americans say all companies should meet the same standard when it comes to the 'raised without antibiotics' label claim.
- When given a list of criteria for a label claim referencing 'no antibiotics' on meat and poultry, most Americans say 'no antibiotics' should mean (1) no antibiotics were administered to a healthy animal (77% of Americans), no hormones were administered to the animal (71%), and no antibiotics were administered to the animal under any circumstances (67%).

## NATURAL FOOD LABEL

# 30%

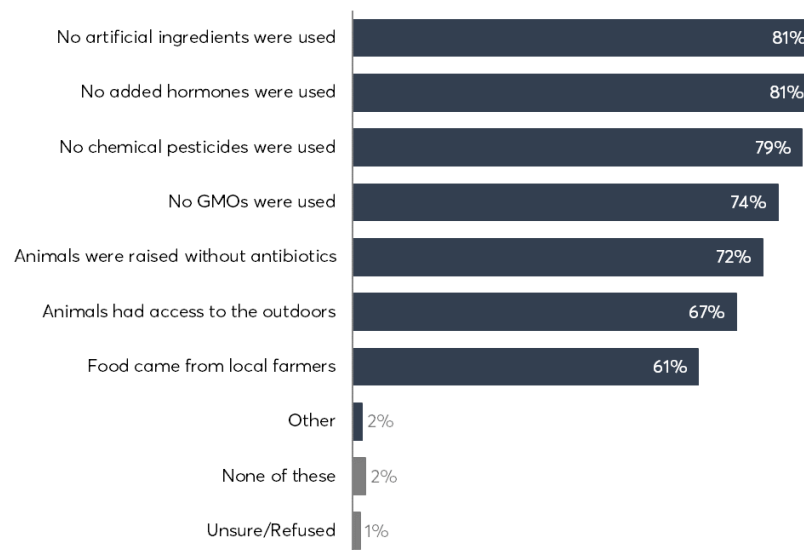
ALWAYS/OFTEN BUY FOOD LABELED  
NATURAL

Three out of 10 Americans always/often buy food labeled 'natural' when shopping for groceries; 39% occasionally do this, and 18% rarely do so.

### MOST SAY NATURAL SHOULD BE DEFINED AS NO ARTIFICIAL INGREDIENTS/HORMONES USED

When given a list of criteria for the FDA definition of 'natural', most Americans say 'natural' should mean (1) no artificial ingredients were used (81% of Americans), no added hormones were used during food production (81%), no chemical pesticides were used during food production (79%), or no GMOs were used during food production (74%). Many (72%) say it should mean that the animals were raised without antibiotics.

### CONSUMER PREFERENCE FOR FDA DEFINITION OF **NATURAL**



Base: All respondents (n = 1014)

# 88%

SAY ALL COMPANIES SHOULD MEET  
SAME STANDARD FOR NATURAL LABEL

The clear majority (88%) of Americans think that all companies should meet the same standard for the 'natural' label; less than one in 10 say each company should set its own standard.

## RAISED WITHOUT ANTIBIOTICS LABEL

# 43%

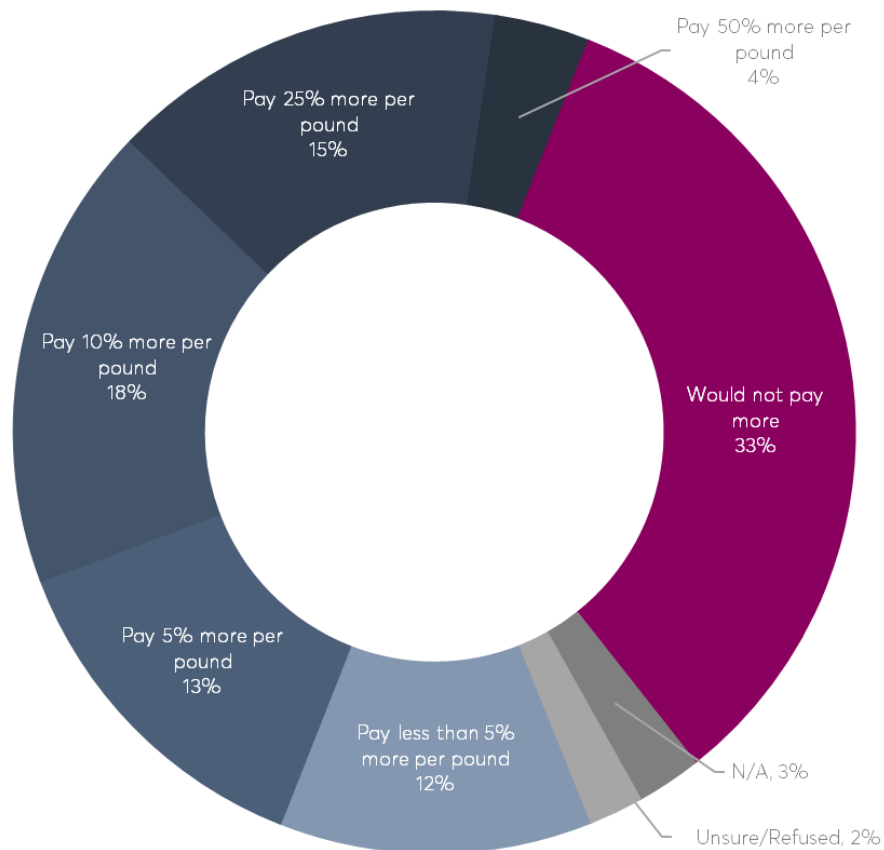
ALWAYS/OFTEN LOOK FOR  
MEAT/POULTRY LABELED 'RAISED  
WITHOUT ANTIBIOTICS'

Over four out of 10 Americans always/often look for meat/poultry labeled as 'raised without antibiotics' when shopping for groceries; 16% occasionally do this, and 13% rarely do so.

### MANY WOULD PAY MORE FOR MEAT/POULTRY LABELED 'RAISED WITHOUT ANTIBIOTICS'

Over six out of 10 Americans would pay more for meat/poultry with the 'raised without antibiotics' label. A third of Americans would not pay more.

#### CONSUMER WILLINGNESS TO PAY MORE FOR **MEAT/POULTRY RAISED WITHOUT ANTIBIOTICS**



Base: All respondents (n = 1014)

# 54%

OF AMERICANS ARE **AWARE** OF POTENTIAL DIMINISHED EFFECTIVENESS OF ANTIBIOTICS

Over half of Americans are aware that the practice of feeding antibiotics to farm animals may diminish the effectiveness of antibiotics in humans.

# 44%

OF AMERICANS **WERE CONCERNED** ABOUT ANTIBIOTIC INEFFECTIVENESS

When taking antibiotics for a bacterial infection, 44% of Americans have been concerned that the antibiotics would not be effective in treating the infection.

# 43%

OF AMERICANS ARE **HIGHLY CONCERNED** THAT FEEDING ANTIBIOTICS TO ANIMALS MAY DIMINISH EFFECTIVENESS OF ANTIBIOTICS IN HUMANS

Over four out of 10 Americans are either extremely (17%) or very (26%) concerned about the practice of feeding antibiotics to farm animals making these drugs less effective for humans; 34% are somewhat concerned about this.

# 32%

OF AMERICANS ARE **AWARE** OF INSTANCE WHERE ANTIBIOTICS WERE INEFFECTIVE

About a third of Americans know someone (including themselves) who had a bacterial infection where antibiotics were ineffective in curing the illness.

## MOST AMERICANS SAY COMPANIES SHOULD DISCLOSE AMOUNT/TYPE OF ANTIBIOTICS USED

When asked about the extent they agree or disagree with some statements about antibiotics, the majority of Americans (86%) say they *strongly agree/agree* that meat companies should be required to publicly disclose the amount and type of antibiotics they use. Nearly eight out of 10 *strongly agree/agree* that meat/poultry producers should stop giving antibiotics to animals that are not sick.

### PERCENTAGE OF CONSUMERS THAT **AGREE/DISAGREE WITH STATEMENT**

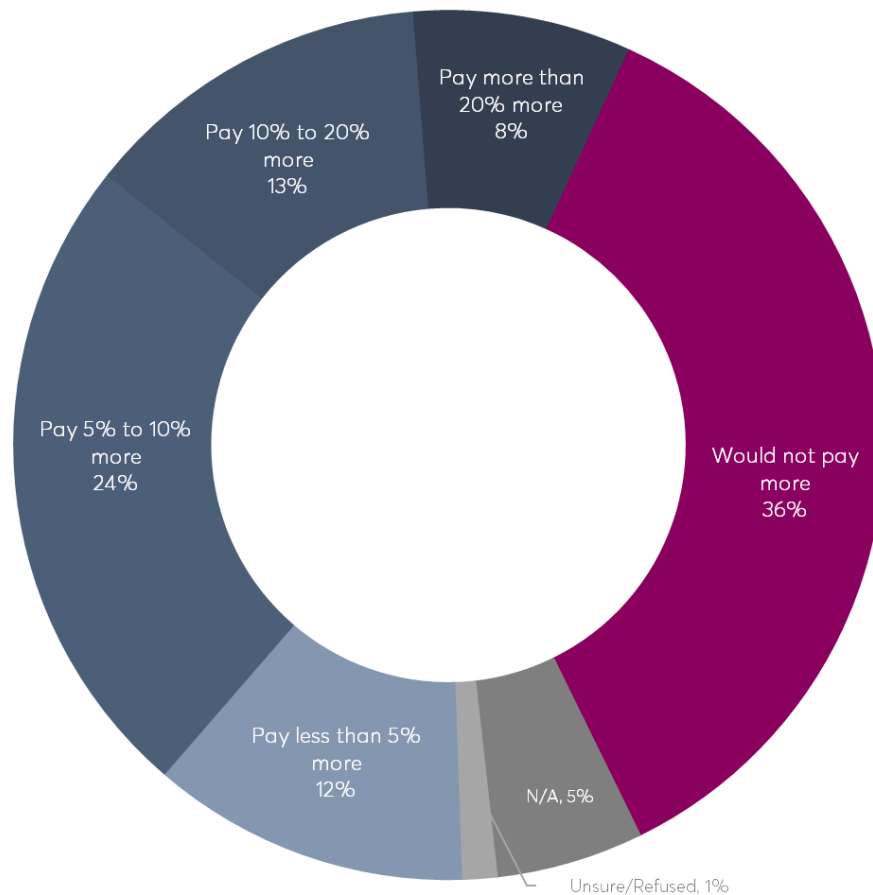


Base: All respondents (n = 1014)

## MANY WOULD PAY MORE FOR BURGER MADE FROM MEAT 'RAISED WITHOUT ANTIBIOTICS'

Nearly six out of 10 Americans would be willing to pay more for a burger made from meat 'raised without antibiotics'. Over a third of Americans would not pay more.

### CONSUMER WILLINGNESS TO PAY MORE FOR **BURGER WITHOUT ANTIBIOTICS**



Base: All respondents (n = 1014)

# 89%

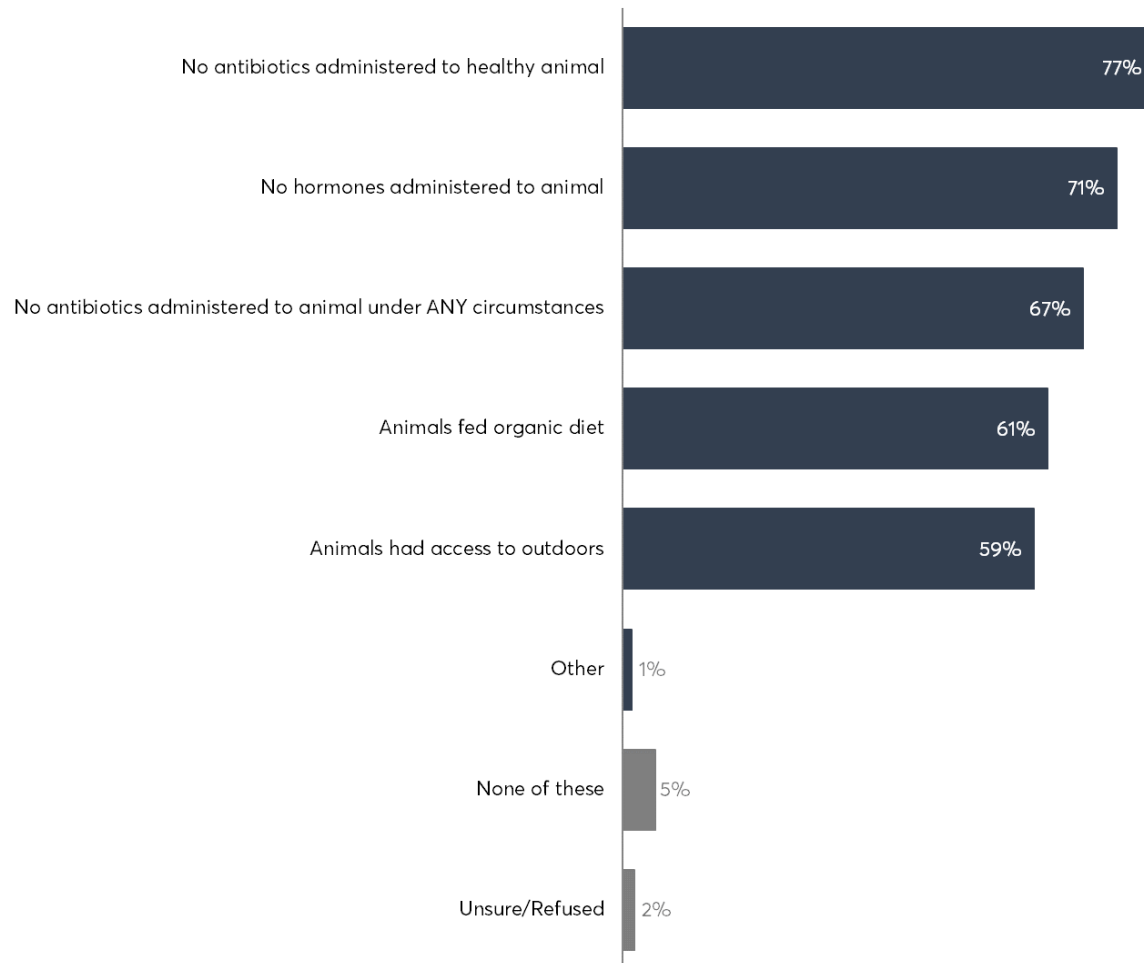
SAY COMPANIES SHOULD MEET SAME  
STANDARD FOR 'RAISED WITHOUT  
ANTIBIOTICS'

The overwhelming majority (89%) of Americans say all companies should meet the same standard when it comes to the 'raised without antibiotics' label claim on meat/poultry.

## MAJORITY OF AMERICANS SAY 'NO ANTIBIOTICS' SHOULD MEAN NO ANTIBIOTICS ADMINISTERED TO HEALTHY ANIMAL

When given a list of criteria for a label claim referencing 'no antibiotics' on meat or poultry, most Americans say 'no antibiotics' should mean (1) no antibiotics were administered to a healthy animal (77% of Americans), no hormones were administered to the animal (71%), or no antibiotics were administered to the animal under any circumstances (67%).

### CONSUMER PREFERENCE FOR MEANING OF **NO ANTIBIOTICS CLAIM**



Base: All respondents (n = 1014)



## SUMMARY

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Our findings show that the overwhelming majority of Americans want all companies to have the same standard for 'natural' and 'raised without antibiotics' labels. Many Americans also expressed that they want specific criteria for 'natural' and 'raised without antibiotics' claims. Indeed, many Americans would even pay more for food that was produced without antibiotics.

Our findings also show that while some Americans are aware of the detrimental effects of antibiotic use on animals, a substantial percentage are unaware of the potential diminished effectiveness in humans. Yet, a notable percentage are aware of instances where antibiotics were ineffective in treating a bacterial infection.

### METHODOLOGY

This phone survey was fielded by ORC using a nationally representative sample. The survey fielded from April 5-8, 2018. The margin of error is +/- 3.1 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.