

The Ethics of Snacking

Millennials expect their snacks and grab-and-go foods to have no “negative” consequences.

CHICAGO – Millennials love their grab-and-go foods and snacks, but “they do not want their dining choices to have unintended negative consequences,” said Sharon Olson, executive director of Culinary Visions Panel in Supermarket News. In “**Ethics on the Go,**” a new report from Culinary Visions Panel’s Mindful Dining Initiative, millennials desire its foods to be from sustainable seafood, free-range eggs and fair-trade coffee.



“We found that whether it’s rewarding a company’s fair-trade labor practices or their zero-waste policies, **millennials are the most serious about ethically sourced grab-and-go foods,**” she said.

The study found that **82%** of consumers surveyed want retailers to use more environmentally friendly business practices. “Foodservice operators need to start considering how to introduce and communicate ethically sourced ingredients, menu concepts and business practices,” the report said.

The **Culinary Visions Panel** identified five ways to address the issue:

1. **Use your ethical practices as a shortcut to connecting with younger customers.** The report found that millennials put a high value on ethical eating choices.
2. **Communicate your efforts.** Retailers need to let their customers know what they’re doing. “From vegan food options to composting onsite, ethical efforts are the new cool ‘it’ factor for millennial consumers who have to navigate more dining options,” the report said.
3. **Focus on grab-and-go.** Millennials aren’t willing to give up their convenience, so having snacks that meet their ethical standards is key.
4. **It’s worth it to them.** Customers under the age of 35 don’t have a problem paying more to eat ethically-sourced snacks or grab-and-go foods. “This fact creates an exciting opportunity for foodservice operators to expand their menu offerings and tap into young consumers’ desire for ethical snacks and grab-and-go foods,” the report said.
5. **Go plant-based.** While meat isn’t off the table, millennials love ways to eat more plants.