
Consumer Confidence Attitude Monitor

Understanding the Consumer Mindset Toward Dairy Issues
Emphasis on the Southeast (SUDIA Area)

Cheryl Hayn
SUDIA General Manager

Southern Dairy Conference
January 25, 2011

Background and Purpose

- Building and maintaining consumer confidence in dairy products and the dairy industry requires an understanding of what the consumer is thinking – the mindset
- The dairy industry monitors consumer beliefs, attitudes and concerns/interests consumers hold toward key issues of importance
 - With attention being drawn to differences between consumers in SUDIA and the broader U.S. population

Method

- Web-based quantitative survey
 - SUDIA representative sample of adults age 18-70 (n=528); National n=1000
 - Questions asked
 - Views
 - Attitudes toward dairy
 - Product safety
 - Interest in/Concerns regarding dairy topics
 - Farmer image
 - Processor image
 - Behaviors – purchase and consumption
 - News interest, sources of trust
 - Will recap only some today
 - Fielded May 2010

Key Take Aways

■ Starting from a good place

- Strong foundation of consumer confidence
- Messaging needs to sustain current levels, protecting against potential threats
- Health benefits of dairy acknowledged and appreciated

■ Biggest threat lies with consumer concerns about unintended outcomes from production practices--- view shared across the board

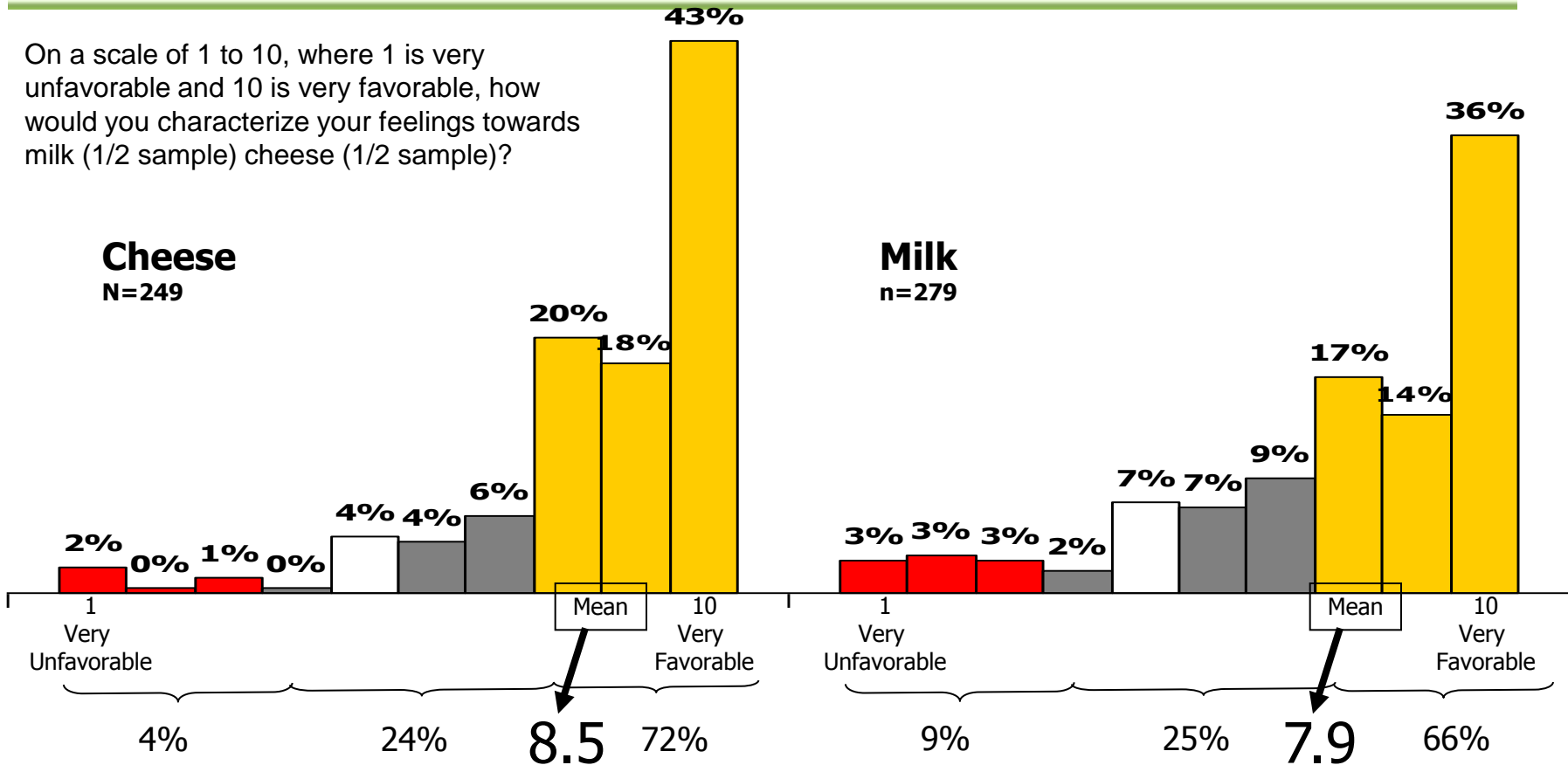
- Hormones, pesticides, antibiotics

Key Take Aways

- Environmental issues are important to the environmentally savvy, but for most they remain “out of sight, out of mind”
 - With the exception of welfare of dairy cows—an emerging matter of concern
- The remaining issues are off the radar, but of interest or concern for small niche populations
 - Barring major new findings of significance, negative nutrition issues like flavored milk/sugar in schools and sodium in cheese are not front and center

Feelings Toward Dairy Products

On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is very unfavorable and 10 is very favorable, how would you characterize your feelings towards milk (1/2 sample) cheese (1/2 sample)?



Days/Year Consume Cheese

53

106

212

★ **121 index vs National**

Days/Year Milk Consumed as Beverage

37

56

196

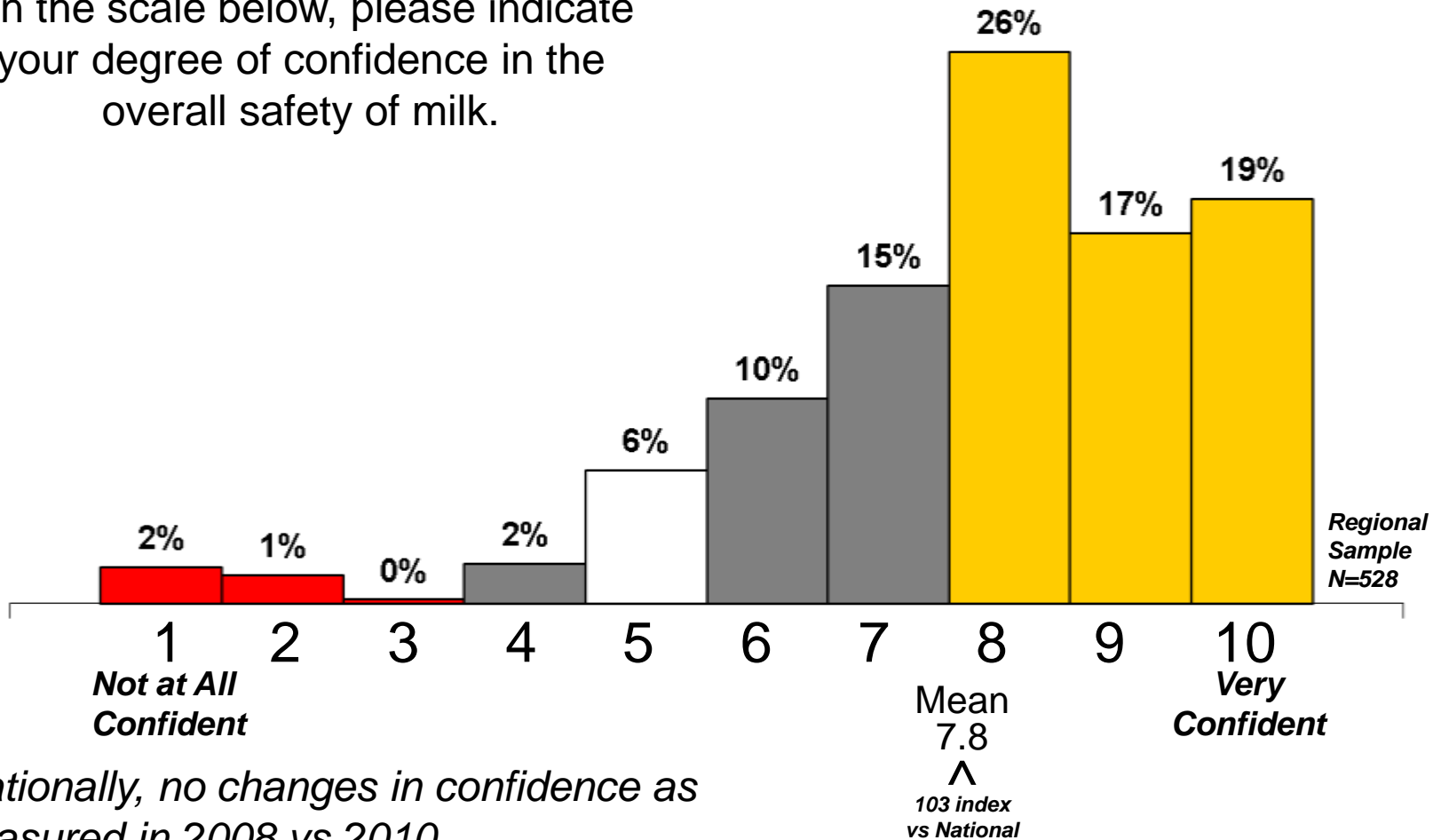
95 index vs National



Consumer Confidence Attitude Monitor
 Understanding the Consumer Mindset Toward Dairy Issues
 --- SUDIA Analysis

Confidence in Safety of Dairy

On the scale below, please indicate your degree of confidence in the overall safety of milk.



•Nationally, no changes in confidence as measured in 2008 vs 2010

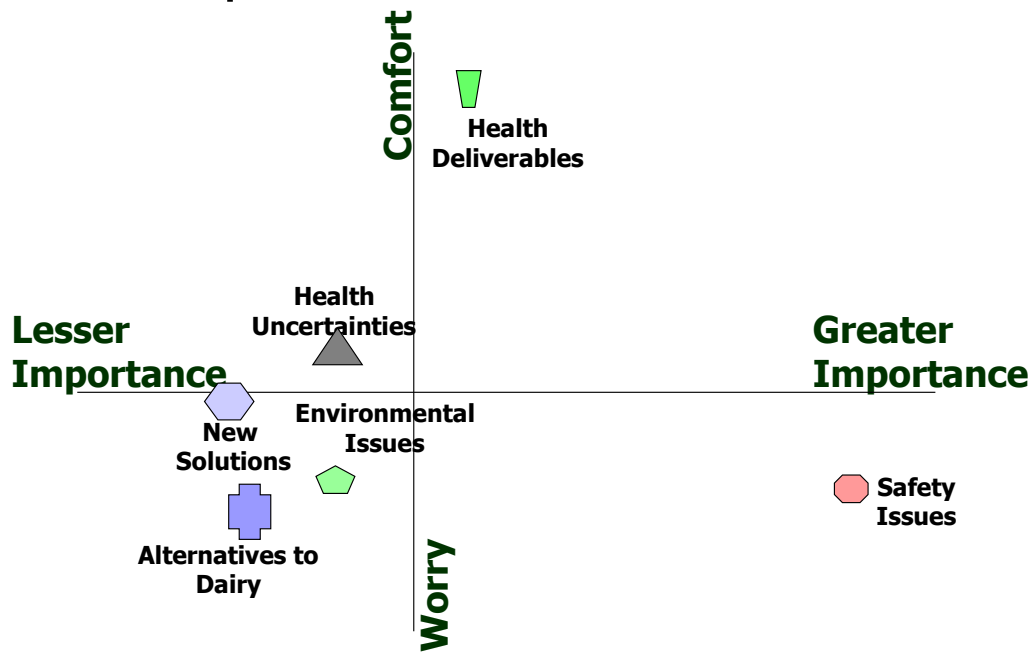
Are there issues that might encroach on this confidence?

Issue Importance

- Degree of Interest In/Concern About 28 Dairy Related Issues

Confidence in Dairy

Map of Consumer Mindset



Safety Issues: concerns about ways dairy products can be made unsafe - *hormones, pesticides, antibiotics, and contamination of milk products*

Health Deliverables: interest in what dairy products deliver in terms of health and nutritional well-being - *vitamin D, calcium, protein, nutrient rich, and osteoporosis*

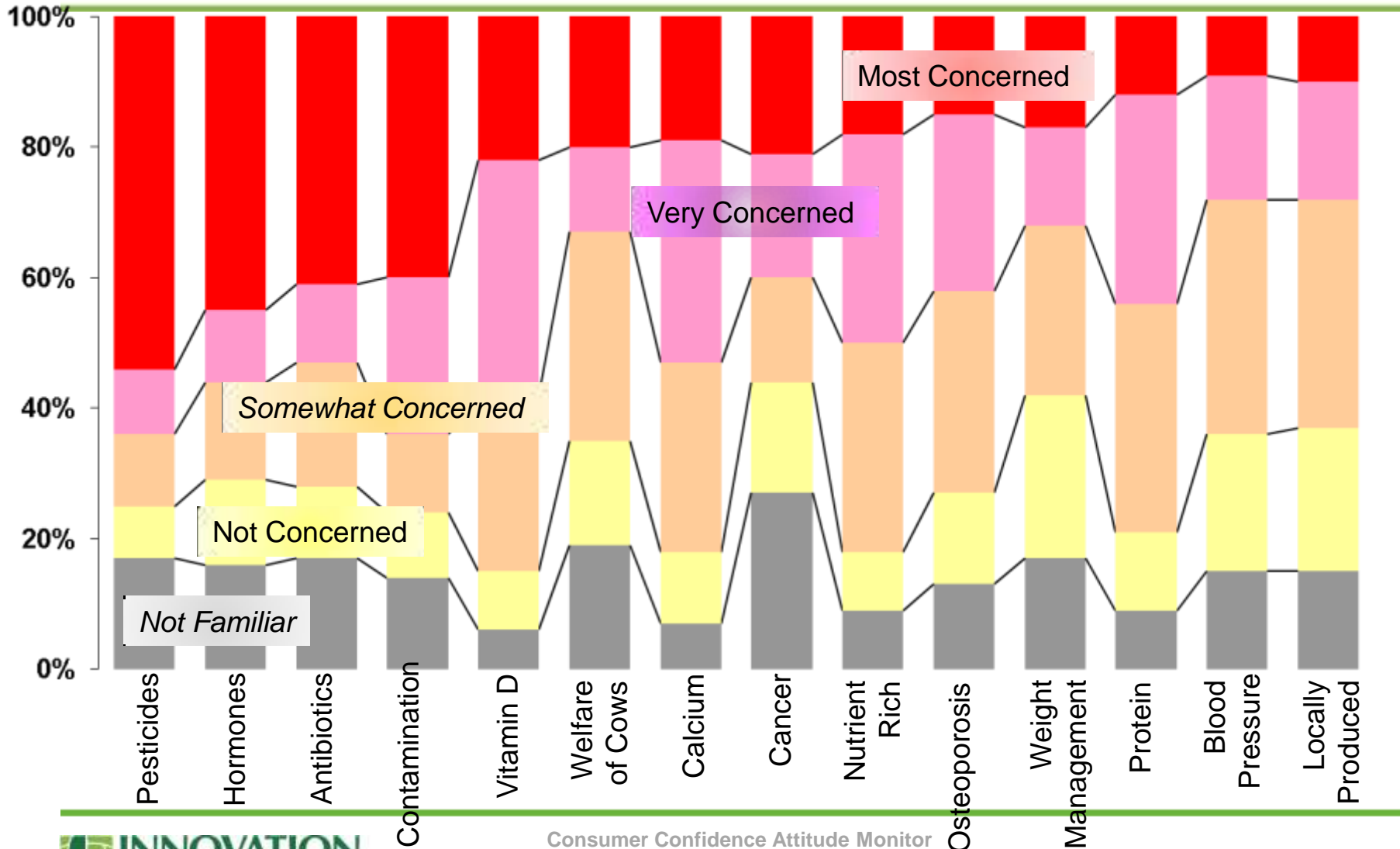
Health Uncertainties: concerns about uncertainties relating to dairy products and various health risks - *child obesity, adult obesity, cancer, flavored milk at school, blood pressure, weight management, cheese and sodium*

Environmental Issues: concerns about how dairy producers manage and care for the environment, the community, and their animals - *water management, odor control, manure management, community, environment, and welfare of cows*

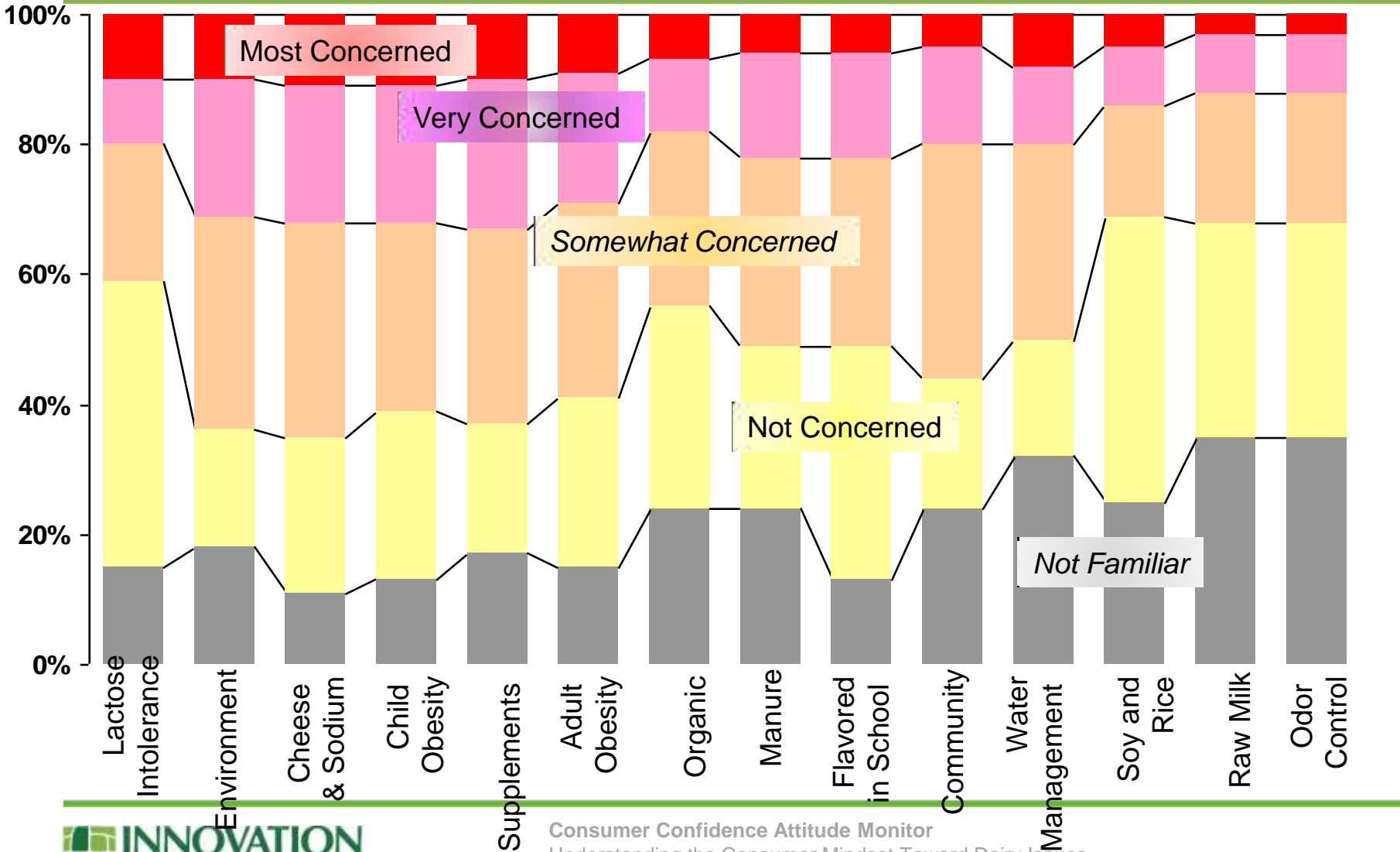
New Solutions: interest in alternative solutions to securing the health benefits of dairy products without side effects - *lactose intolerance, supplements, soy and rice*

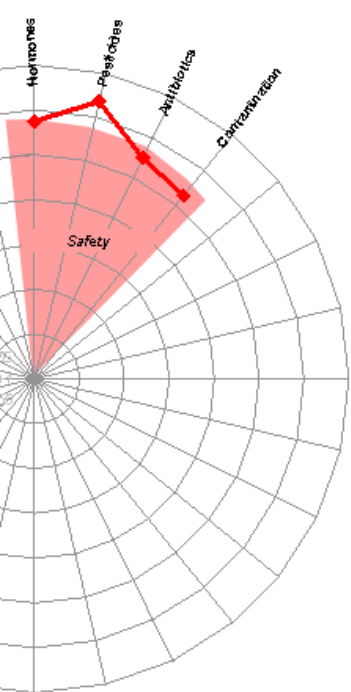
Alternatives to Dairy: interest in ways dairy products can be produced unconventionally - *organic dairy, raw milk, and locally produced*

Issue Importance



Issue Importance





SAFETY ISSUES

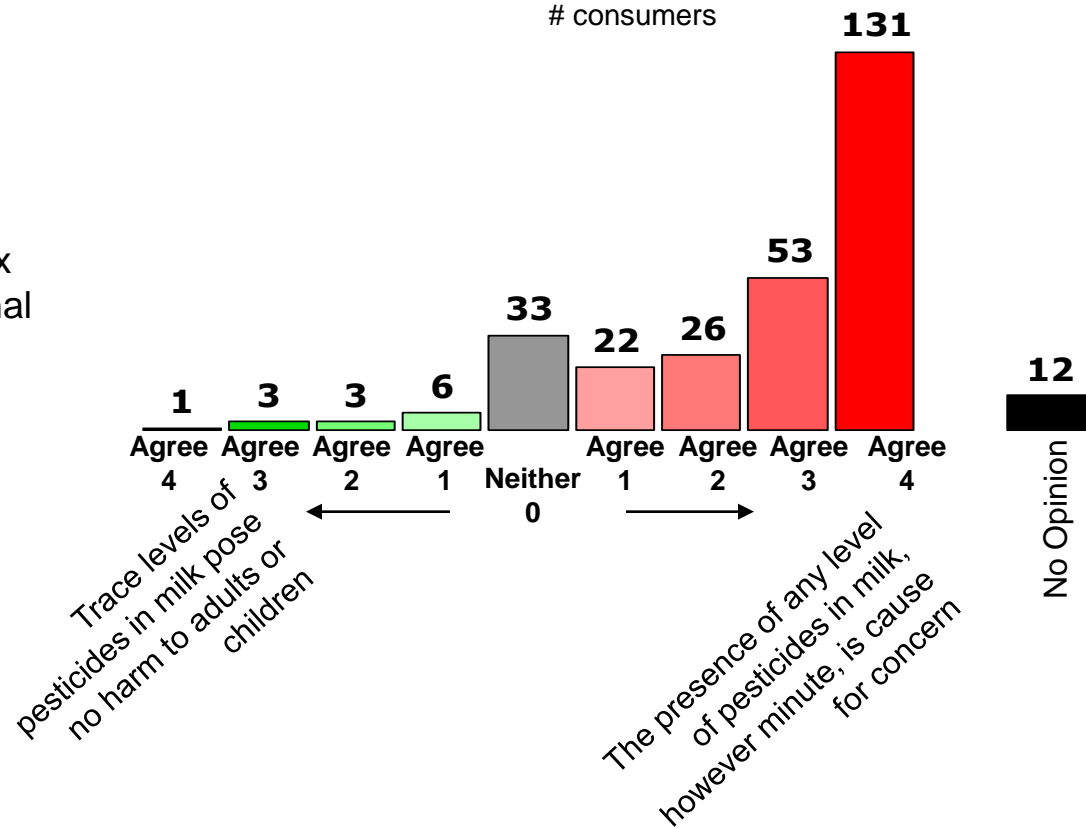
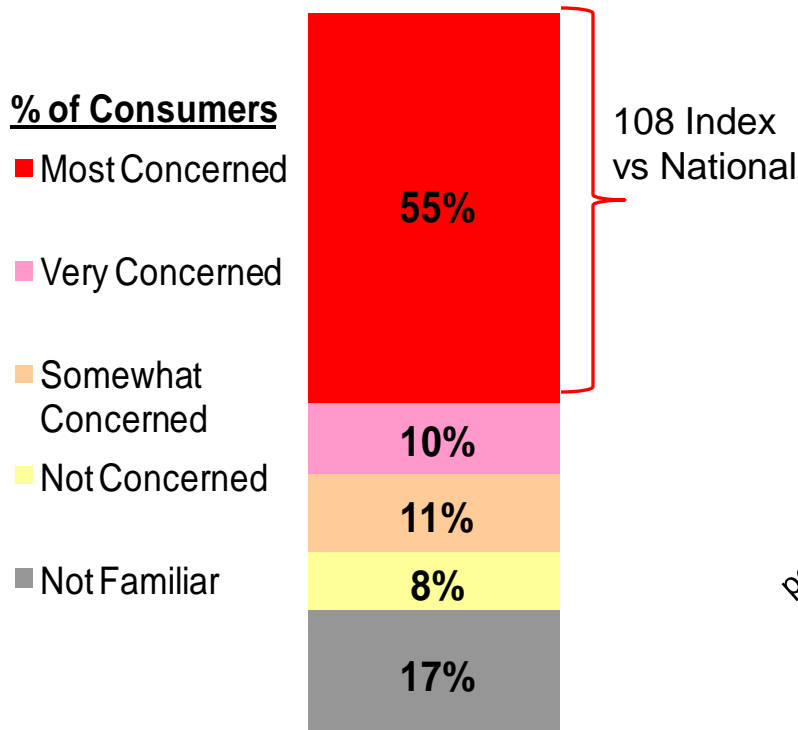
Issue Importance: Pesticides in Milk

Consumer POV

Among Adults Who Have the
Greatest Interest/Concern With Topic

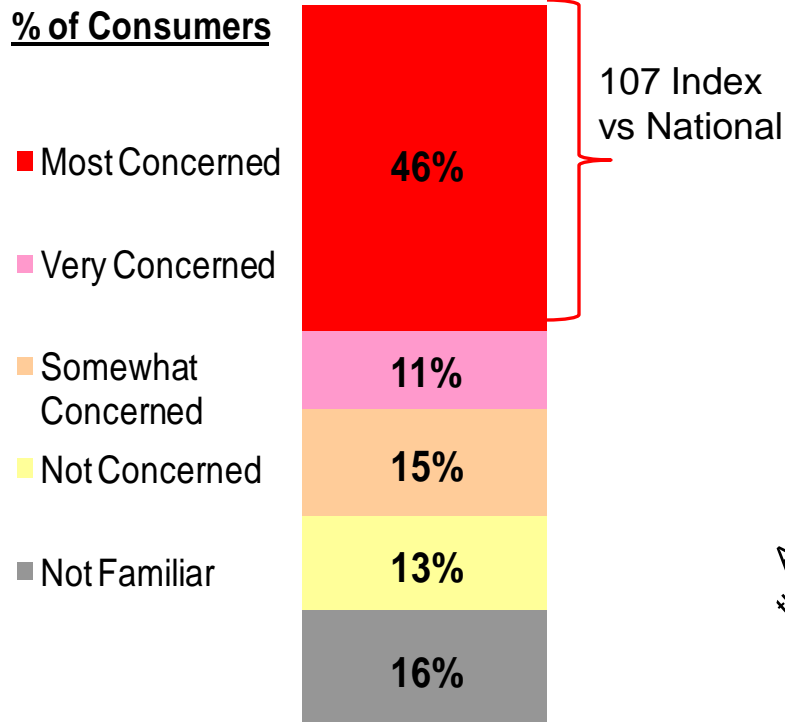
consumers

SUDIA Mean=3.28 Gen Pop Mean=3.09
Not Statistically Significant Difference

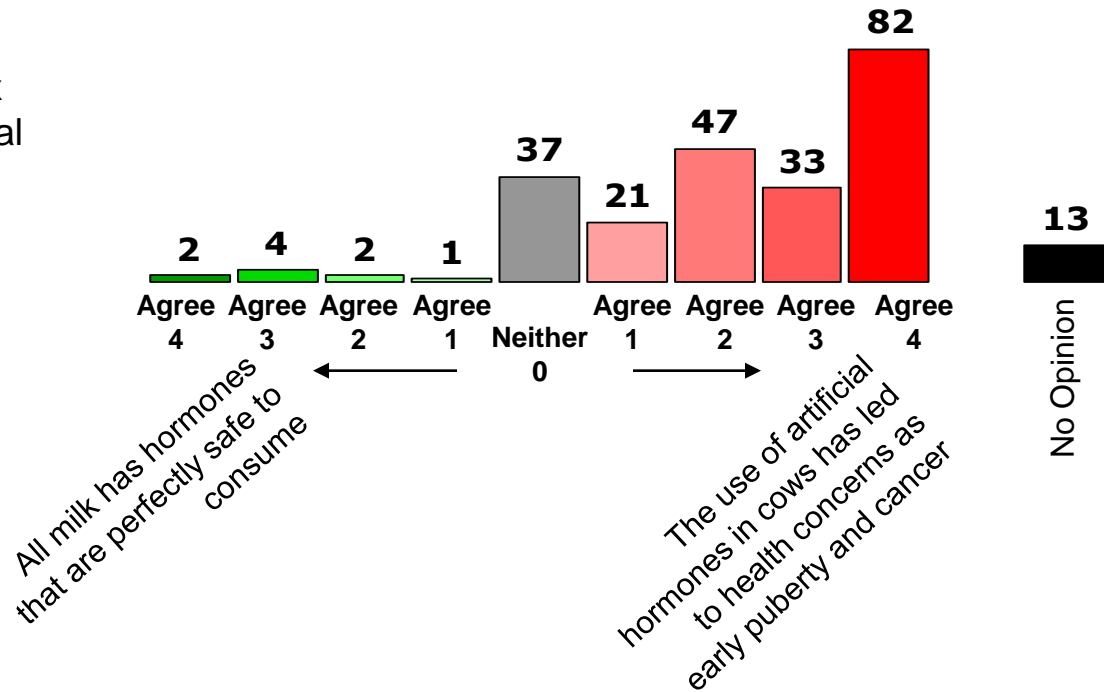


Issue Importance: Hormones in Milk

SUDIA Mean=2.94 Gen Pop Mean=2.86
Not Statistically Significant Difference

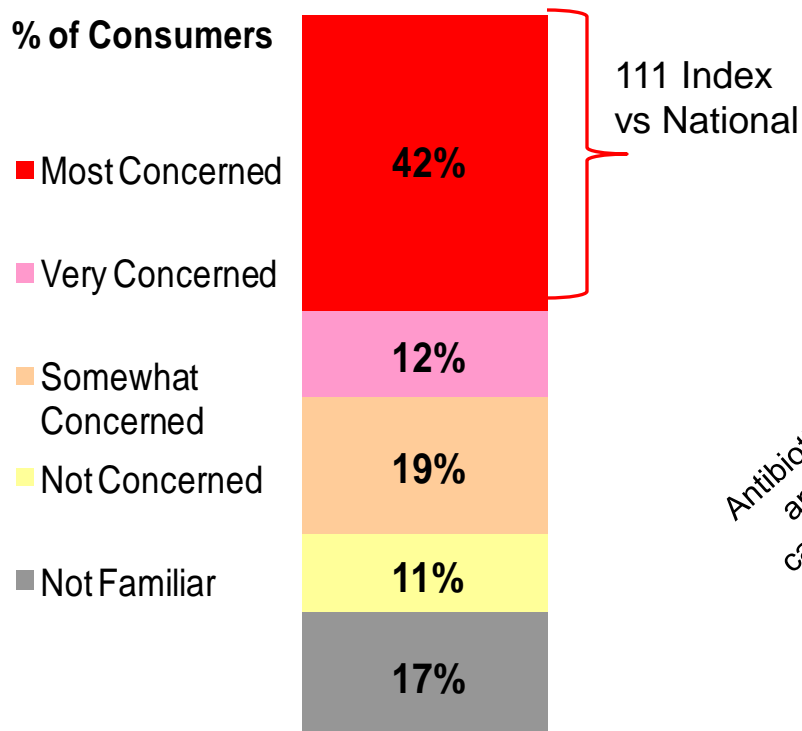


Consumer POV Among Adults Who Have the Greatest Interest/Concern With Topic # consumers



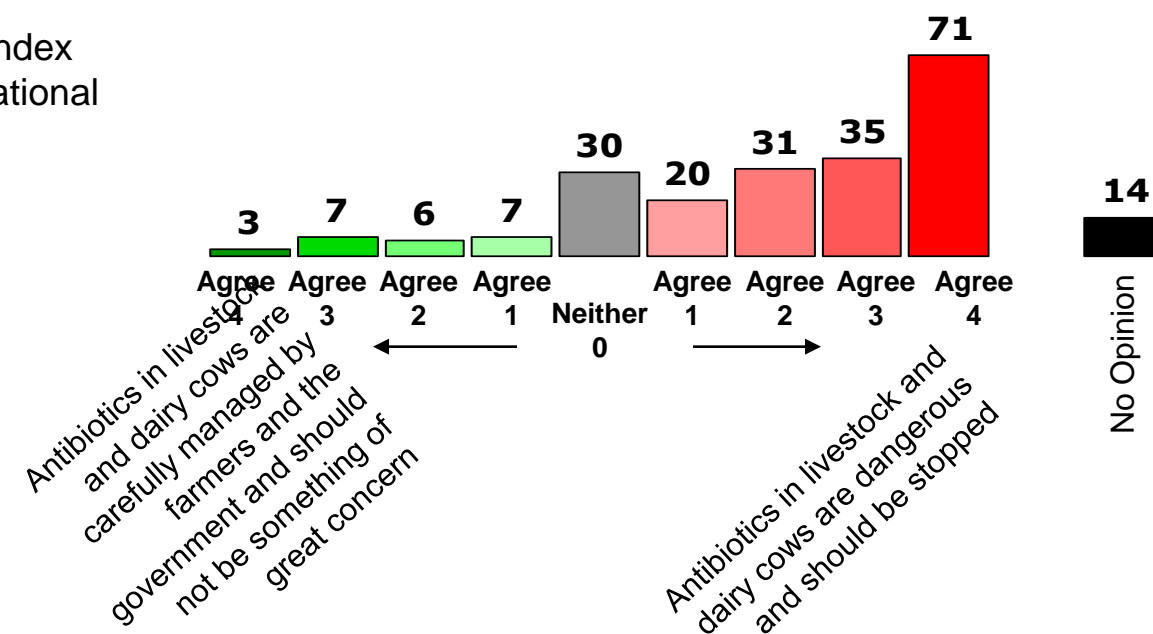
Issue Importance: Antibiotics in Milk

SUDIA Mean=2.86 Gen Pop Mean=2.70
Not Statistically Significant Difference



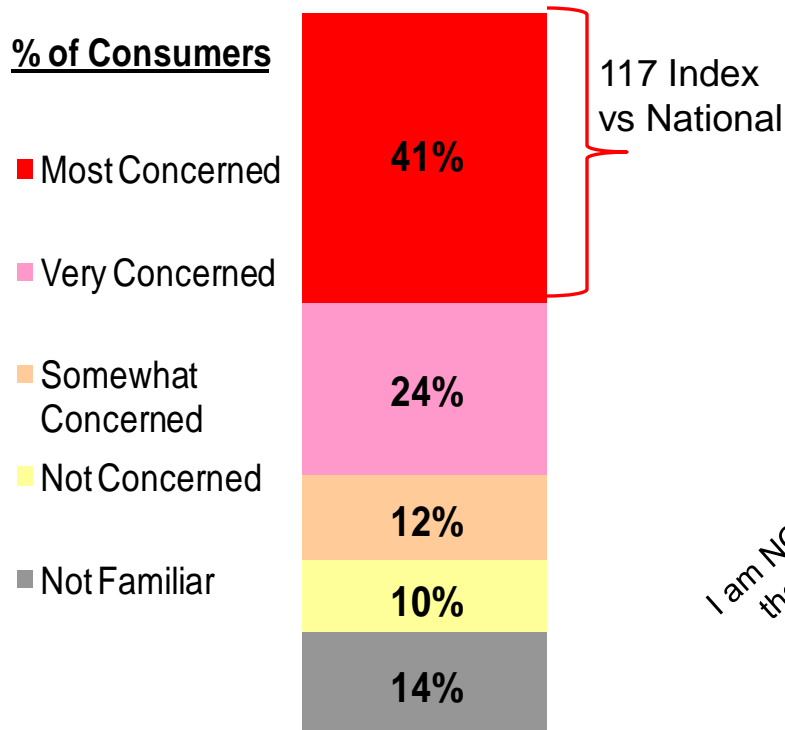
Consumer POV

Among Adults Who Have the Greatest Interest/Concern With Topic
consumers

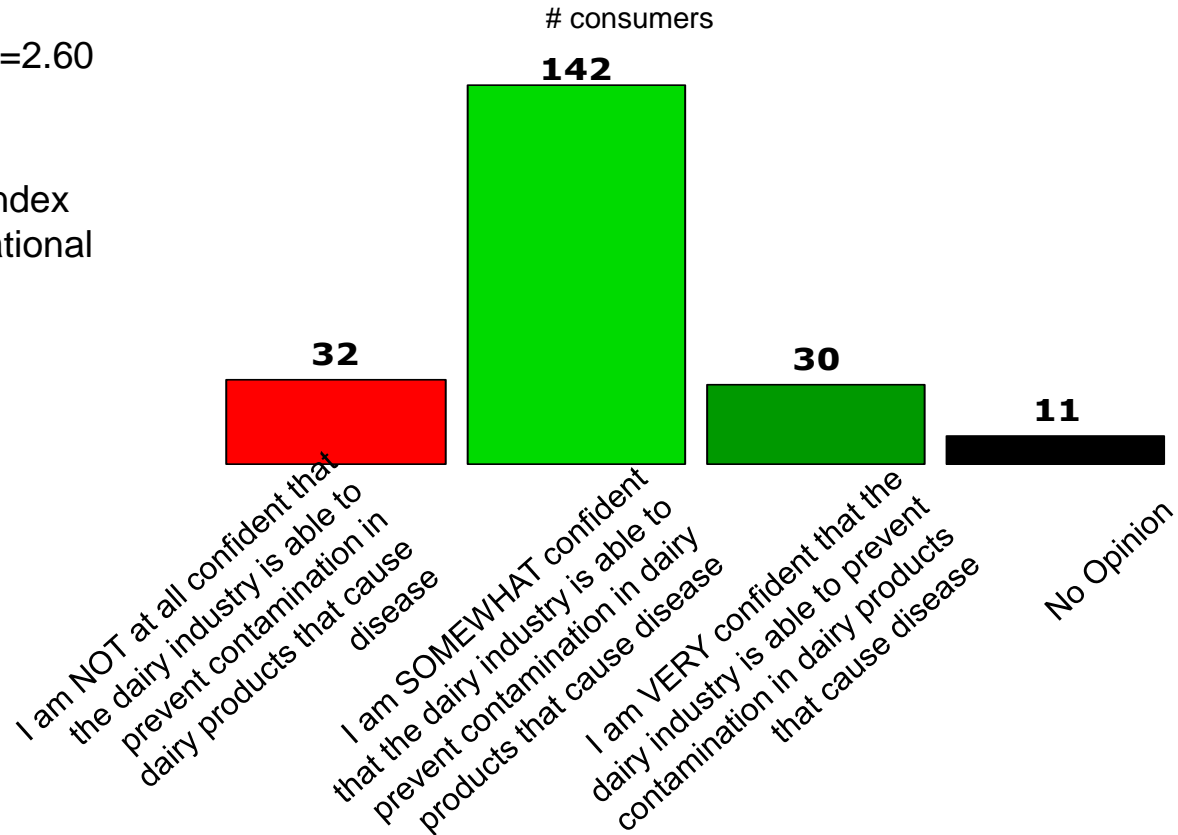


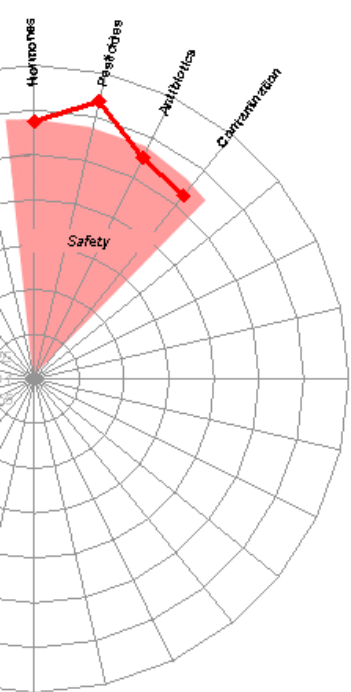
Issue Importance: Contamination in Milk

★ SUDIA Mean=2.86 Gen Pop Mean=2.60
Statistically Significant Difference



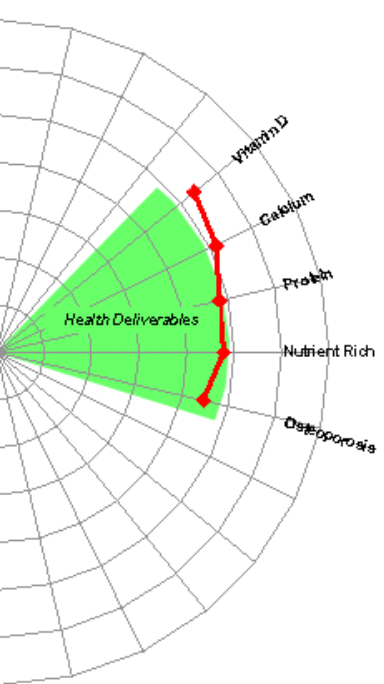
Consumer POV Among Adults Who Have the Greatest Interest/Concern With Topic





Take Away: Safety Issues

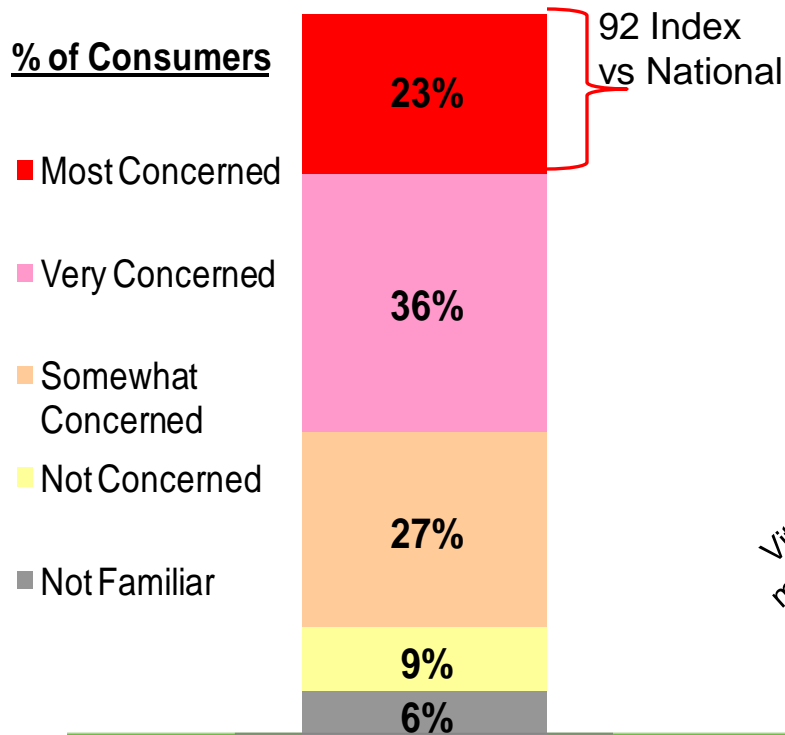
- Dairy is most vulnerable to an erosion of consumer confidence in the area of safety
 - Particularly so with Contamination in Milk Products in SUDIA
 - Even so, appear to have a measure of faith in the industry to appropriately manage
- Consumers take positions not desired by the industry; views are strongly held
 - Very weak support for messages that support the industry
 - The usual “fan” tolerance and willingness to take the industry side are notably marginal



HEALTH DELIVERABLES

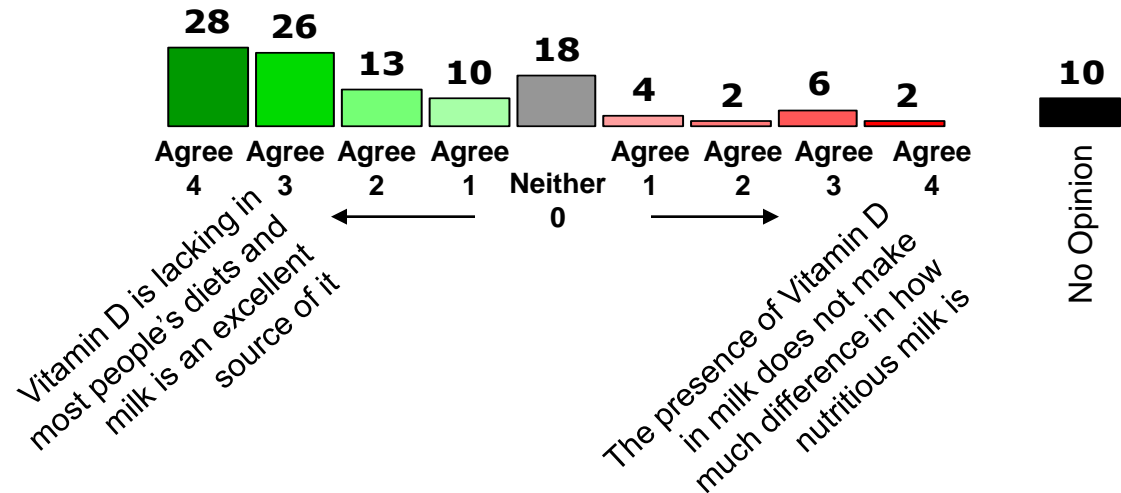
Issue Importance: Milk and Vitamin D

SUDIA Mean=2.76 Gen Pop Mean=2.66
Not Statistically Significant Difference



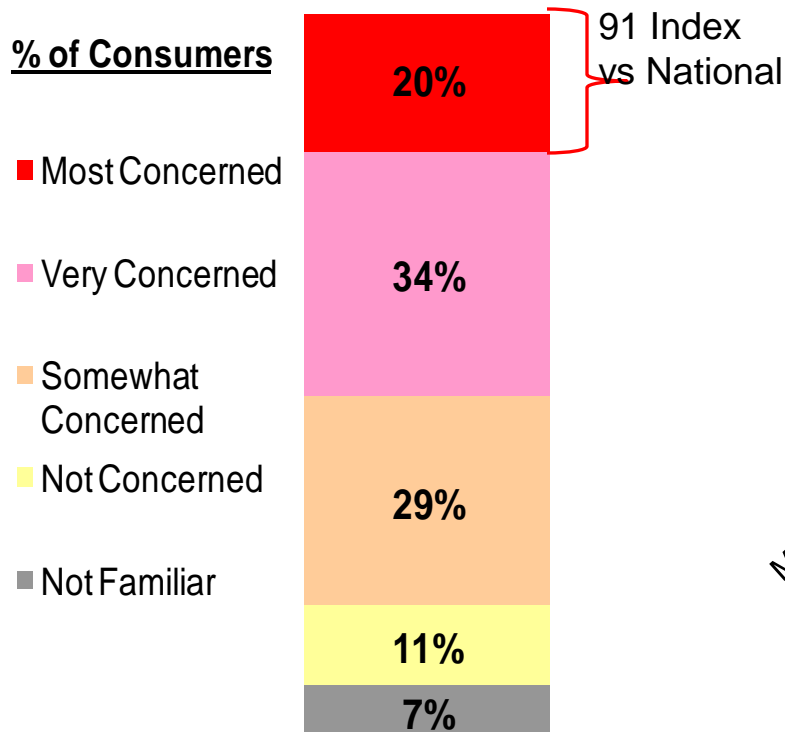
Consumer POV

Among Adults Who Have the Greatest Interest/Concern With Topic
consumers



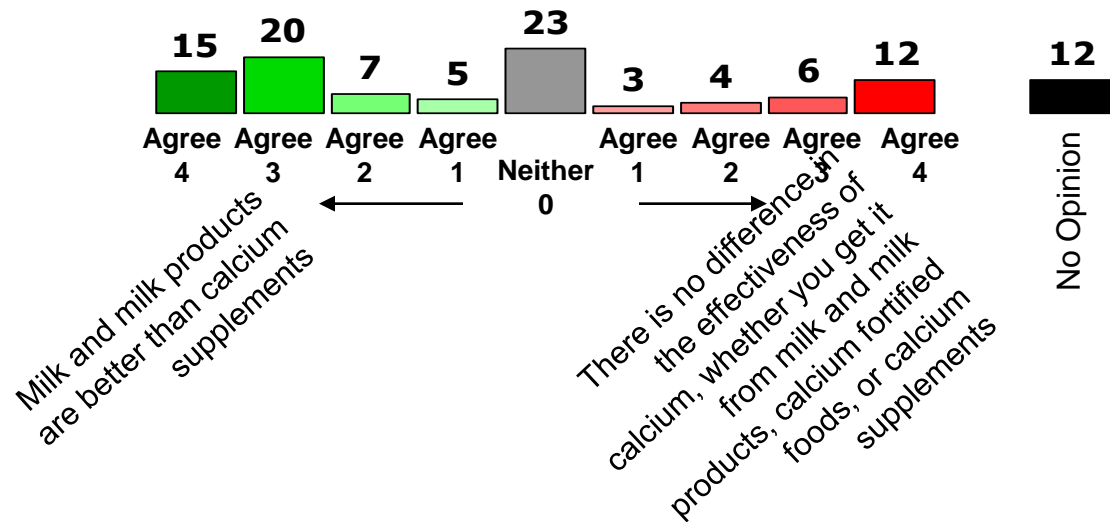
Issue Importance: Calcium

SUDIA Mean=2.63 Gen Pop Mean=2.55
Not Statistically Significant Difference



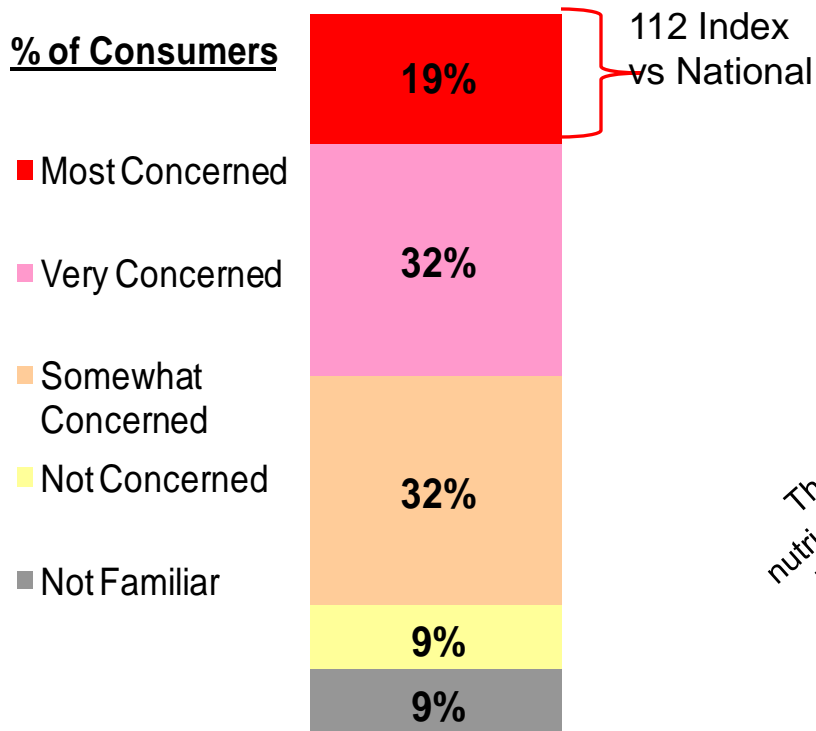
Consumer POV

Among Adults Who Have the Greatest Interest/Concern With Topic
consumers



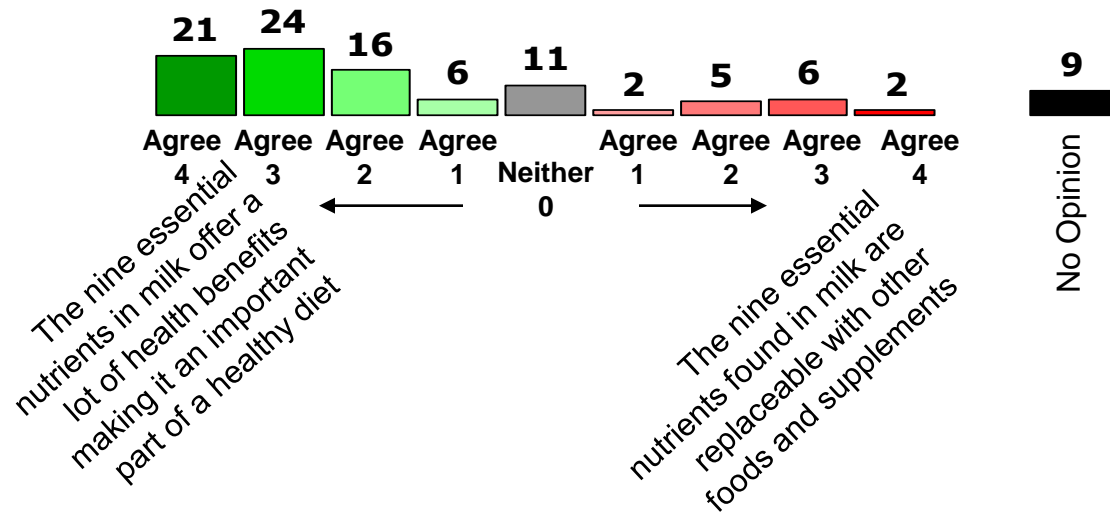
Issue Importance: Milk and Nutrient Rich Foods

★ SUDIA Mean=2.53 Gen Pop Mean=2.37
Moderately Statistically Significant Difference



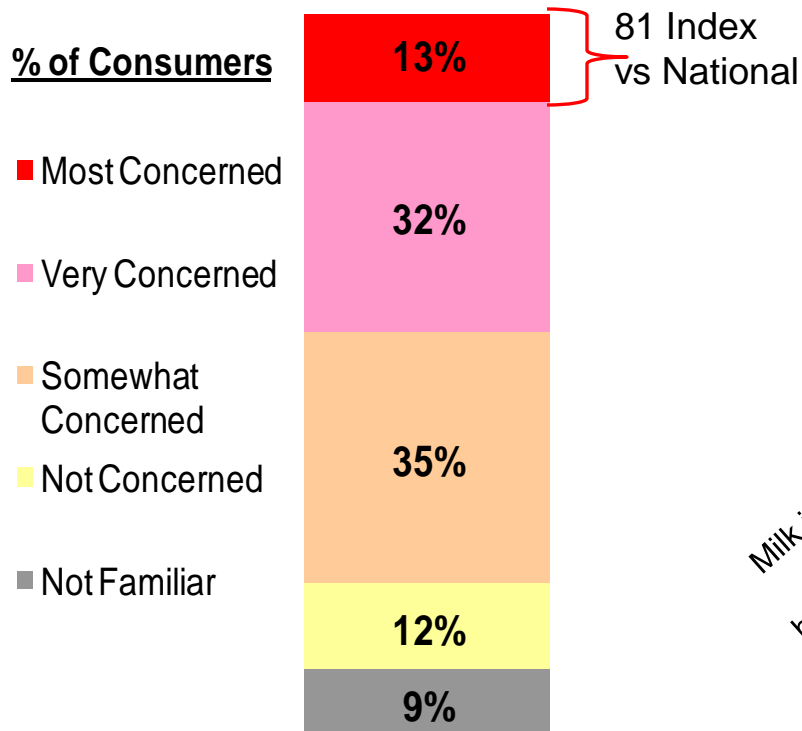
Consumer POV

Among Adults Who Have the Greatest Interest/Concern With Topic
consumers



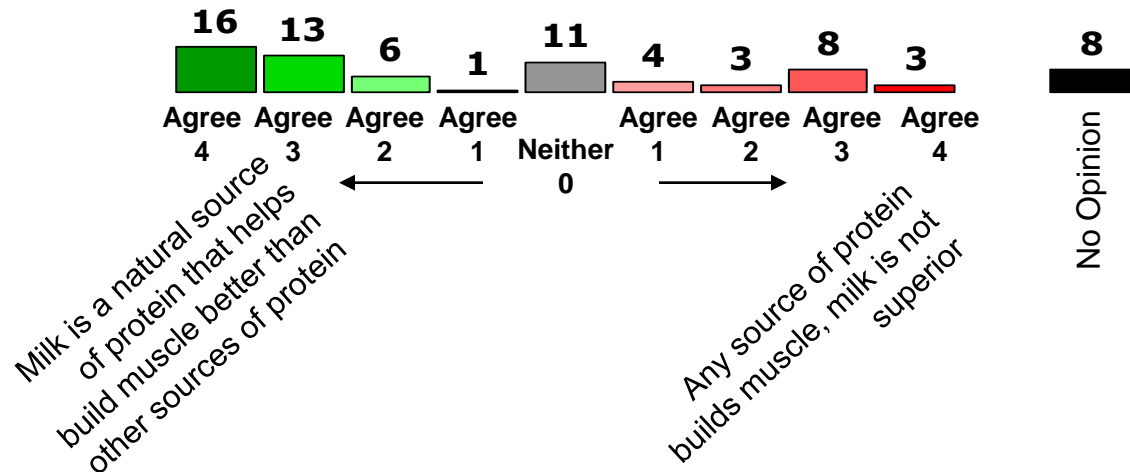
Issue Importance: Milk and Protein

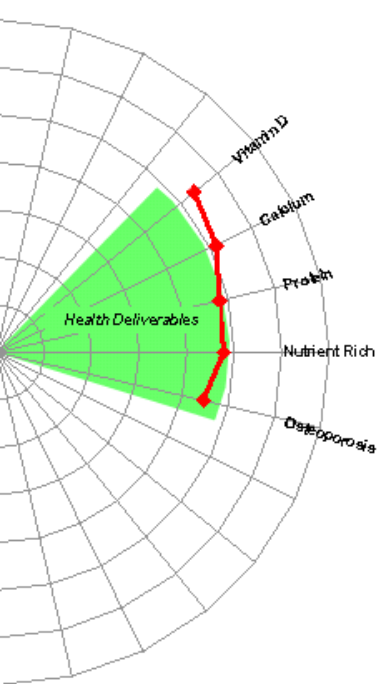
SUDIA Mean=2.37 Gen Pop Mean=2.33
Not Statistically Significant Difference



Consumer POV Among Adults Who Have the Greatest Interest/Concern With Topic

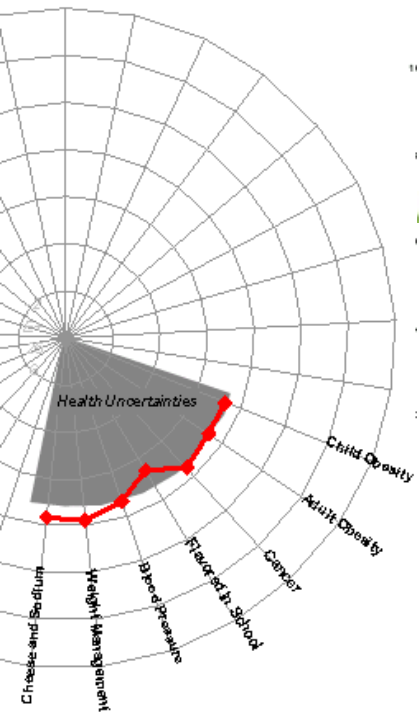
consumers





Take Away: Health Deliverables

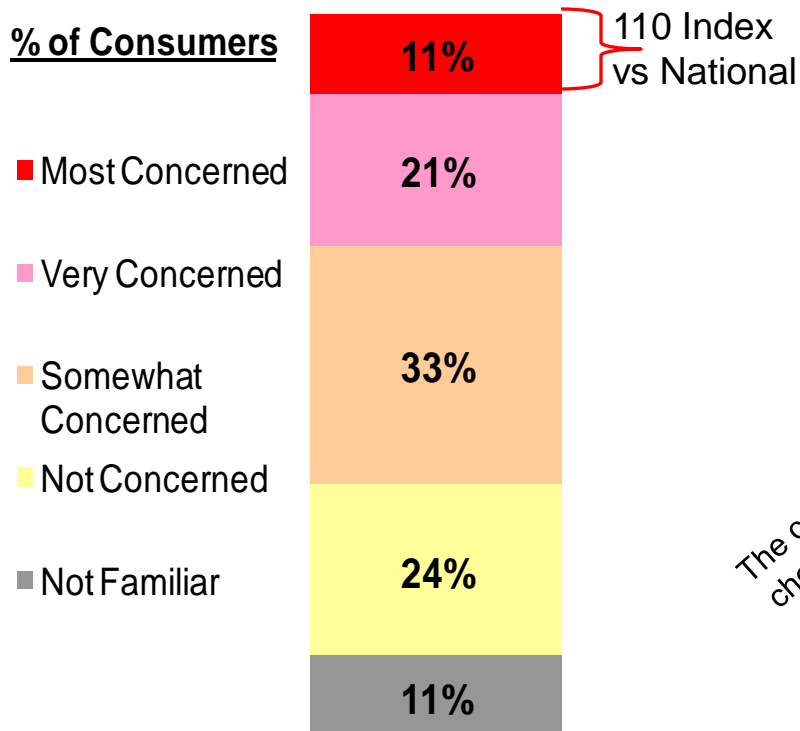
- Ample findings show that consumers grant that dairy is healthy
- Opportunity to solidify some consumers' positions
- SUDIA consumers parallel national consumers with one exception
 - Greater focus on, interest in Milk and Nutrient Rich Foods



HEALTH UNCERTAINTIES

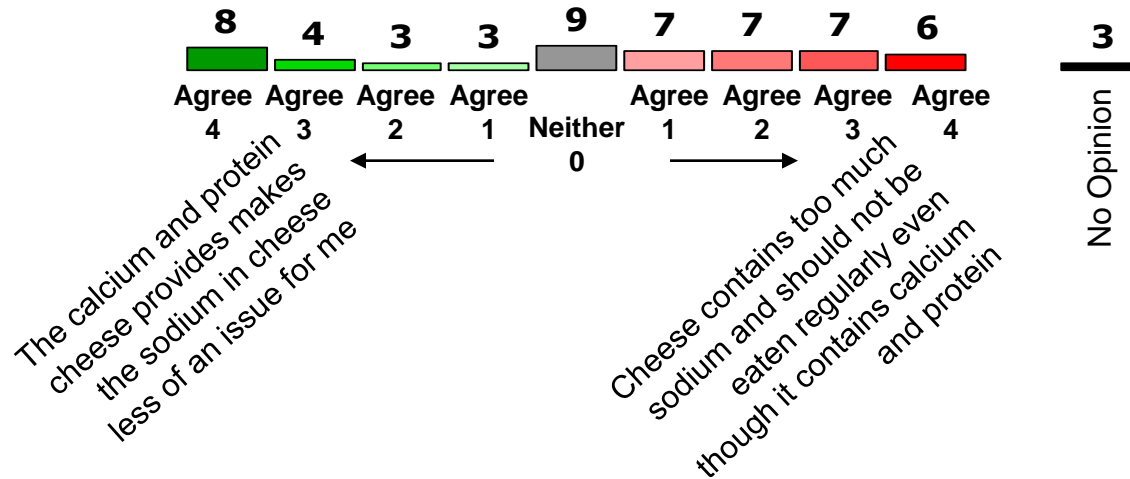
Issue Importance: Cheese and Sodium

SUDIA Mean=1.98 Gen Pop Mean=1.90
Not Statistically Significant Difference



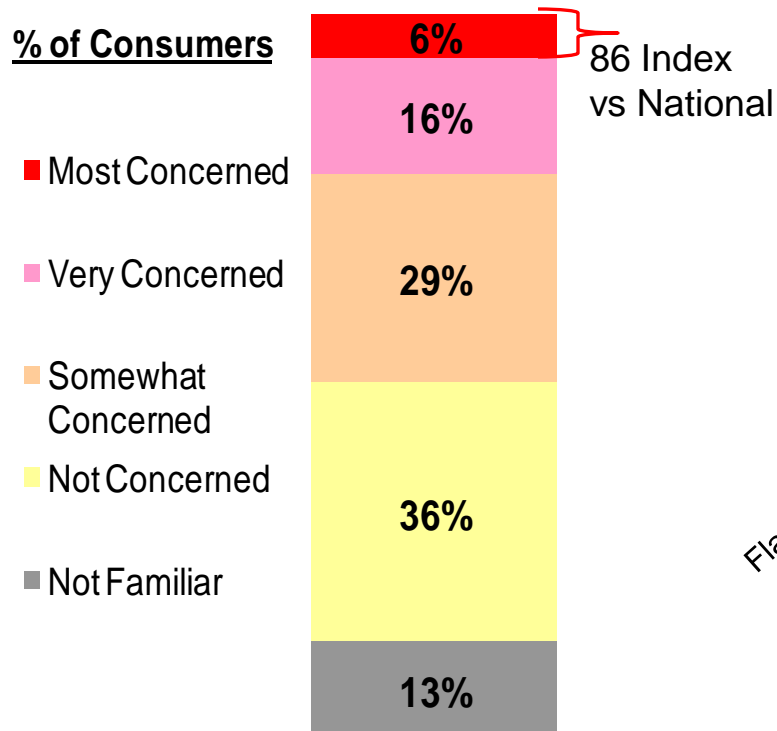
Consumer POV

Among Adults Who Have the Greatest Interest/Concern With Topic
consumers



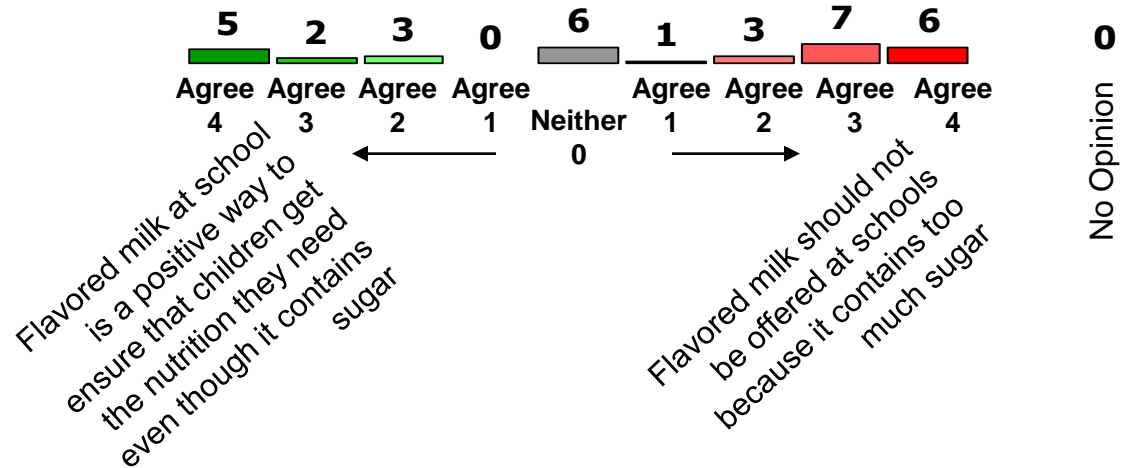
Issue Importance: Flavored Milk in Schools

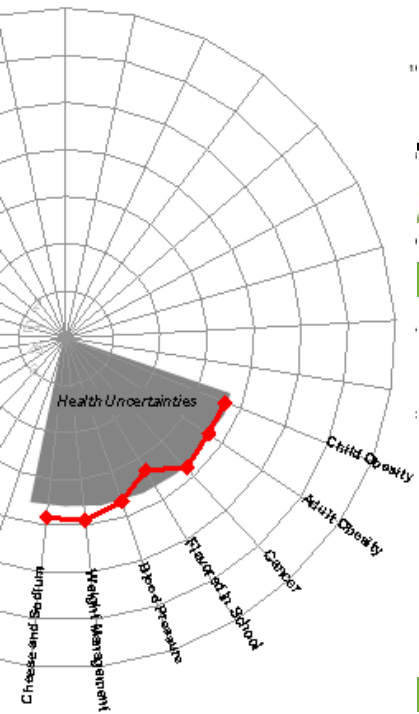
SUDIA Mean=1.68 Gen Pop Mean=1.64
Not Statistically Significant Difference



Consumer POV

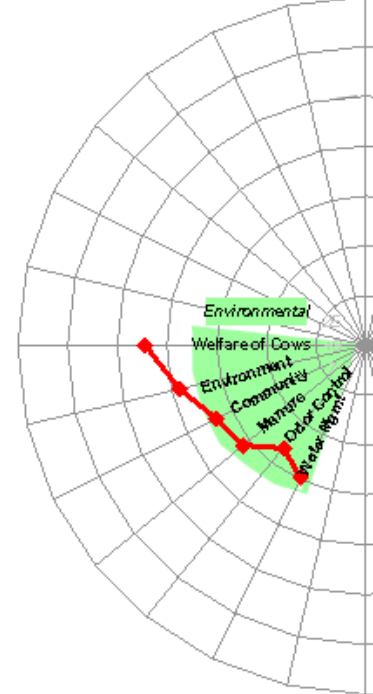
Among Adults Who Have the Greatest Interest/Concern With Topic
consumers





Take Away: Health Uncertainties

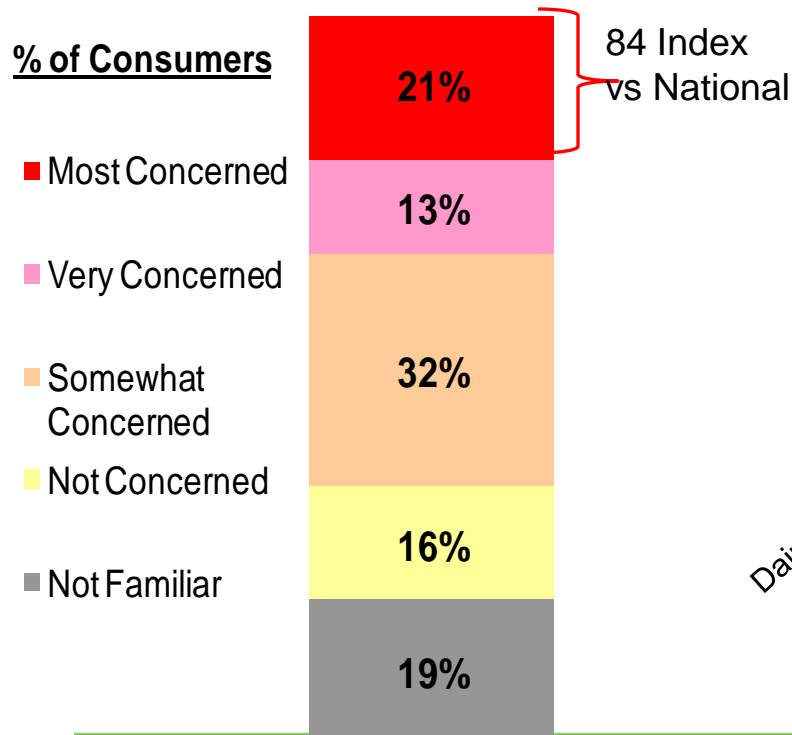
- While critics of flavored milk have gained momentum in curtailing availability in schools, this is not a broad consumer issue nationally or with SUDIA consumers
- While cheese is on the radar among health professionals for its sodium content, it is not a top concern for consumers yet



On-Farm Expectations

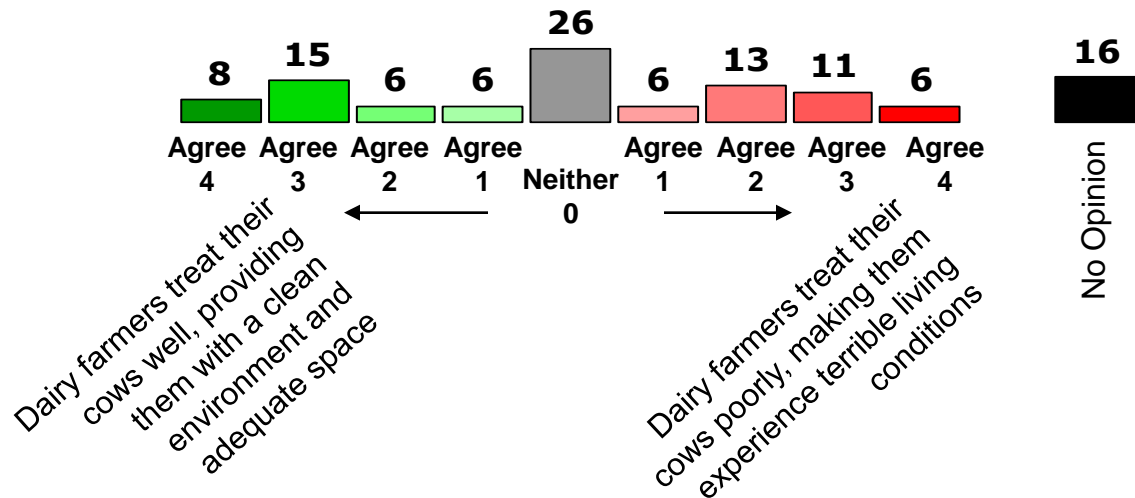
Issue Importance: Welfare of Cows on Dairy Farms

SUDIA Mean=2.12 Gen Pop Mean=2.18
Not Statistically Significant Difference



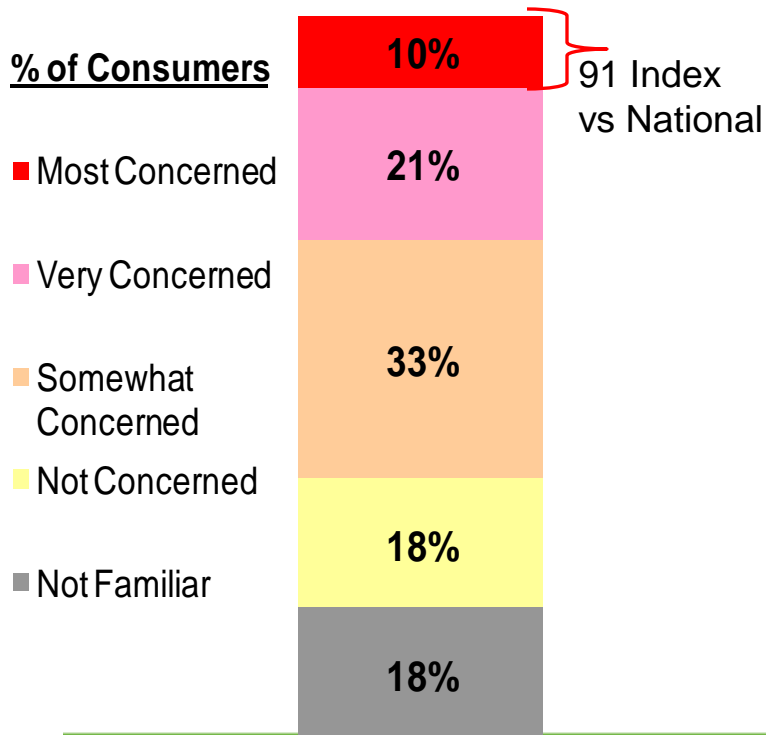
Consumer POV

Among Adults Who Have the Greatest Interest/Concern With Topic
consumers



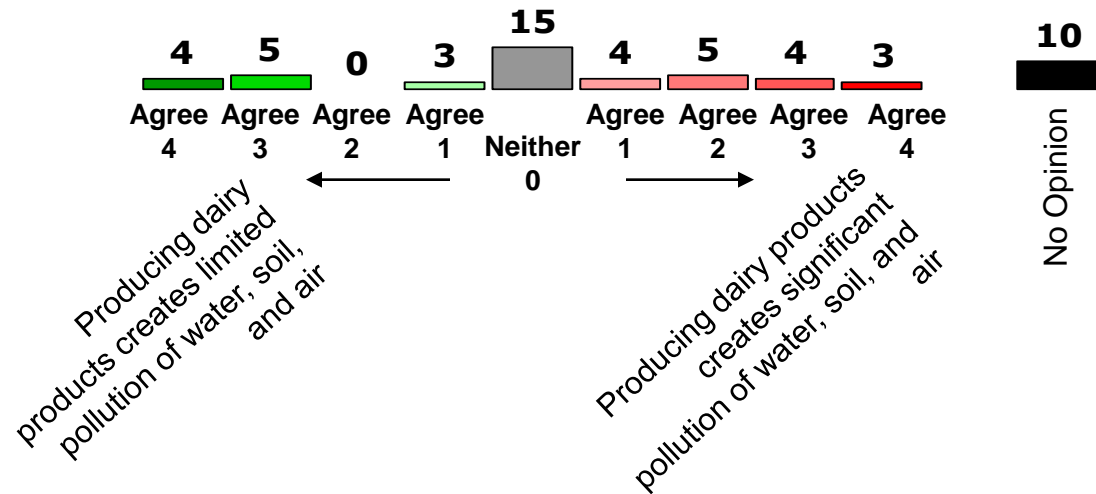
Issue Importance: Dairy Products and the Environment

SUDIA Mean=1.87 Gen Pop Mean=1.91
Not Statistically Significant Difference



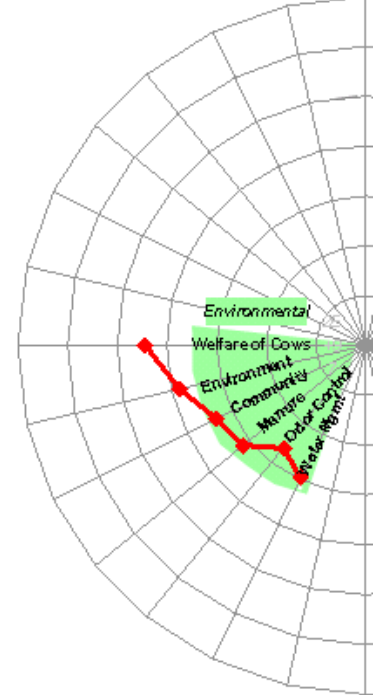
Consumer POV

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consumers



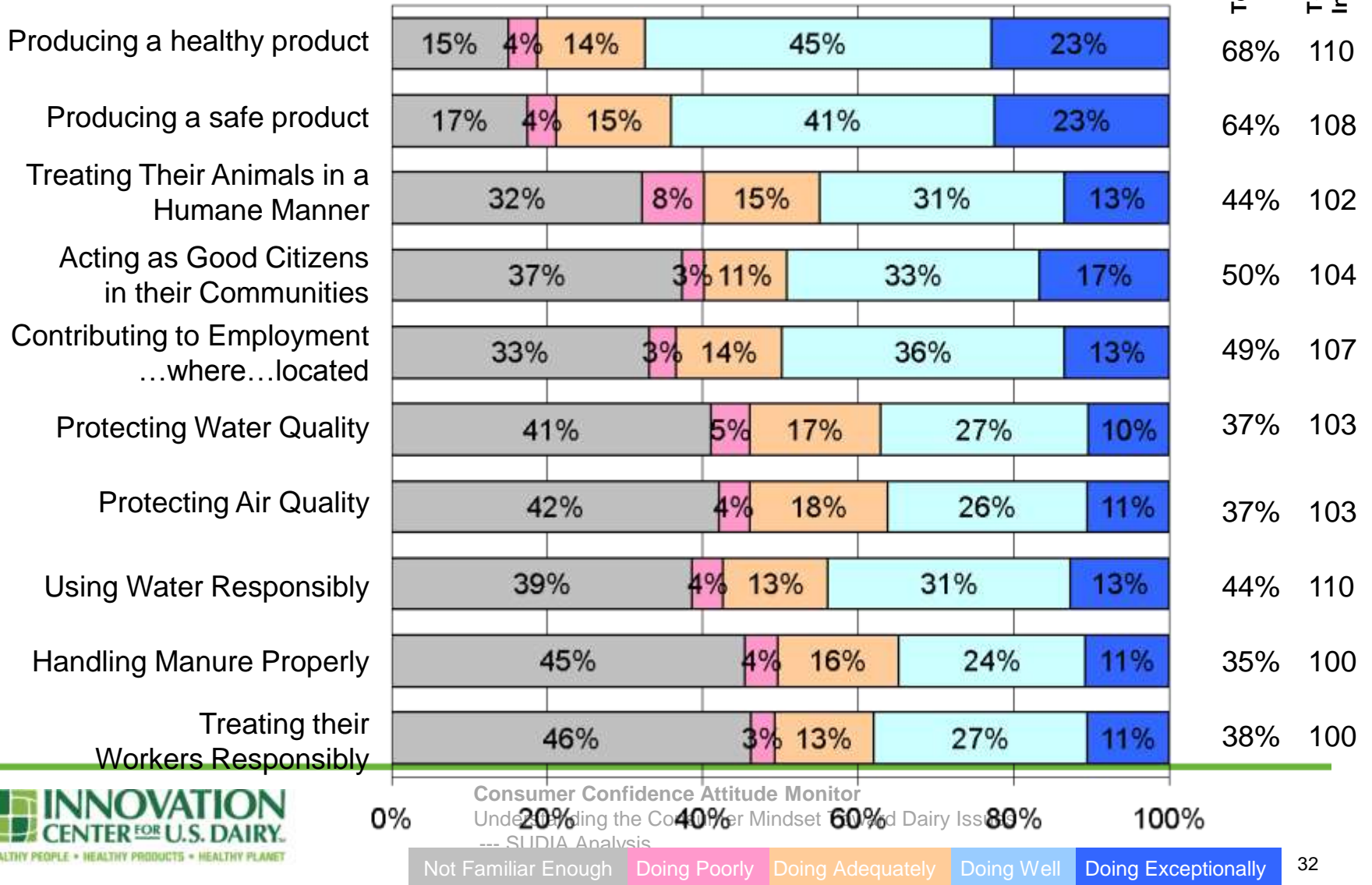
Take Away: On Farm Expectations

- Overall on-farm issues are not top-of-mind for consumers nationally and appear to some degree even of lesser importance for those in the SUDIA marketing area
 - Of most importance is welfare of cows

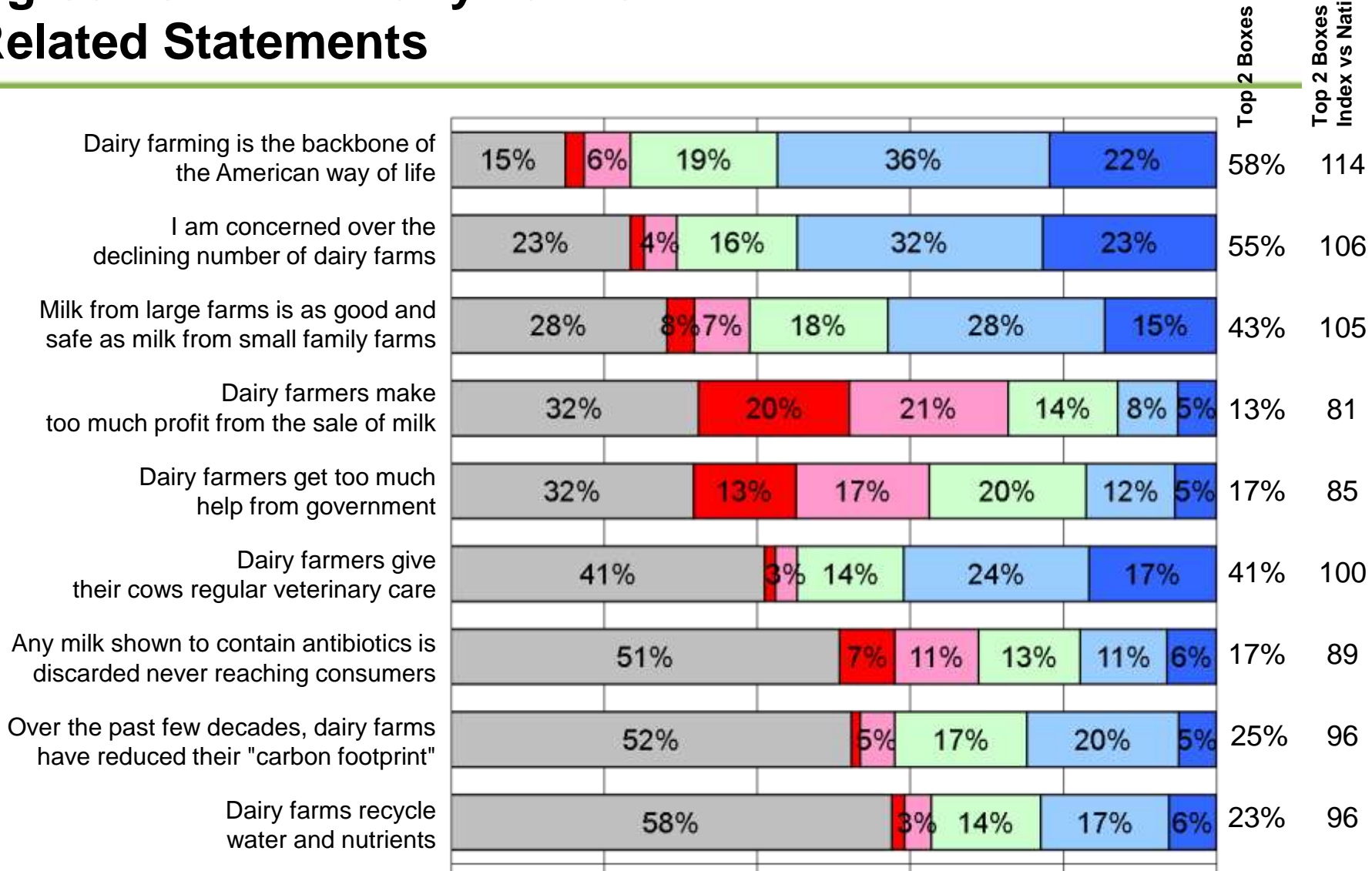


Attitudes Toward Dairy Farmers

Attitudes Toward Dairy Farmers



Agreement with Dairy Farmer-Related Statements



Take Away: Attitudes toward Dairy Farmers

- Both national and SUDIA consumers have a high regard for the farmer, though with significant gaps in knowledge about what farmers actually do
- SUDIA consumer perceptions parallel national
 - A strong admiration for farmers producing a healthy and safe product
 - A solid recognition of dairy farmers contribution to community
 - An awareness of financial hardships
 - SUDIA - More so than national consumers acknowledge
 - Generally positive perceptions of how the farmer actually farms, among those who claim to be knowledgeable enough to judge
 - Treating animals well
 - Protecting resources appropriately
 - Treating workers well

Conclusions



Implications

- Behaviorally and attitudinally consumers are highly involved with and positively engaged with dairy products
 - Consumer purchase behavior and consumption of dairy products are at solid levels, liking of milk and cheese is high, and consumers are feeling confident about the safety of milk
 - SUDIA levels approximate national
- There is a clear need to communicate in ways that sustain these high levels
 - Need to work to improve the moderate consumers' views in ways that can help prevent erosion
 - Programs: More proactive communications about nutrient benefits, research, etc.

Conclusions



Implications

- Consumers, both nationally and within SUDIA, are suspicious of technological advances in milk, production and the product.
 - Altering a product that is viewed as good, pure, wholesome and nutritious can raise concerns regarding its safety, healthfulness, or taste.
 - The safety issues facing dairy are shared by other industries (e.g., fruits, vegetables, and meat); the issues become heightened due to consumers' strong emotional tie to dairy.
- There are opportunities that the dairy industry can address now to reduce the risk of a food safety issue
 - Development of a more thoughtful approach to technology with clear consumer benefits supported by science
 - Creation of industry best practices regarding technology
 - Development of a more unified industry approach to consumer communications
 - Programs: Innovation Center Food Safety Task Force, more aggressive consumer messaging, publicity

Conclusions



Implications

- Consumers are engaged in issues of interest to the dairy industry only if they have *personal* impact.
 - Food safety and the delivery of health benefits easily align with personal benefits
 - Consumers care about animals
 - A small group of adults who perceive that animals are mistreated which may affect their dairy consumption.

- Demonstrate and verify that U.S. milk producers are committed to providing the highest standards of animal care.
 - Certification and verification programs such as FARM may help ease consumer concerns.
- Programs: Stronger positive dairy farmer image programs
 - Animal care
 - Wholesome product
 - Good stewards of the land