

Baking Aisle Insider (Quarter 1 2024)

Understanding the flour shopper's mindset

New flour insights to help you optimize your shelf set

There's a lot of opportunity in the baking aisle, but it can be tough to stay on top of what flour shoppers want. Even with the all data at your fingertips, keeping up with the trends is a lot of work, especially when you manage multiple categories. As a leading co-manufacturer and ingredient partner for national brands and Private Labels, Ardent Mills can help you understand what's driving flour purchases.

Recently, we conducted a large-scale national consumer study of flour shoppers 18 years old and older to help you find new ways to optimize your shelf set. We've taken out all the guesswork by analyzing our proprietary data for you, so you can focus on new opportunities that keep your flour shoppers happy.



The increased value of flour

Consumers see flour as more than an ingredient—it's a valued resource. Today's flour shoppers are well informed and have strong opinions about flour.

Value flour like your flour shoppers do

Flour's ubiquity in the kitchen makes it a pantry staple, and people are using it more and more. In 2023 alone, flour shoppers reported baking more from scratch—up *significantly* from 2021.

Percentage of home bakers who made these items in the past 6 months*



*as of June 2023

Offer a variety of flour to enable discovery at the shelf

Flour shoppers understand the differences in flours. 83% of flour shoppers agree that having flour options for their baking is important. They're buying self-rising, bread, cake, whole wheat and pastry flours, too. Offering the right variety of flour products on your shelf might mean even more purchases.

Shoppin' around: 63% of flour shoppers like to shop around for different options

A marked difference: 53% of flour shoppers see major differences among flour brands

What's next in flour?

Stock the “latest and greatest” for your flour shoppers

Flour shoppers are telling us they want to see new and exciting offerings on the shelf.

59% of flour shoppers report interest in flour brands and retailers making innovative new products available

58% of flour shoppers will check out a packaged flour that is different or new

73% of most frequent flour purchasers will check out a packaged flour that is different or new

There are two ways to get the attention of today's flour shoppers

Get flours with perceived benefits on your shelf

Flours that are perceived as “good” for the body, like digestive health, higher fiber, higher plant protein and naturally sweeter wheat, are interesting to almost all flour shoppers.

Stock up on flours with benefits

Purchase intent for alternative flours with perceived health benefits:

Oat Flour:	30%
Ancient Grain Blend Flour:	26%
Chickpea Flour:	19%
Quinoa Flour:	16%
Millet Flour:	10%
Lentil Flour:	10%
Spelt Flour:	8%



Stock flour with innovative packaging

Flour shoppers are not happy with current packaging options—both Brand and Private Label shoppers have similar complaints. In fact, 71% of flour shoppers sometimes store flour in a container other than the original retail packaging. Retailers and manufacturers should consider new packaging that addresses these four problems:



Mess—Packaging should limit mess in the store and at home.



Handling and pouring—Make baking easier on flour shoppers.



Freshness—Keep flour fresher and useable for a longer time.



Food safety—Give flour shoppers the confidence that the product is safe to consume.



Private Label opportunity

Maximize Private Label opportunity with an assortment of flours

Private Label flour has a strong base of loyal shoppers. However, nearly 1/3 of them also buy Brand flour. We call those who shop both “Switchers”—and they are thoughtful about what they purchase. Because of Switchers, there is measurable opportunity loss within Private Label flour.

Win over Switchers with an assortment of Brand and Private Label flours

What Switchers want: 81% of Switchers agree that finding the right flour is important

Typically, their baking habits are relatively diverse compared to the average Private Label flour shopper, and they look for flours that have specific performance needs.



Switcher purchases over the last 6 months

Flour types	% purchased	Index*
Self-rising flour	49%	165
Bread flour	39%	181
Cake flour	36%	168
Whole wheat flour	32%	174
Pastry flour	17%	232

*The index when Private Label Switchers results are compared to total Private Label Buyer results (an index reflects how much higher or lower than the standard [100] a result is). Indexes of 110 or higher are commonly considered notable.

Ardent Mills Proprietary Research/Analysis

Ardent Mills is transforming how the world is nourished. As the premier flour-milling and ingredient company with more than 40 locations focused on traditional wheat, quinoa, chickpeas, pulses, organic and gluten free products, we cultivate the future of food to help our customers and communities thrive.

Looking to take these insights into action in your baking aisle? Contact your Ardent Mills Account Manager or info@ardentmills.com to see how we can help.

Switchers are interested in flour innovations

Innovation can boost sales: 61% of Switchers are interested in new, innovative products in the baking aisle

Switchers show an above average purchase interest in what might be next in flour

New flour types

- ◆ Chickpea
- ◆ Oat
- ◆ All-Purpose Baking Mix

Perceived benefits

- ◆ Digestive health
- ◆ Organic
- ◆ Low-carb/Keto/Keto-friendly (grain-based)

Packaging

- ◆ Longer shelf life at home
- ◆ Safe/tamper proof
- ◆ Resealable stand-up pouch