

# NIQ

## Demographics

Food & Beverage

April 27, 2026

“What stands out to me, as both a thought leader and a man, is how quickly I narrow my own choices when I shop. If a product doesn’t clearly explain what it does or why it’s worth my time, I move on without hesitation. Protein, functional beverages, and AI haven’t changed what I value, they’ve simply removed the friction from deciding. Over the next several years, brands that win with men will be the ones that earn trust fast and prove useful every day, not the ones that rely on novelty to get noticed.”



**Chris Costagli**  
Vice President,  
Thought Leadership  
F&B Insights Lead,  
NielsenIQ

### Did you know...

- Men who are focused on improving their healthy eating New Year’s resolutions are **1.7x more likely than women** to be fully on track and consistently keeping their resolutions.<sup>3</sup>
- Men who use product-scanning apps are **1.3x more likely than women** to avoid buying a product when the app assigns a low health score or flags additives.<sup>2</sup>
- Men who used scanning apps to assess snacking purchases are **1.3x more likely than women** to watch out for the product’s fiber content.<sup>1</sup>

NielsenIQ

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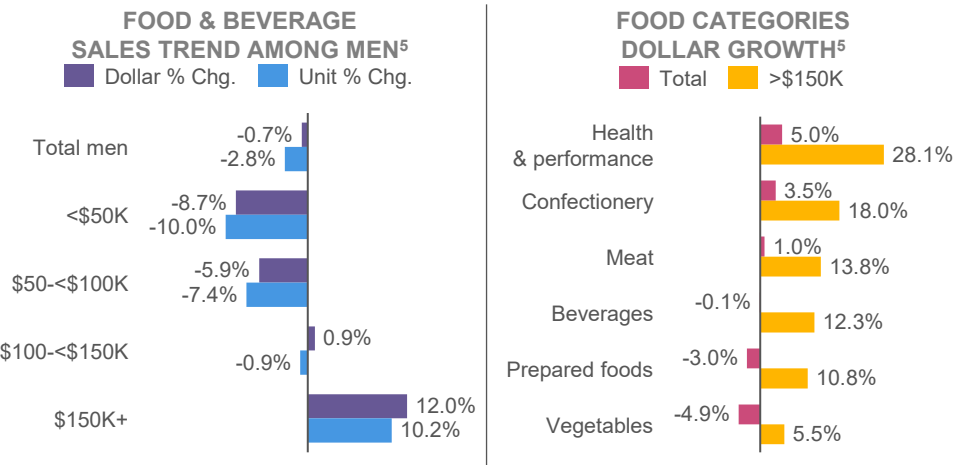


# Men Are Re-Engineering Consumption Around Function

## Men

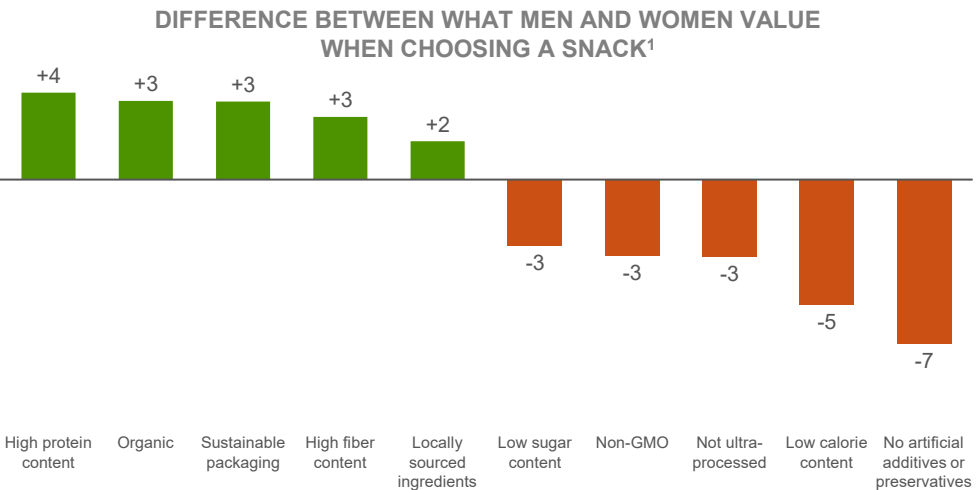
### Growth concentrates among higher income men

Growth among men is being carried almost entirely by households earning \$150K+, while men under \$100K continue to retreat in both dollars and units. That imbalance reshapes where profit pools form and where volume quietly erodes. The opportunity is not premium expansion alone, but designing credible value that keeps lower-income men engaged without diluting performance-led propositions.



### Men are prioritizing function over everything else

Men are recalibrating value around function, effortlessness, and credibility rather than price or promotion. They gravitate toward right-sized packs, on-the-go formats, and products that remove friction from daily routines. Health for men centers on what fuels performance and reliability, with 33% citing high protein as a key driver alongside elevated interest in fiber and organic claims. This reframes value as efficiency per decision, not savings per unit.



Industry Analysis Sources: <sup>1</sup>NIQ, BASES Quick Question Omnibus Survey, n=2,024, March 2026; <sup>2</sup>NIQ, BASES Quick Question Omnibus Survey, n=2,006, Jan 2026; <sup>3</sup>NIQ, BASES Quick Question Omnibus Survey, n=2,029, Feb 2026; <sup>4</sup>NIQ, BASES Quick Question Omnibus Survey, n=1,020, August 2025 <sup>5</sup>NIQ, Expanded Omnishopper Panel On Demand, Total US, Total Outlets, Total Food & Beverage, L52 Wks Ending 02/21/2026

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### The takeaway...

- Men are compressing decision-making, what looks like selectivity is actually intolerance for friction, driving faster exclusion rather than slower comparison.
- Men are building routines, not repertoires, meaning fewer brands win more of his spend once credibility is established.
- Men increasingly externalize trust, relying on systems, data, and validation layers instead of brand familiarity to reduce risk.

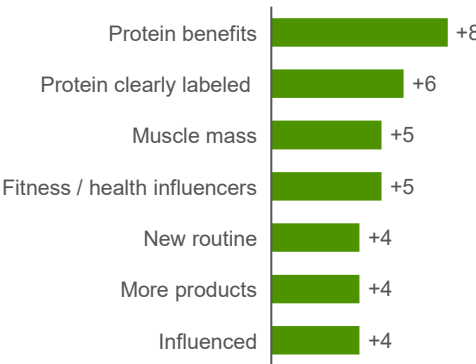
### Your next move...

- Rebuild physical and digital shelves to help men eliminate choices fast, prioritizing functional signposting and benefit clarity over assortment breadth.
- Lock in male loyalty by engineering repeat behavior, making trusted products effortless to find, repurchase, and rely on across every trip and channel.
- Design products to pass instant credibility checks by making benefits obvious, defensible, and verifiable without explanation or storytelling.
- Concentrate innovation on fewer products that earn a permanent role in daily routines, knowing men reward reliability far more than novelty.

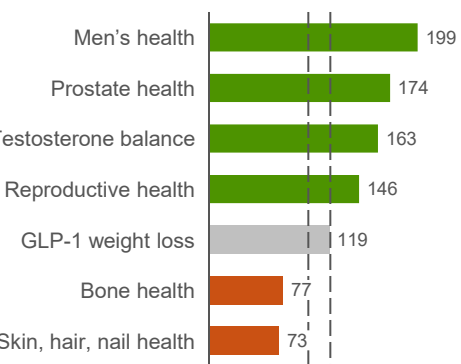
### Protein is becoming a daily health tool in men's diet

Men are turning protein into everyday infrastructure tied to longevity, strength, and staying functional over time. What was once an episodic choice now sits inside daily routines that support work demands, aging, recovery, and resilience. This elevates protein from a feature to a system, where consistency matters more than novelty. Clarity and authority outweigh variety, driving demand for education-led positioning that treats protein as foundational.

#### DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MEN & WOMEN, REASONS TO FOCUS ON PROTEIN<sup>4</sup>



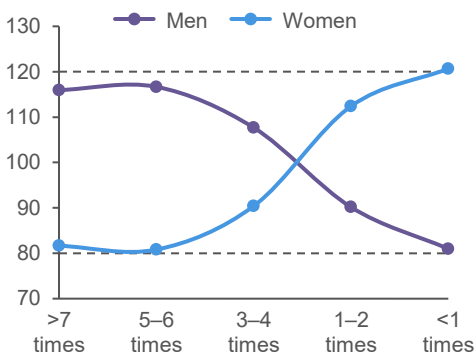
#### HEALTH FACTORS DRIVING PROTEIN AWARENESS AMONG MEN<sup>4</sup> (INDEXED TO TOTAL RESPONDENTS)



### Beverages are emerging as nutritional shortcuts for men

Men turn to beverages when they need efficiency, clarity, and function without friction. Protein gives beverages nutritional credibility, expanding their role into mid-morning fuel, afternoon gaps, and light replacement moments. Energy and satiety further push beverages into food territory, not refreshment. This repositions beverages to capture meaningful value from snack occasions long dominated by solid foods.

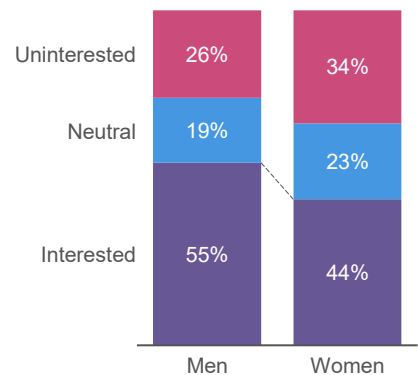
#### WEEKLY USAGE OF BEVERAGES AS SNACK INSTEAD OF FOOD SNACKS<sup>1</sup> (INDEXED TO TOTAL RESPONDENTS)



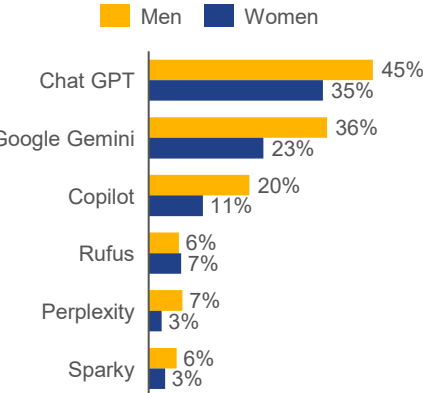
### AI is turning into a man's decision partner

Men are increasingly delegating product evaluation to AI and health technologies that reward clarity and punish ambiguity. They are 1.6x more likely to want AI agents guiding purchases and 1.8x more likely to use AI daily, shifting discovery away from shelves and toward answers. AI reinforces men's functional mindset, validating ingredients, claims, and nutrition in seconds.

#### INTEREST IN USING AI AGENTS TO HELP RESEARCH & PURCHASE PRODUCTS<sup>3</sup>



#### MOST USED AI TOOLS TO ASSIST SHOPPING<sup>3</sup>



Looking for more?

Men are shaping what the next era of FMCG will be built around, whether the industry is ready or not. Over the next several years, purchasing behavior shifts away from browsing and persuasion toward validation, efficiency, and outcomes. Products earn relevance only if they fit cleanly into daily systems that support work, health, and performance over time. Growth concentrates where utility is obvious and credibility holds up under scrutiny, while everything else fades quietly from consideration. By the end of the decade, winning with men requires designing for how decisions will be made, not how shelves are organized.