

## **Dairy Attitudes**

Prepared for Dairy MAX | July 2023

Baseline Research for Level Unlocked / Esports Campaign

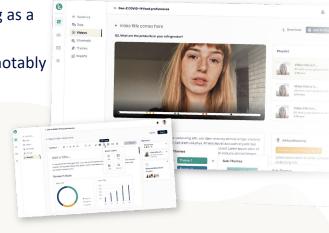


## **Business & Research Objectives**

Dairy MAX would like to get a read on usage and attitudes of dairy, among key audience segments, to establish a benchmark for their Level Unlocked / Esports campaign

## Through this study, Dairy MAX will establish benchmarks to understand if campaigns are positively affecting:

- Dairy sentiment, how do consumers feel about dairy in relation to other plantbased alternatives?
- Usage occasions how and where is dairy consumed, and is it broadening as a result of the campaign?
- Athletes and esports followers how do these segments perceive dairy, notably chocolate milk as a recovery drink?

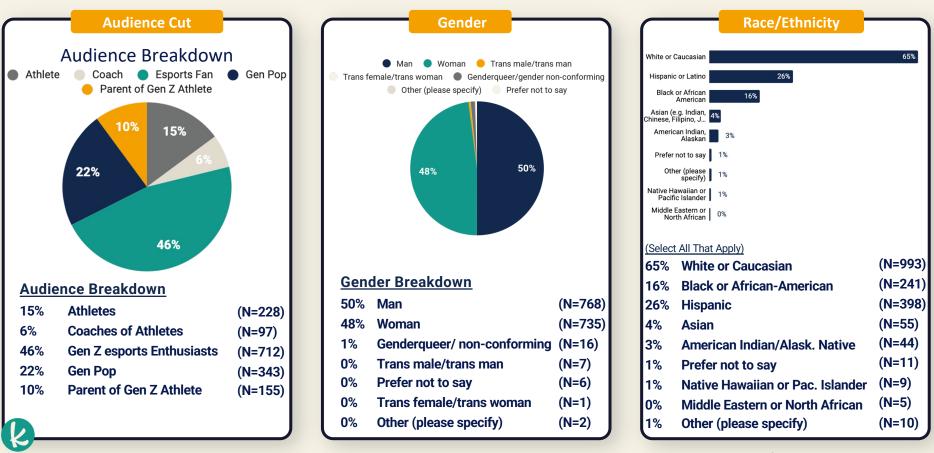




# Respondent Demographics

### **Respondent Demographics**

#### Total Sample Size: N = 1,535 and 134 Voice of Consumer Videos



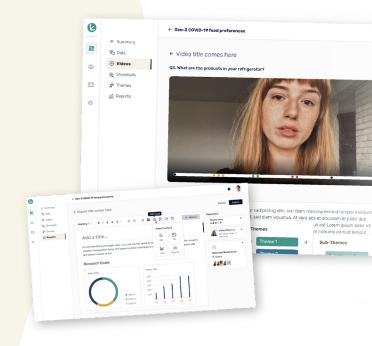
100% of respondents are in the US

#### **Terminating Question**

## 100%

## of respondents consume at least one type of dairy.

Respondents who do not consume any type of dairy were excluded from this report.





Q: How often do you or other members of your household consume each of the following dairy products? Note: Please keep in mind that dairy items like milk and yogurt can be used in other food products like smoothies/shakes, and butter used for baking & cooking.

## **Audience Data Cuts**

For the purpose of this report, the audience breakdowns are defined as...

#### **Athletes**

are defined as respondents who participate in athletics. (N = 228)

#### **Coaches of Athletes**

are defined as respondents who are 18+ and coached athletes. (N = 97)

#### **Gen Z Esports Enthusiasts**

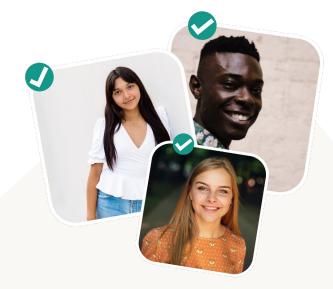
are defined as respondents who are ages 18-26 and are esports fans. (N = 712)

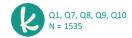
#### Parents of Gen Z Athlete

are defined as respondents who are parents of Gen Z athletes. (N = 155)

#### **Gen Pop**

constitutes the remaining respondents. (N = 343)





General Dairy Usage & Perceptions

## **Dairy Perceptions**

Perceptions around dairy are mixed, roughly half perceive dairy to be nutritious but an indulgence while 1 in 3 have stronger attitudes about the category, citing that it is both nutritious and crucial to one's diet.

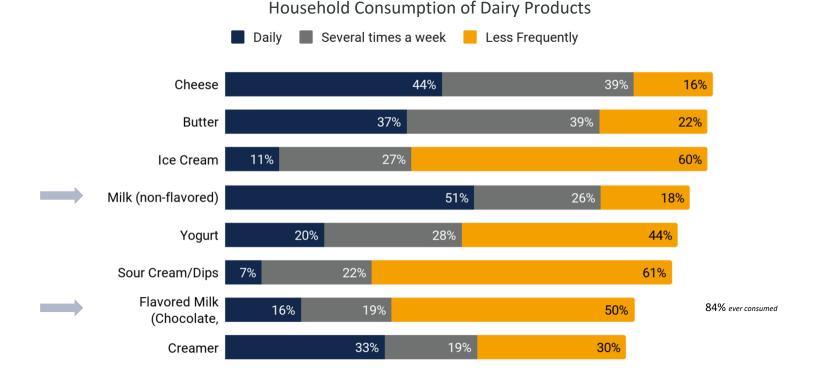
Notably, 16% of Gamers considered dairy products an indulgence.

A nutritious and crucial part of diet A little bit of both An indulgence that makes me happy

35% 51% 13%

## **Dairy Product Usage**

Non-flavored milk is the most frequently consumed dairy product, though cheese is the most commonly consumed product overall (i.e. more have had it). Around 1 in 3 respondents consume flavored milk weekly.





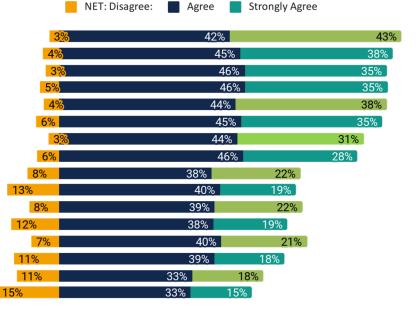
Q7: How often do you or other members of your household consume each of the following dairy products? Note: Please keep in mind that dairy items like milk and yogurt can be used in other food products like smoothies/shakes, and butter used for baking & cooking. Base: Total Dairy Consumers (n=1535).

## **Dairy Attitudes**

Among category consumers, 83% agree that dairy is an enjoyable product, and most recognize the bone and gut health benefits that dairy provides. However, while most respondents trust the dairy industry, agreement is lower, as are perceptions of sustainability.

I enjoy consuming dairy products	
	Total
Yogurt supports a healthy gut and a healthy immunity system	Gamer
Togart supports a healthy gat and a healthy initiality system	Total
Developmental because developments	Gamer
Bone health is supported by consuming dairy	Total
	Gamer
Dairy products are healthy and nutritious	Total
	Gamer
I trust dairy products and the dairy industry	Total
	Gamer
Milk supports your energy levels	Total
	Gamer
Dairy can give you a sense of calm	Total
	Gamer
Dairy products are environmentally friendly	Total

#### **Attitudes Towards Dairy Products**



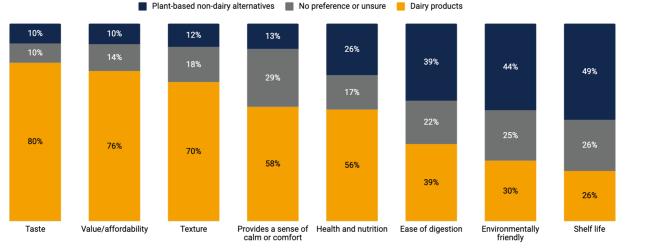
Q14: Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. Base: Total Dairy Consumers (n=1535) Scale: 1=Strongly disagree to 5=Agree strongly

## **Dairy Associations**

Among dairy consumers, dairy is found to better deliver on 5 of the 8 attributes queried; plant-based non-dairy alternatives win on 2: sustainability and shelf-life. Perceptions are split on the ease of digestion.

**42%** of Gamers think Dairy products better deliver *Ease* of digestion in comparison to Plant-based alternatives.

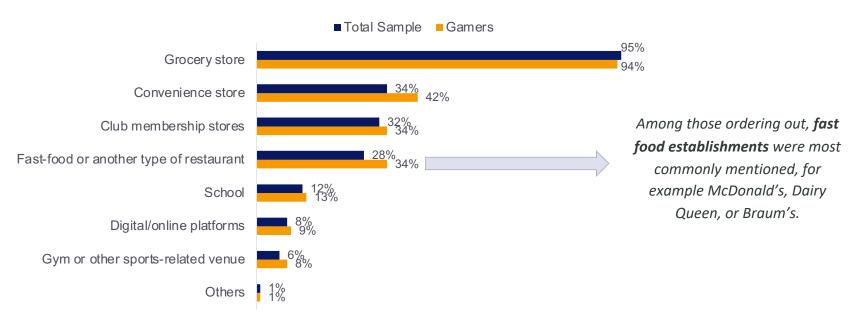
61% of Gamers think Dairy Products are better at Providing a sense of calm or comfort in comparison to Plant-based alternatives.



#### Benefits of Dairy vs. Plant-Based Substitutes - % Selected

## **Dairy Purchasing**

Dairy is most commonly purchased at the grocery store but, on average, buyers are purchasing at 2 different locations. Around 1 in 3 purchase dairy when eating out, namely at locations serving ice cream, such as fast food restaurants.

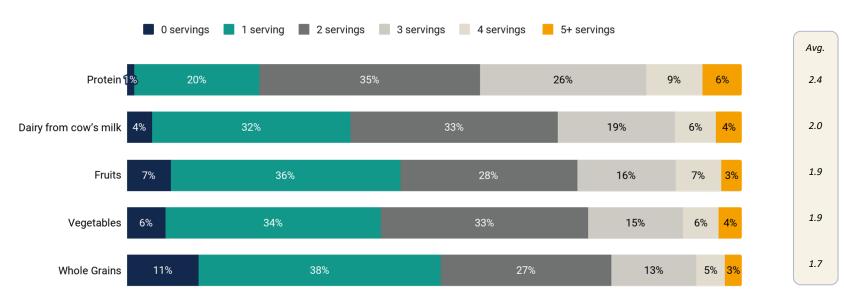


#### Where Dairy is Typically Purchased – % Selected



## **Depth of Dairy Involvement**

On average, category consumers consume around 2 servings of dairy per day, which is common across other food categories. Notably, 32% of Gamers have at least 3 servings of dairy per day compared to 29% of the Total sample.



#### Average # of Daily Servings by Food Type

## **Benefits of Dairy - From a CEO**

- If category buyers were to act as a dairy company CEO, they'd want to communicate that the product(s) sold are healthy and are comprised of healthy, nutritious, and safe ingredients.
- Versatility is another theme, both in regards to having lighter dairy options (e.g. lactose-free), but also in terms of communicating the various uses of dairy throughout the day.
- Another major theme is **sustainability** both in terms of animal treatment and production's impact.
- Overall, buyers want more, or better, **transparency** into the ingredients, product line (various product types), and operation (how the product is made).



VQ1: Imagine that you're the CEO of a dairy company. If you owned a company that sold milk, yogurt, or cheese to people your age, what would you want people to know about your products? (n=67)

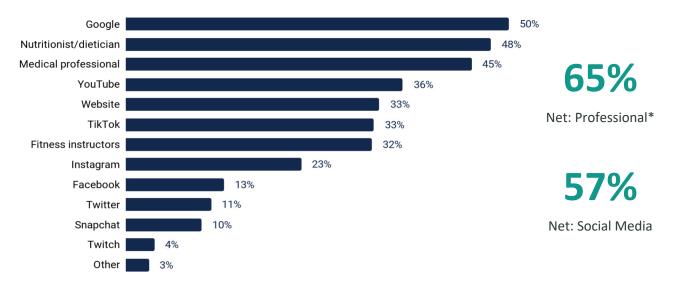
Audience Deep-Dive: Gen Z Esports Enthusiasts

## **Gen Z Esports: Nutritional Sources**

On average, Gen Z Esports Enthusiasts get their nutritional information from around 3 sources. Seeking professional advice is most common, followed by social media, then web searches (Google).

Preferred Sources of Nutritional Information

Among Gen Z Esports Enthusiasts



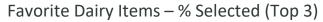
Avg. #: 3.4

Base: Gen Z esports Enthusiasts (n=712)

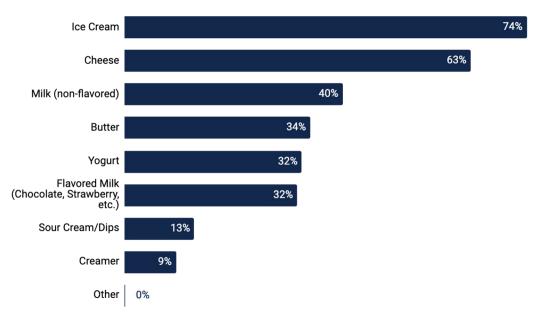
2: From which platform(s) do you prefer to receive nutrition information? Select all that apply. \*Net professional includes nutritionist, medical professional, and fitness instructor

## **Gen Z Esports: Favorite Dairy Items**

Ice cream and cheese are favorite dairy items among Gen Z Esports fans; only 1 in 3 cite flavored milk as a top 3 favorite, which ranks lower overall.







## **Gen Z Esports: Dairy Usage Occasions**

The top usage occasion for milk (both flavored and unflavored), yogurt, and creamer is **breakfast**.

While non-flavored milk is more commonly consumed at breakfast, close to 2 in 3 also consume flavored milk at breakfast. Overall, flavored milk is more versatile, with many consuming throughout the day, up until dinner, and then again as a late night snack. Though only 17% of Gen Z esports fans consume flavored milk after a workout, it's among the top post-workout dairy products, topped only by yogurt.

#### Dairy Usage Occasions by Product

Daily Couge Coousie	Milk (non- flavored)	Flavored Milk	Cheese	Yogurt	Ice Cream	Butter	Creamer	Sour Cream/ Dips
Base: (Selected as top 3 favorite dairy item) Sorted by daypart	(n=285) %	(n=225) %	(n=452) %	(n=231) %	(n=525) %	(n=242) %	(n=67) %	(n=91) %
Breakfast	86	62	45	68	3	68	90	10
Mid-morning snack	22	32	23	42	6	12	27	12
Lunch	25	32	82	28	8	61	10	54
Mid-afternoon snack	23	32	41	42	36	14	16	44
Dinner	30	24	78	12	26	78	4	63
Late night snack	38	40	32	29	83	12	6	40
After a workout	14	17	10	20	5	5	3	4

Q21: Tell us more about your favorite dairy items you selected. When do you like to eat/drink each? Select all that apply.

## **Gen Z Esports: Modes of Consuming**

### MILK

- Drinking it straight from a glass
- Mixing it with cereal
- Enjoying it with cookies
- With breakfast
- In protein shakes and smoothies
- With ice cream
- Incorporating it into meals
- With a straw

## CHEESE

- · On sandwiches and burgers
- With crackers
- Melted on foods like pizza, nachos
- In Mexican cuisine generally
- As a topping or ingredient
- On its own or paired with other charcuterie type items
- With dip or as a dip (fondue)

## YOGURT

- · Eating by itself
- With toppings like granola, fruits
- In smoothies for creaminess
- · For breakfast item or with cereal
- As a dessert or frozen yogurt
- As a substitute for sour cream
- As a dip
- For gut health

## **ICE CREAM**

- Enjoy it plain
- With toppings
- With cookies
- In a cone or bowl
- Blended (e.g. milkshakes)
- As a treat or indulgence
- On hot days
- As a comfort food

### BUTTER

- Spread it, on toast, bread, etc.
- In cooking or baking
- Incorporating it into meals
- Melting (on seafood)
- As a topping (on popcorn, pancakes)
- Substitute for oil in cooking when trying to provide better flavor

## **OTHERS**

**Creamer:** Creamer is often mentioned as a popular choice to enhance the flavor, sweetness, and creaminess of coffee

**Sour cream/dips:** on tacos, nachos, baked potatoes; as a dip for chips, crackers, or vegetables; on foods like quesadillas

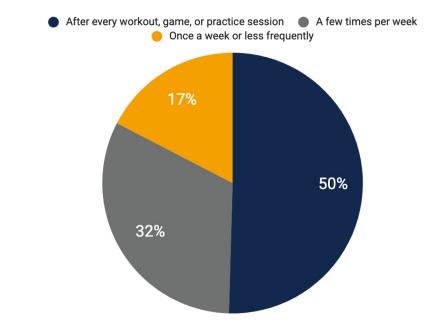


## Audience Deep-Dive: Athletes & Coaches

## **Athletes: Post-Workout Recovery Drink Usage**

Virtually all athletes drink post-workout recovery beverages, and the majority consume them quite frequently.

Post-Workout Recovery Beverage Consumption



98%

of athletes drink post-workout recovery beverages.

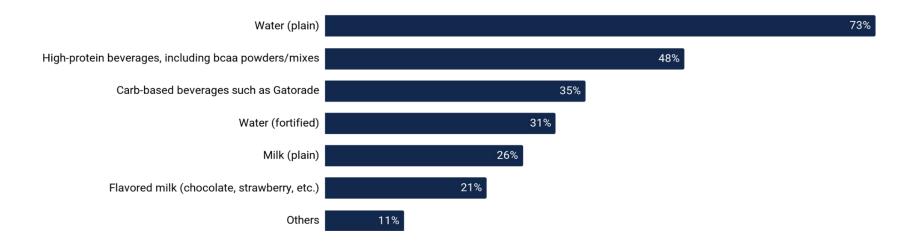


Q24: Which post-workout recovery beverages do you consume? Select all that apply. Base: Athletes (n=228) Q25: How frequently do you consume post-workout recovery beverages? Base: Athletes Consuming Post-Workout Recovery Beverages (n=224)

## **Athletes: Post-Workout Recovery Drinks**

On average, athletes consume 2 to 3 different forms of post-workout recovery drinks, of which, plain water is the most common; flavored milk ranks last - only around 1 in 5 currently consume it as a recovery drink.

Types of Post-Workout Recovery Beverages Consumed

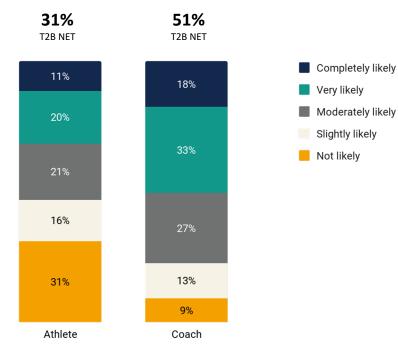




## Chocolate Milk Post-Workout Usage

Coaches are more likely than athletes to consider providing or using flavored (chocolate) milk as a recovery beverage.

#### Likelihood to Use or Provide Chocolate Milk as a Post-Recovery Beverage



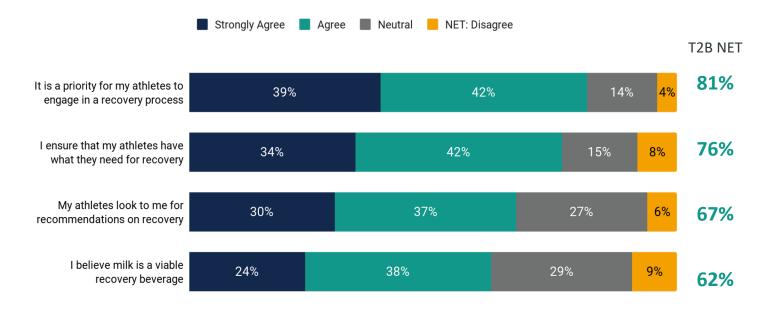
Q26: How likely are you to consider chocolate milk as a post-workout recovery beverage? Base: Athletes (n=228)

Q31: Given a budget, how likely would you be to provide chocolate milk as a post-workout recovery beverage to your athletes? Base: Coaches (n=97)

## **Recovery Attitudes among Coaches**

Although only 50% of coaches were willing to provide chocolate milk as a recovery beverage, 62% agreed that is was a viable recovery option and almost all agreed that recovery for athletes is important. Additionally, 67% of coaches agreed that their athletes would seek them out as a resource for recommendations on recovery, indicating that coaches may be a key channel for advocating the benefits of flavored milk as a recovery beverage.

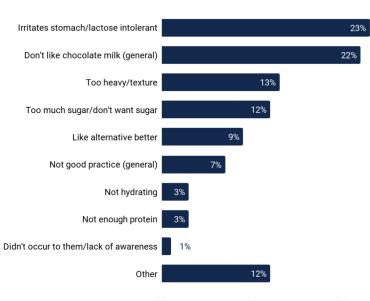
Attitudes Towards Recovery Practices & Beverages



## **Barriers to Chocolate Milk Post-Workout**

Among athletes and coaches not open to chocolate milk as a post-workout recovery beverage, **digestive issues** were the top mentions, though having too much sugar, texture, and preference for other beverages were also key themes.

#### Barriers to Consuming Chocolate Milk Post-Workout - % Mentioned Unaided



#### Among Athletes

#### Among Coaches\*

Among the few coaches not open to Chocolate Milk, as a recovery beverage, digestive issues, sugar, and hydration were mentioned...

"Because dairy is hard on the stomach while exercising..."

"I would recommend something with **less sugar.**"

"Water is the best in my opinion. To stay hydrated."

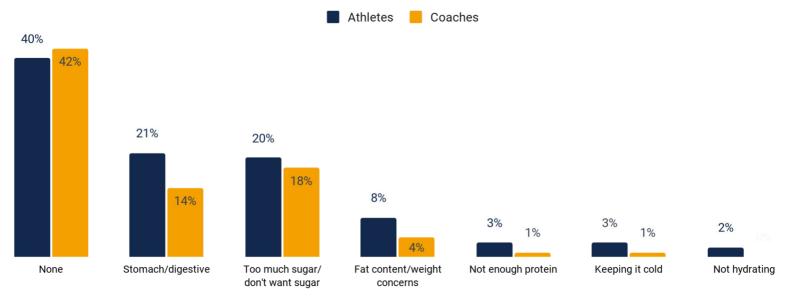


7. Why are you NOT likely to consider chocolate milk as a post-workout recovery beverage? OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE. Base: Athletes Who Wouldn't Consider Chocolate Milk (n=69) 2. Why are you NOT likely to consider providing chocolate milk to your athletes as a post-workout recovery beverage? OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE. Base: Coaches Who Wouldn't Consider (n8)\* - small base

## **Chocolate Milk Post-Workout Concerns**

Concerns among those open to consuming / offering chocolate milk post-workout mirror barriers among those not open: digestive issues and sugar content. Unsurprisingly, many athletes and coaches who are willing to consume / offer do not have any concerns about chocolate milk as a recovery beverage.

Concerns About Using Chocolate Milk as Post-Workout Drink - % Mentioned Unaided



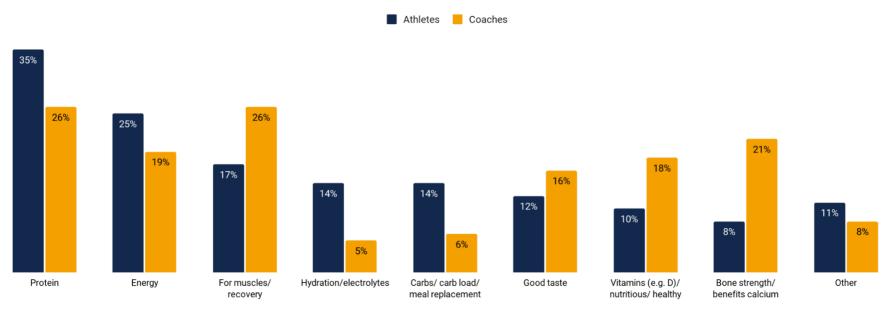


9. What concerns do you have, if any, about using chocolate milk as a post-workout recovery beverage? OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE. Base: Athletes Open to Chocolate Milk (n=155) 4. What concerns do you have, if any, about using chocolate milk as a post-workout recovery beverage? OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE. Base: Coaches Open to Chocolate Milk (n=85)

## **Benefits of Chocolate Milk Post-Workout**

Protein, energy, and muscle recovery are top cited benefits of consuming chocolate milk post-workout among both athletes and coaches. Coaches are more likely than athletes to recognize the muscle and bone benefits.

Expected Chocolate Milk Post-Workout Recovery Benefits - % Mentioned Unaided



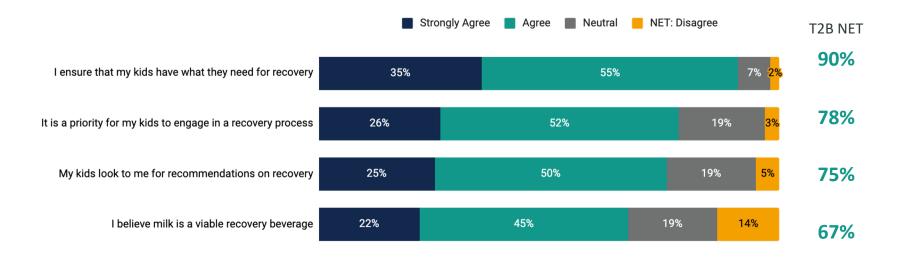
Q28. What benefits would you expect from chocolate milk as a post-workout recovery beverage? OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE. Base: Athletes Open to Chocolate Milk (n=155) Q33. What benefits would you expect from chocolate milk as a post-workout recovery beverage? OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE. Base: Coaches Open to Chocolate Milk (n=85)

Audience Deep-Dive: Parents of Gen Z Athletes

## **Gen Z Parents: Recovery Attitudes**

#### Among Parents of Gen Z athletes, the majority agree that post-workout recovery is important, and 7 in 10 believe milk (in general) is a viable recovery beverage.

#### Attitudes Towards Recovery Practices & Beverages

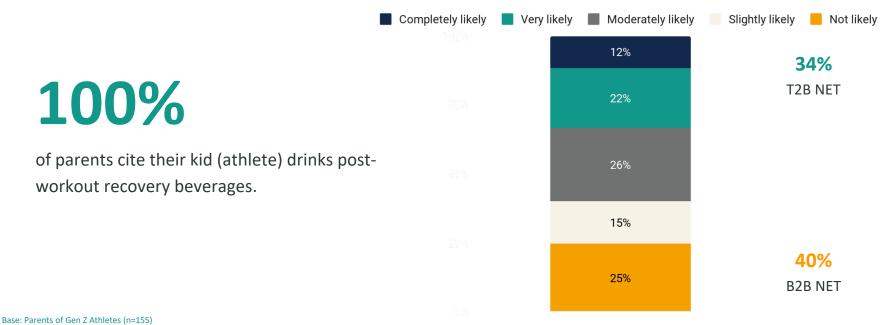


Base: Parents of Gen Z Athletes (n=155) Q35: Regarding the post-workout/practice/competition recovery process, what is your level of agreement with the following:

## **Gen Z Parents: Post-Workout Recovery Drinks**

All parents of Gen Z athletes say their kids consumes post-workout recovery beverages. However, likelihood to consider chocolate milk as an option is divided.

Post-Workout Recovery Beverage Consumption & Likelihood to Consider Chocolate Milk

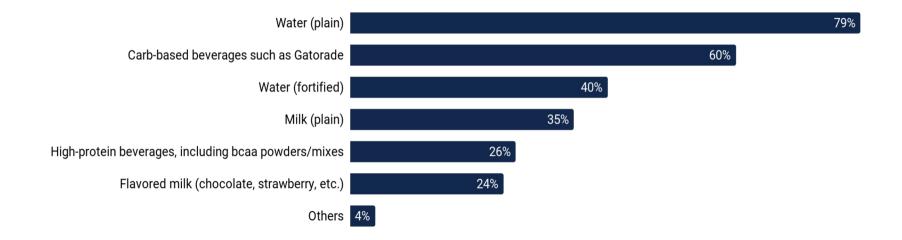


Q36: Which beverages do your children consume after participating in athletics? Select all that apply. Q38. How likely are you to consider chocolate milk as a post-workout recovery beverage for your children who participate in athletics?

## **Gen Z Parents: Post-Workout Recovery Drinks**

Of post-workout recovery beverages, parents cite their children's top selection as water and the least selected beverage as flavored milk.

Types of Post-Workout Recovery Beverages Kids Consume - % Selected among Parents

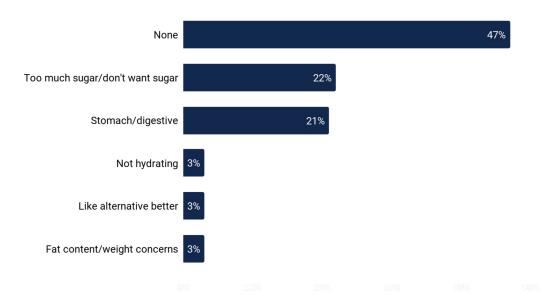




## **Gen Z Parents: Chocolate Milk Barriers**

Among parents, sugar content and digestive issues are the top barriers to providing chocolate milk to Gen Z athletes. Though as previously seen, most parents are open to chocolate milk during post-workout recovery.

#### Barriers & Concerns to Giving Chocolate Milk Post-Workout - % Mentioned Unaided



#### Among Parents Open to Chocolate Milk for Kids

#### Among Parents Not Open to Chocolate Milk

Among the few Gen Z Parents not open to Chocolate Milk, as a recovery beverage for their kids, digestive issues and sugar were mentions:

"Amount of sugar content in the product."

"I feel it would make them sick."

"It's too heavy."

*"It's too thick* after a strenuous activity. They want something simpler, like water or Propel/Gatorade"



41. Do you have any concerns about providing chocolate milk as a post-workout recovery beverage? OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE. Base: Parents of Gen Z Athletes Open to Chocolate Milk (n=117)
39. Why are you NOT likely to consider chocolate milk as a post-workout recovery beverage for your children? OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE. Base: Parents of Gen Z Athletes Not Open to Chocolate Milk (n=37)

## **Gen Z Parents: Chocolate Milk Purchasing**

Among those who do purchase chocolate milk for their kids, purchase frequency is heavy - 46% purchase on a weekly basis and 41% purchase a few times per month.

Frequency of Purchasing Chocolate Milk for Children



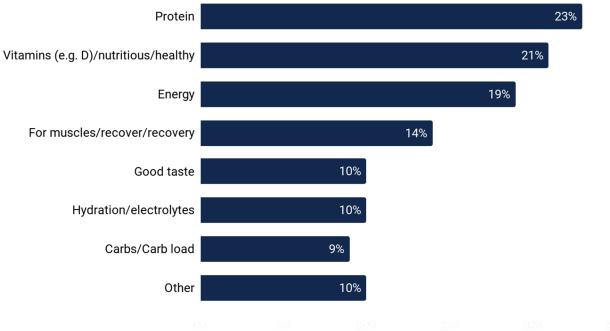


Base: Parents of Gen Z Athletes Who Purchase Chocolate Milk as a Recovery Beverage (n=37) Q37: How frequently do you purchase chocolate milk for your children?

## Gen Z Parents: Benefits of Chocolate Milk

Parents of Gen Z perceive protein to be the top benefit of chocolate milk as a post-workout beverage. Secondary perceived benefits include vitamin replenishment, energy, and muscle recovery.

Expected Chocolate Milk Post-Workout Recovery Benefits - % Mentioned Unaided



Base: Parents of Gen Z Athletes Open to Providing Chocolate Milk (n=117)

240. What benefits would you expect by providing chocolate milk as a post-workout recovery beverage to your children? OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE

## **Influencer Strategies**

## **Influencer Strategies**

- Outside of talking about product benefits, such as health, nutrition, and taste, the top strategy mentioned was to show how dairy products can be used and how they fit in with one's day-to-day life.
  - For instance, beyond simply providing recipes, show how to create the recipe, how to best consume the recipe, and show the after effects / benefits of consumption (e.g. energy).
  - Possible usage occasions to highlight: with cereal, cookies, and in protein shakes.
- Another strategy to consider, specifically targeted to Gen Z, is use of humor or "wacky" content. Notably, flavor variety appeals to this generation, and may help drive more Gen Z influencers to pick up the product and talk about it.
- Other mentions were use of celebrities, apparel (t-shirts), challenges, and promotions (BOGO/deals).

#### knit

## Influencer Strategies

Imagine you're an influencer. How would you influence your followers to consume dairy and what tactics would you use?

VQ2: Imagine you're an influencer. How would you influence your followers to consume milk, yogurt, or cheese? What tactics would you use? (n=67)

# Key Takeaways

## **Key Takeaways**

#### **Dairy Perceptions**

#### Flavored Milk Landscape

Overall, perceptions of dairy are positive among category consumers.

The vast majority of respondents enjoy consuming dairy and more consumers find **dairy better delivers on taste, texture, value, and health benefits** when compared to plant-based dairy substitutes. Of all dairy products, respondents consume non-flavored milk and cheese most frequently, with most respondents consuming at least several times a week.

86% of respondents have consumed flavored milk in general. Of those respondents, **few are consuming flavored milk frequently**.

#### Perception of Flavored Milk Post-Workout

Nearly all athletes drink postworkout recovery beverages, but fewer would consider chocolate milk (around 1 in 3).

Among athletes surveyed, around 20-25% consume flavored milk post-workout, small compared to alternatives like water and other non-dairy beverages. However, this is still a sizable proportion among a broad group of consumers.

#### Benefits of Chocolate Milk Post-Workout

Notably, coaches are more likely to consider chocolate milk postworkout, and they're more likely to recognize certain benefits like muscle recovery and bone strength.

Other perceived benefits (among athletes and coaches) are protein and energy boosting effects.



## **Key Takeaways**

#### Barriers to Chocolate Milk Post-Workout

Qualitatively, respondents reference awareness and availability as barriers to chocolate milk as a recovery beverage (i.e. not having it readily available after a workout, not shelf stable, etc.)

Digestive or perceived digestive issues are also common barriers, as well as preferences for other beverages, and not liking the added sugar in chocolate milk.

#### Gen Z's Source of Nutritional Information

Gen Z (Esports fans) are going to multiple sources (3-4) to get nutritional information.

While Google/search is top ranked individually, consulting with a professional such as a medical professional, nutritionist, or fitness instructor is most common overall.

In addition, 2 in 3 coaches say their athletes look to them for recovery recommendations. Naturally, social media is a key area to reach younger consumers – over half of Gen Z Esports fans look to social media for nutritional information.

What Consumers Want to

Know

Transparency in the dairy industry is highly important to consumers – not only in regards to ingredients but also in production and processing.

Respondents also value sustainability in the dairy industry, indicating if appointed CEO of a dairy company, they would ensure ethical animal treatment and sustainable production.

#### How to Influence

Respondents note that the most effective influencer tactic would be to show consumers how dairy products fit into their everyday lives.

From recipe creation, preparation, consumption, and postconsumption benefits, **consumers** want real-life demonstrations on product use-cases.



## Looking Ahead: What's Next?

- **Opportunity to build awareness, trust, and consideration** through social media and influencer campaigns that show consumers how to use dairy in a variety of fun and engaging ways in their everyday lives.
- **Opportunity to highlight chocolate milk as a post-workout recovery beverage to fill knowledge gaps** amongst athletes, parents of athletes, and Gen Z esports fans. While few respondents consider chocolate milk to be a recovery option, some groups would be open to it in the future; thus, indicating the need to further raise awareness about this specific use-case for flavored milk.
- Opportunity to consider using professionals in the medical or fitness/nutrition space to vocalize use-cases as younger generations are looking to them for advice. In addition, leveraging coaches and sports pros in omnichannel marketing to build trust amongst the younger generation, particularly when it comes to chocolate milk as a post-workout beverage.
- Opportunity to provide additional product education around the benefits and misconceptions around dairy. Given the split perceptions around dairy in terms of digestion / digestive health, additional information and discussion amongst current category buyers may ease barriers to dairy consumption.
- Opportunity for future studies to explore the emotional effect and mood elevation which comes from consuming dairy. For instance, why is it calming to some? How does it tie to childhood? How does it connect and bring families, or teams (athletes and coaches) together?



# Thank You



# Appendix

## **Research Methodology**

#### **Type of Research**

Custom, quick-turn quantitative and qualitative research

#### **Level of Confidence**

The total population size is 198,000,000. The total sample size was N = 1535, giving us a 95% Confidence Level with a 2.5% margin of error.

#### Process: Study Design, Data Collection, and Analysis

- 1. The client shared the research objectives with Knit.
- 2. The study was designed in collaboration with the client and Knit.
- 3. Knit programmed the study into Qualtrics and connected it to Knit's real-time dashboard.
- 4. The survey was fielded within Knit's partnerships with third-party panel providers, enabling access to approx 8.4M respondents across the US. The survey was fielded by distributing an online anonymous survey link to respondents. Every complete, qualified survey resulted in an appropriate incentive to the respondent.
- 5. Knit compiled a comprehensive report by analyzing and synthesizing a combination of quantitative and qualitative findings.

#### Timing

The entire process was conducted from March 31 through June 16, 2023.

#### **The Methodology**

An online survey used a combination of quantitative and qualitative questions to collect feedback from a panel using a method that is PC, mobile, and tablet-friendly.



## Q11 & Q12



Q11: Which of the following MLS teams are you a fan of? N = 333 Q12: Which of the following National Women's Soccer League teams are you a fan of? N = 333 73%