



Let's Talk FOOD



OVERVIEW AND BACKGROUND

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Background: Why did we do this study?

- The data tell us that Chatham-Kent is a region of contrasts...





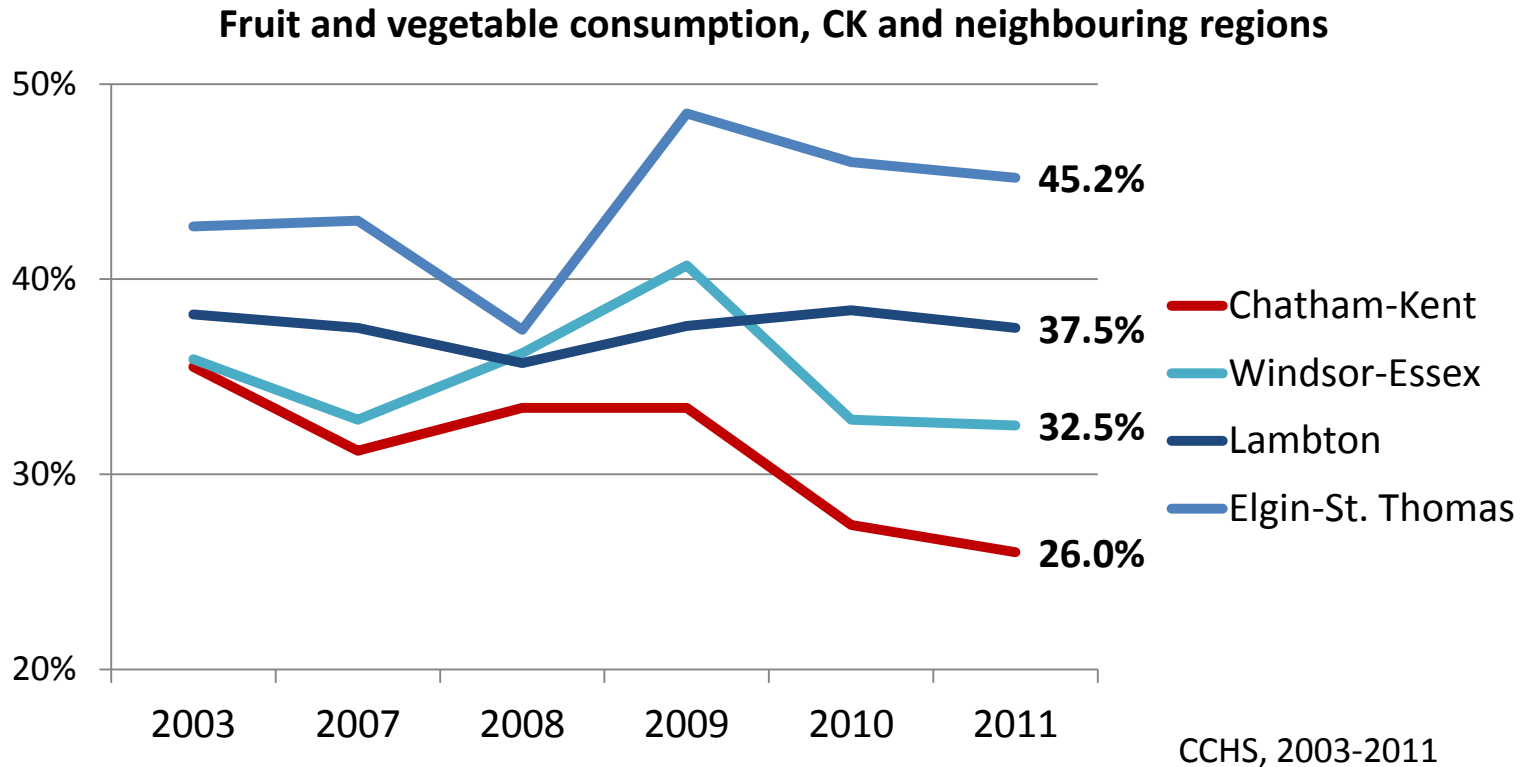
Local context: Chatham-Kent

- By acreage, Chatham-Kent grows **more vegetables** than any other region in Ontario
- In Canada:
 - #1 producer of **tomatoes** & **carrots**
 - #2 producer of **cucumbers, Brussels sprouts**
- In Ontario:
 - #1 producer of **broccoli, cauliflower**
 - #2 producer of **peppers, sweet potatoes**



Local context: Chatham-Kent

- **AND YET:** fruit and vegetable consumption remains **the lowest in Ontario...**and continually dropping

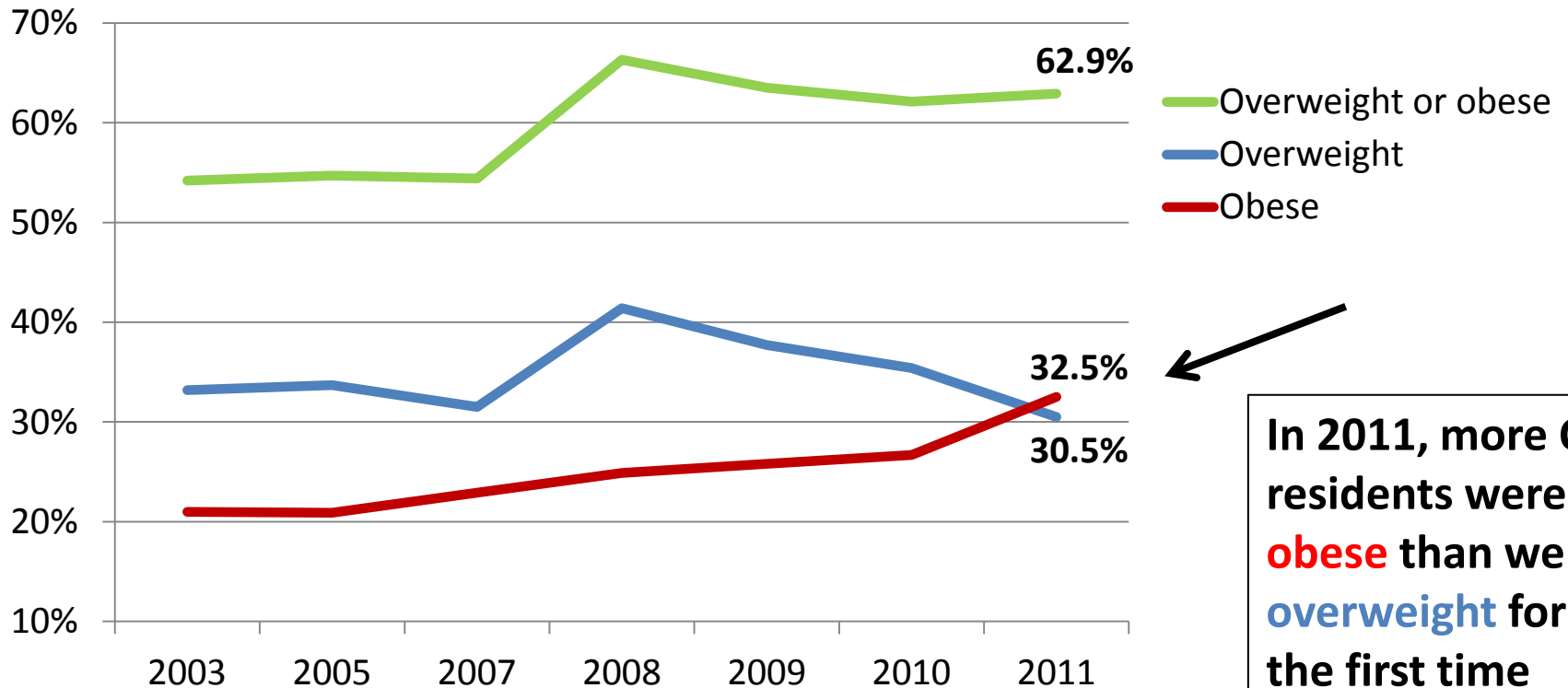




Local context: Chatham-Kent, ON

- Meanwhile, obesity and overweight continue to rise

Self-reported BMI of CK residents, 2003-2011 (CCHS)



In 2011, more CK residents were **obese** than were **overweight** for the first time

A blurred background image showing several green and red tomatoes. The text "WHAT IS GOING ON?" is centered over the image.

WHAT IS GOING ON?

Let's Talk



Background: Getting started

- CK Official Plan Amendment
- Healthy Communities Partnership
- Wanted to understand food from the **community's perspective**

- *Key Question:*
How can we be the lowest consumers of the produce that we are the highest producers of?



Research Design: How we did it

- Community-based participatory research design
- Methods of Data Collection
 - Survey, Interviews, Focus groups
- Research Objectives:
 - To describe and understand the food culture in CK
 - To engage the CK community
 - To inform decision making and policy regarding food

Let's Talk



Research Design: How we did it

- Research was conducted throughout May and June 2012
- Survey:
 - 1275 respondents (online & by paper)
- Focus groups and Interviews:
 - Over 250 respondents from all corners of the CK community

Let's Talk FOOD



WHAT DOES FOOD MEAN TO YOU?

The Chatham-Kent Public Health Unit along with the Healthy Communities Partnership is conducting a community food assessment. You can participate by filling out a short online survey, or a paper copy at your local library. Help us shape the food system for Chatham-Kent and enter for a chance to win 1 of 6 \$100.00 grocery store gift cards.

SO, WHAT DID CHATHAM-KENT SAY?



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Let's Talk FOOD



PRELIMINARY RESULTS

Michaela Smith, Epidemiologist



Let's Talk



Focus of Today's Results

- Survey data
 - Concerns and values around food
 - Food consumption
 - Food availability, accessibility and affordability
 - Local food
- Emerging themes and preliminary suggestions

Let's Talk Food Chatham-Kent

3. How often do you buy food/groceries for yourself and/or your family?

- Once a month
- Twice a month
- Three times a month
- Once a week
- More than once a week

4. Where do you buy most of your food?

- Variety/convenience store (e.g. 7-Eleven, Dollar Store, Giant Tiger, Shoppers Drug Mart, etc)
- Grocery store (e.g. Sobey's, Walmart, No Frill's, Foodland)
- Farmer's market
- Farm/roadside stand

Other (please specify)

5. Please select the reason(s) why you buy most of your food/groceries at this location.

Check all that apply.

- Low prices
- Good quality
- Excellent customer service
- Variety and selection of food
- It is close to home
- It is near the bus stop or other public transportation
- Accepts food coupons

SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

Let's Talk

3. How oft

- Once a m
- Twice a m
- Three time
- Once a we
- More than

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- Variety/con
- Grocery st
- Farmer's m
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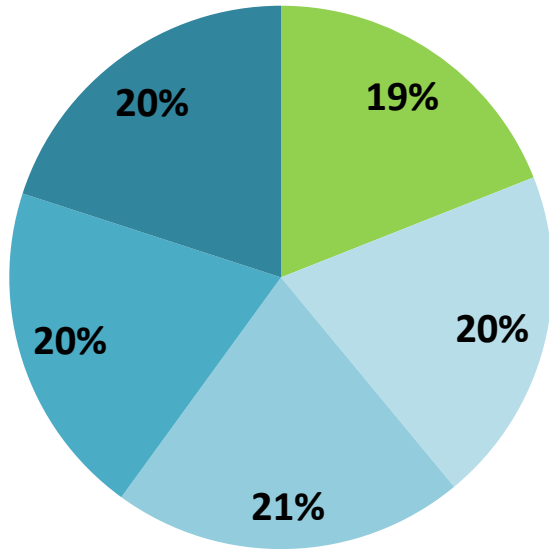
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- Accepts fo

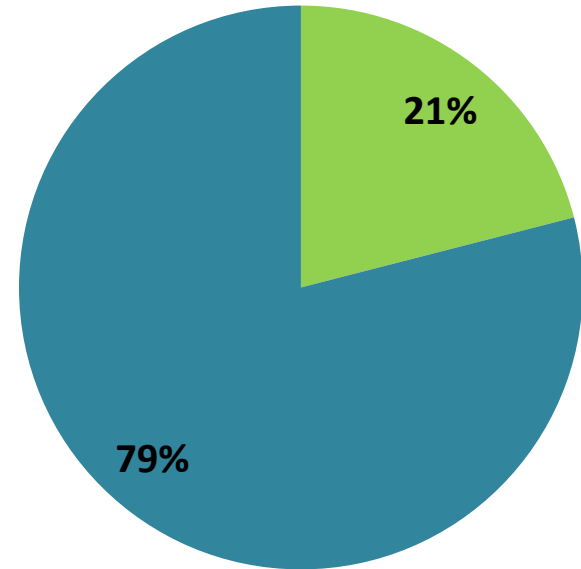


Age and Gender

n=1231



n=1230



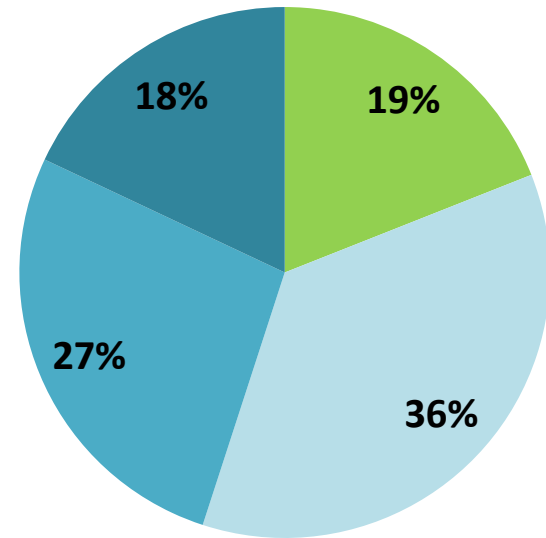
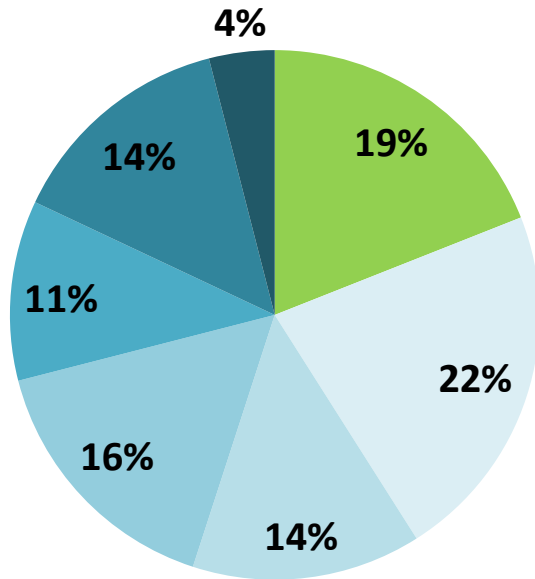
■ <30 ■ 30-39 ■ 40-49 ■ 50-59 ■ 60+

■ Males ■ Females



Gross household income

n=1132



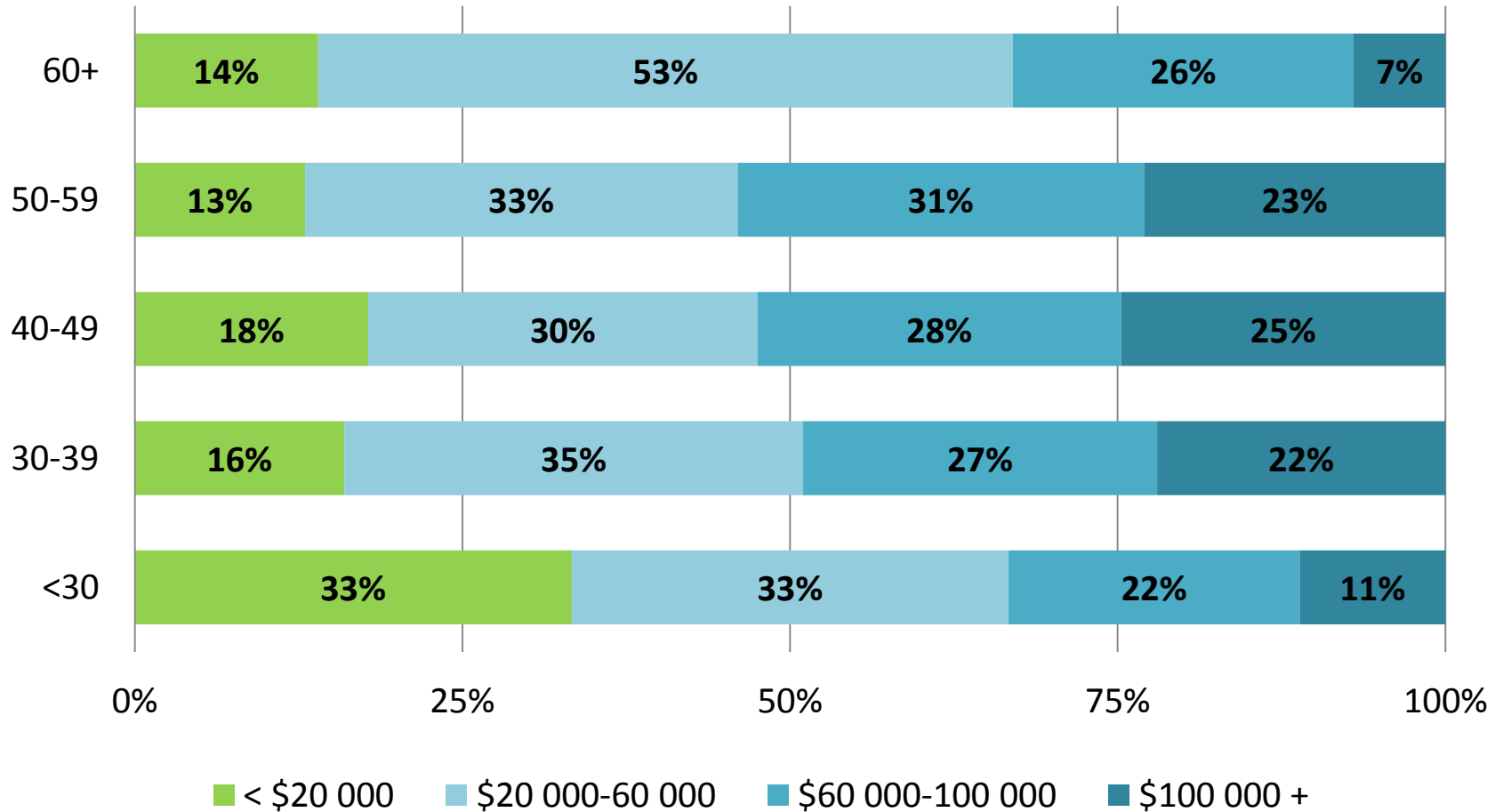
- < \$20 000
- \$20 001-40 000
- \$40 001-60 000
- \$60 001-80 000
- \$80 001-100 000
- \$100 001-150 000
- \$150 000 +

- < \$20 000
- \$20 001-60 000
- \$60 001-100 000
- \$100 000 +



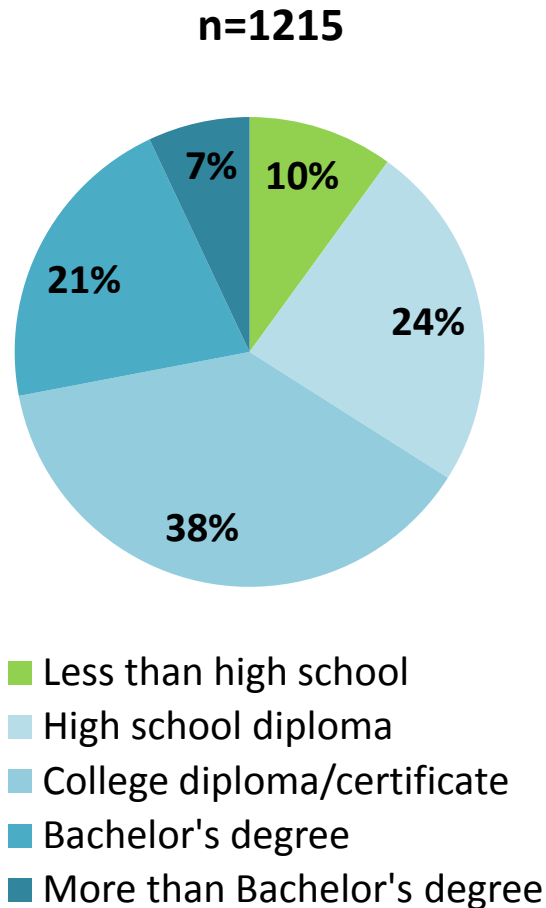
Relationship between age and income

n=1127





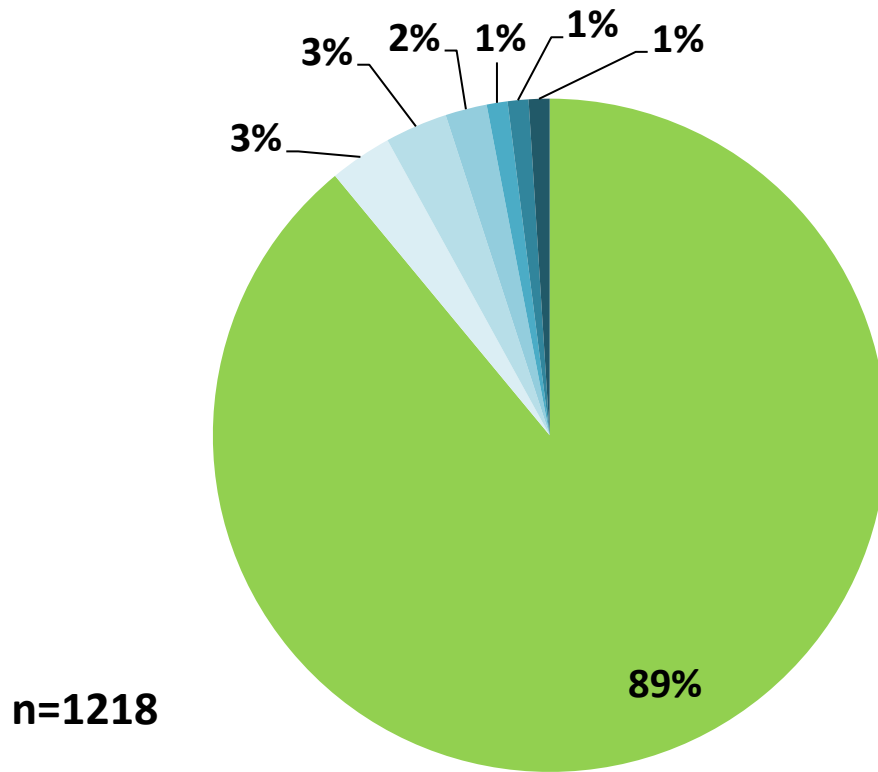
Highest level of completed education



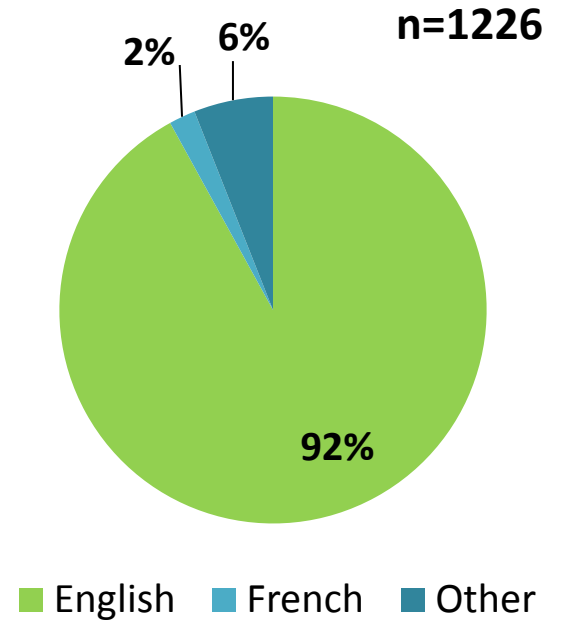
- Most respondents had college diploma/certificate
- More than 25% had Bachelor's degree or higher



Ethnicity and mother tongue



- White/Caucasian
- Other
- Native/Aboriginal
- Multi-ethnic
- Hispanic/Latino
- Asian
- African/Carribbean

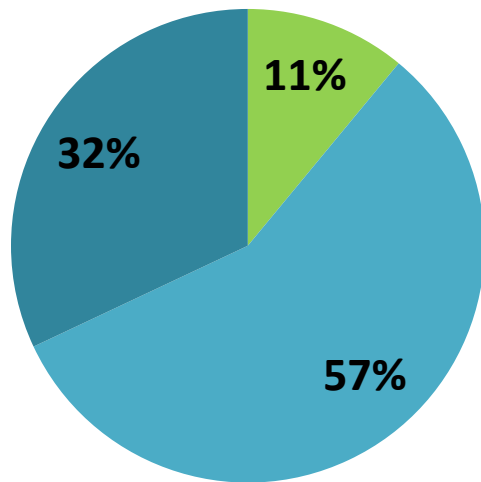


- English
- French
- Other



How long have you lived in CK?

n=1267



- Less than 5 years
- More than 5 years
- Never lived anywhere else

- Most respondents had lived in CK for more than 5 years
- Less than 5 years:
 - higher percentage of
 - males
 - residents <40
 - residents with incomes <\$40 000



THINKING ABOUT FOOD...



What does food mean to you?

“Life force, energy, sustenance.”

-General Focus Group, Blenheim

“Food means showing you care, your love. Food means sharing.”

-Immigrant and Newcomers Focus Group

“I feel that food is a social thing. Good for like catching up with people over a meal and stuff like that.”

-General Focus Group, Chatham



What does food mean to you?

“For me it’s also a source of creativity, a source of constant learning - of cultures and methods and things. If you are someone who is interested in food, it’s something that you never stop learning with.”

-General Focus Group, Chatham

“I guess to a farmer it would be his life... growing their produce is their life.”

-General Focus Group, Chatham

Let's Talk



What does food mean to you?

- We also heard that food can be a trap or a burden, a struggle and a source of stress

“Food is fun, I love food. Everything revolves around your food, getting together. It makes you sad when you think a lot of people don’t have that opportunity, to just enjoy food.”

-Employment and Social Services Staff Focus Group



What does it mean to eat well?

“Balanced with different food groups.”

“Different colours.”

“Lots of vegetables.”

-General Focus Group, Thamesville

“Eating well for me is mostly avoiding the craziness of modern life.”

-Francophone Focus Group

“To me eating well means eating a balanced meal and having a time to eat. Not eating in a rush, really eating and enjoying the food and chewing everything. Taking the time to chew it right.”

-Immigrant and Newcomers Focus Group



What does it mean to eat well?

“Eating well is a state of mind too right because when you’re younger eating well is totally different than what it is when you start getting older.”

General Focus Group, Dresden

“Eating well is healthy eating ...if I’m eating healthy, I have more energy to do what I want to do.”

-Seniors Focus Group

“Eating well means eating as much as you want and still feeling good about yourself.”

-Youth Focus Group



What does it mean to eat well?

“[Eating well is] home cooked.”

-General Focus Group, Thamesville

“[Eating well] is when I cook something from my country.”

- Immigrant and Newcomer Focus Group

“[Eating well is just] to eat when you’re hungry.”

-General Focus Group, Chatham



What is a typical meal for you?

“I pretty much just grab stuff out of the cupboard and eat it when I’m hungry.”

“When I’m hungry, I want to eat now. I don’t want to wait half an hour to cook something or prepare something.”

“I choose to eat what tastes good instead of what’s good for me.”

-Youth Focus Group

“I eat at the table about once every three months.”

“I sit in front of the TV.”

“Me too.”

-Youth Focus Group



What is a typical meal for you?

“I have a young family so it’s really important to us that we eat dinner together particularly. We are lucky because my husband works from home so we can do that. I typically cook every meal which is a lot but I am really concerned about what my kids eat and I think that we need to start them very young on eating well so we eat a lot of vegetables, grains and protein but not always meat...yes, meal times are very important to us, definitely.”

-General Focus Group, Chatham



What is a typical meal for you?

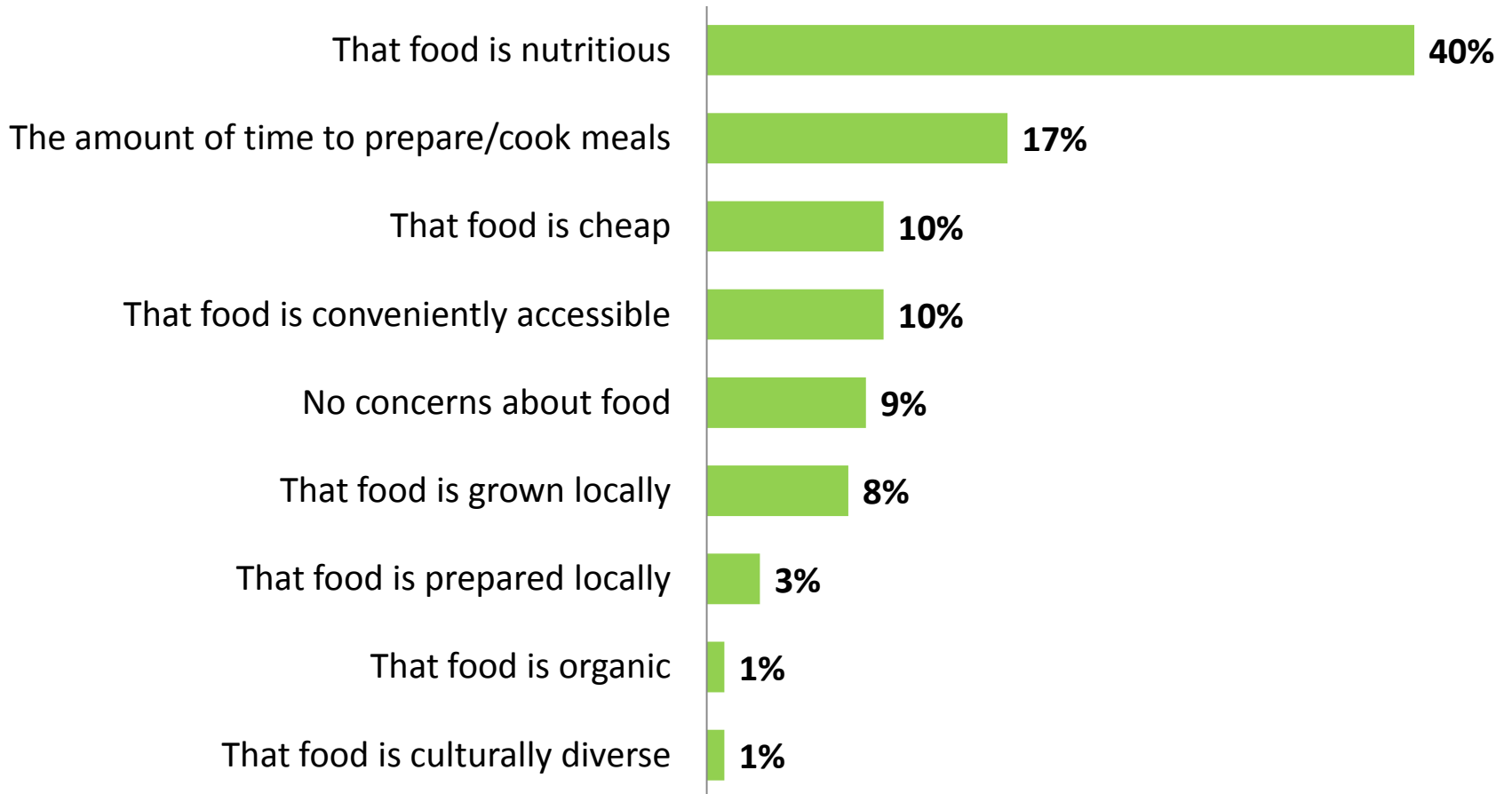
“There’s no typical meal at our place. That’s one thing that I’ve noticed that there is no typical meal. We’re all over the place. We’re in a rush. I get home really late. We’re all hungry, all in a bad mood. It depends what there is to eat in the fridge. Often, if I would choose a typical meal, it would be at the restaurant. That’s our reality.”

-Francophone Focus Group



What is the most important concern you have about food?

n=1208



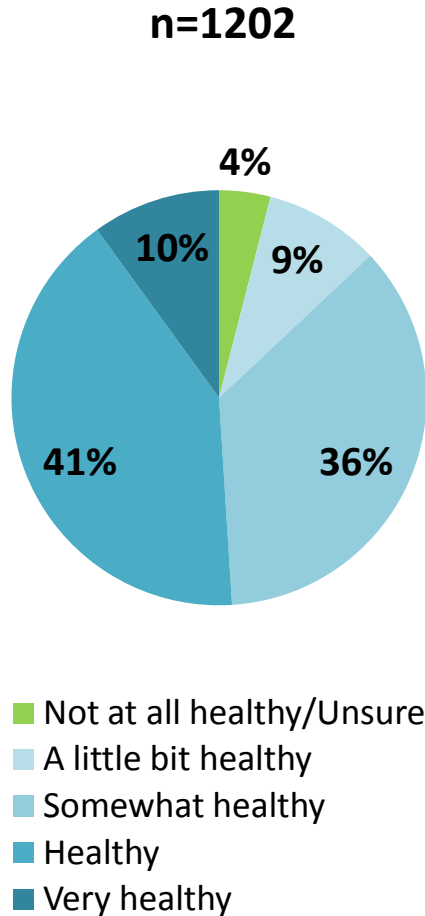


What is the most important concern you have about food?

- <30 – more concerned that food is cheap
- 30-59 – more concerned about the amount of time to prepare meals
- 60+ – more concerned that food is local



In general, how healthy would you say your diet is?

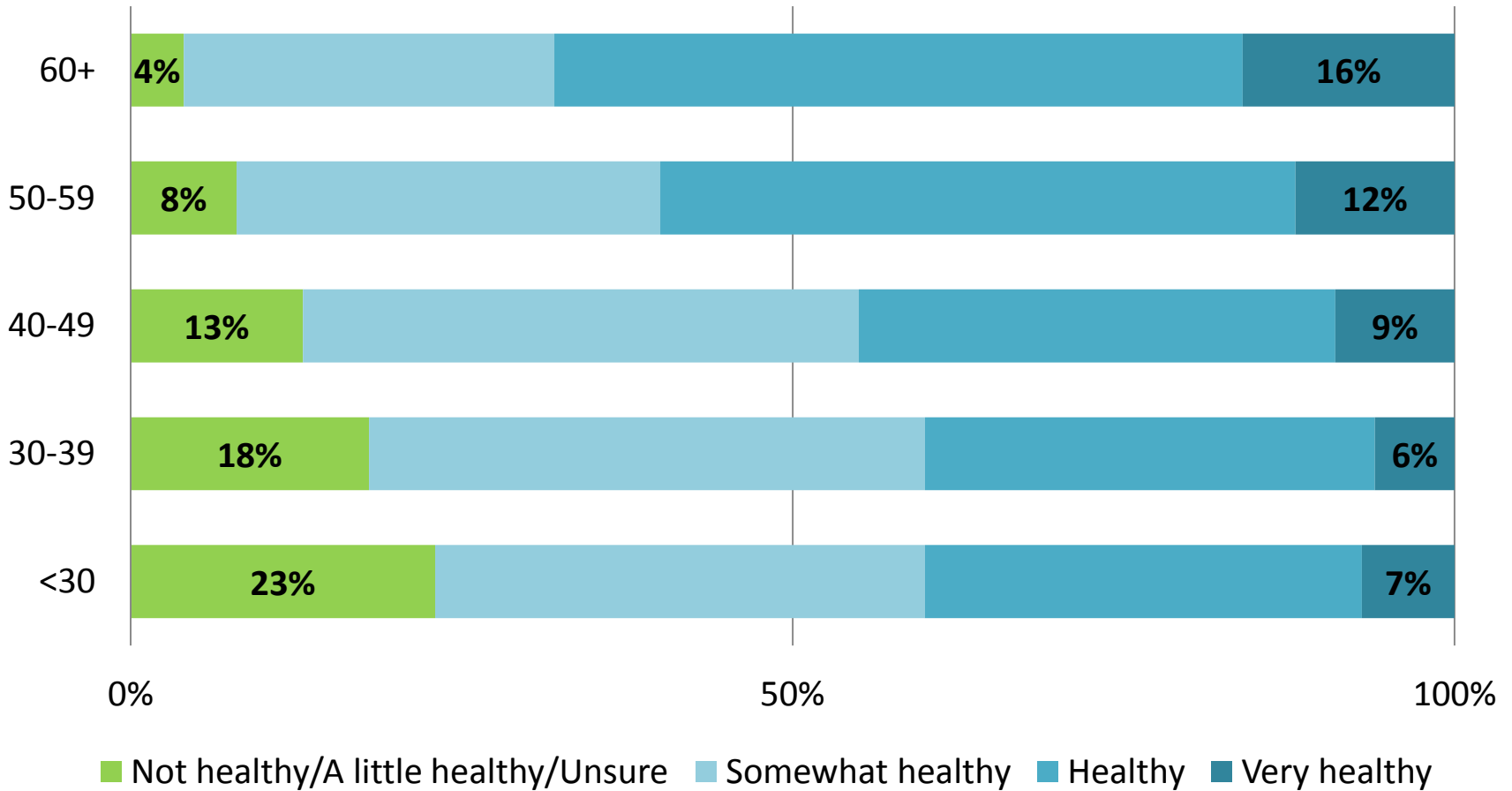


- Most respondents said their diet is healthy (41%) or somewhat healthy (36%)
- BUT: major differences based on age and income



How healthy is your diet, by age

n=1180



Let's Talk



Food and health across the lifespan

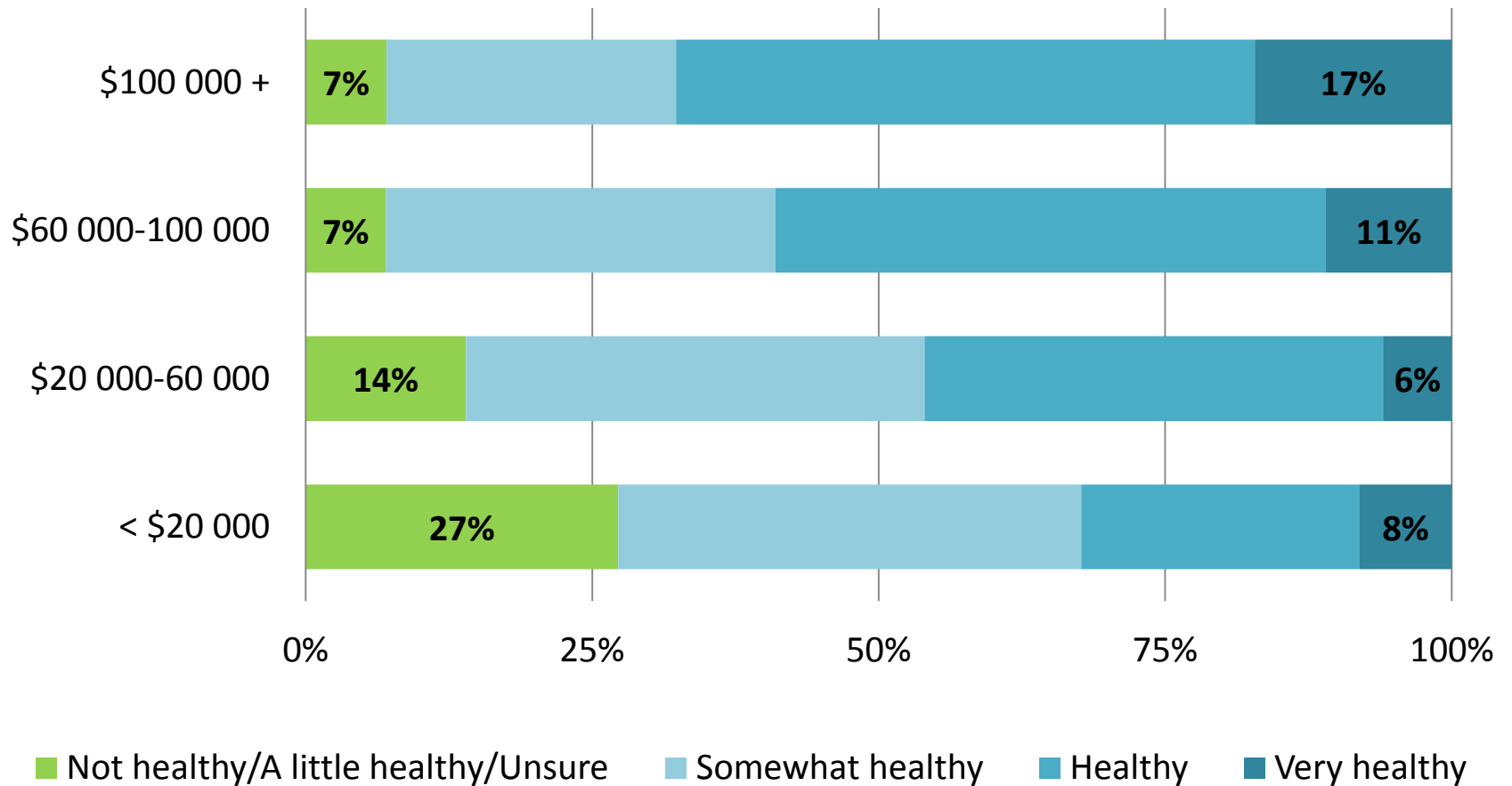
“I think as you get older you become more aware of your own health, our bodies change as we get older, so it’s not as easy to keep the weight off...that’s when most of your diseases are going to start, you’re going to be affected with the heart and blood pressure that kind of thing. As we get older our perspective changes, and even just from life experiences. I think we’re more aware of what’s healthier as we get older.”

-General Focus Group, Dresden



How healthy is your diet, by income

n=1086





Cost of a healthy diet

“You get a green pepper for 1.18. You get a bag of chips, it’s \$2.00! One pepper is a \$1.18.”

-Youth Focus Group

“You can live on Kraft Dinner a lot cheaper than buying fresh fruits and vegetables and that’s the problem.”

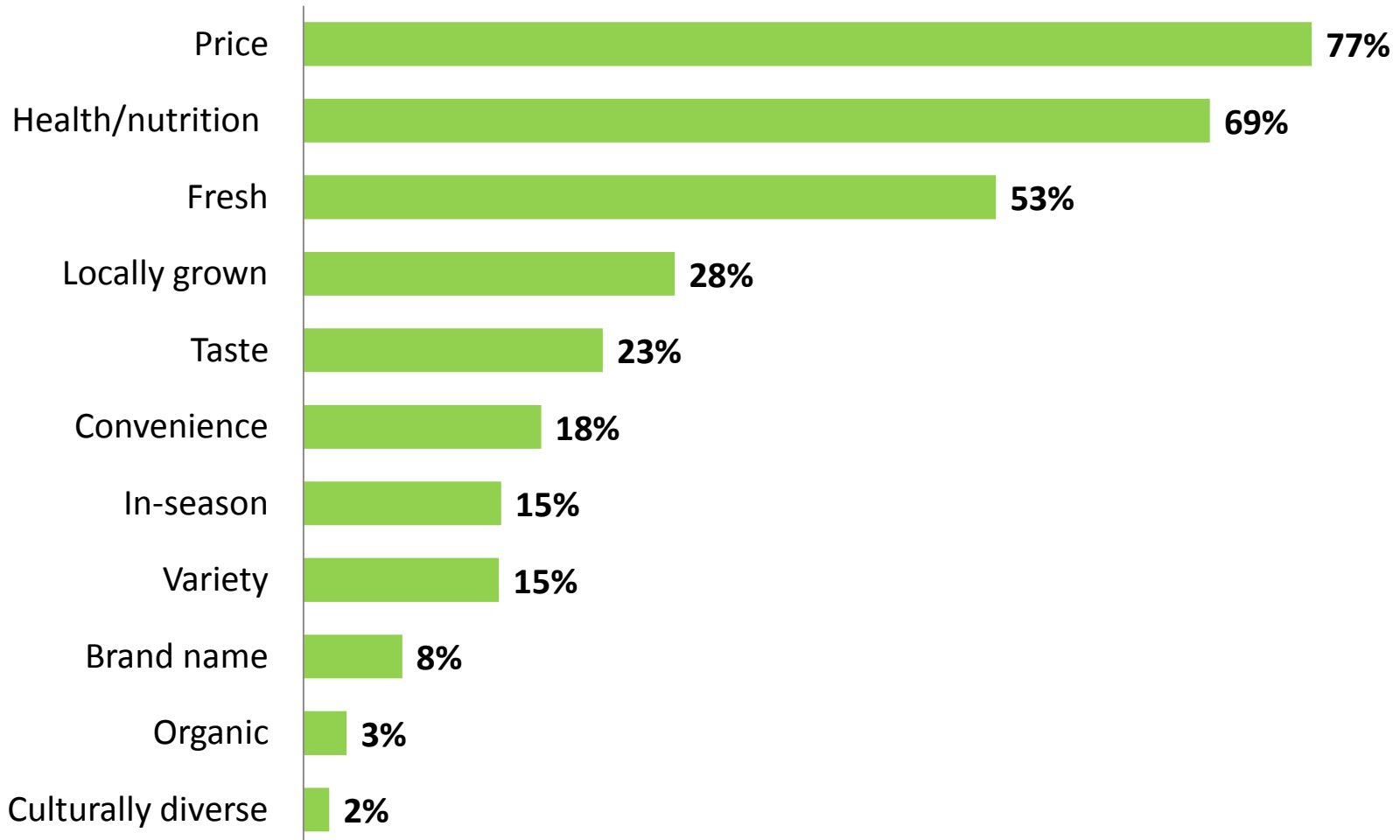
“That’s why there’s obesity.”

-General Focus Group, Dresden



What are your top priorities when purchasing food?

n=1269



Let's Talk

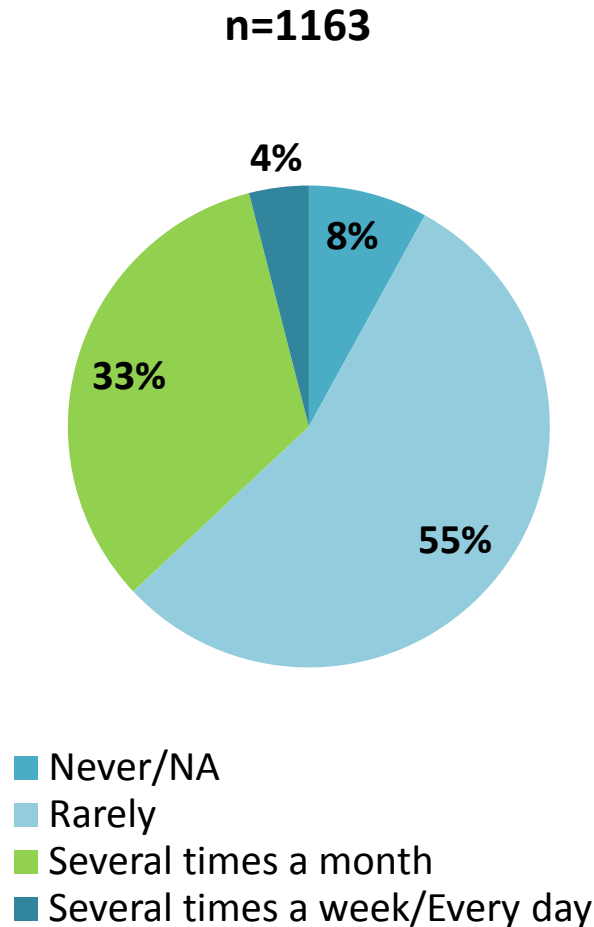


Top priorities when purchasing food

- <30 – more likely to say price, taste
- 60+ – more likely to say locally grown, in-season
- Males – more likely to say convenience
- Females – more likely to say health/nutrition
- <\$20 000 – more likely to say price, convenience
- \$100 000+ – more likely to say health/nutrition



How often do you eat at sit-down restaurants?

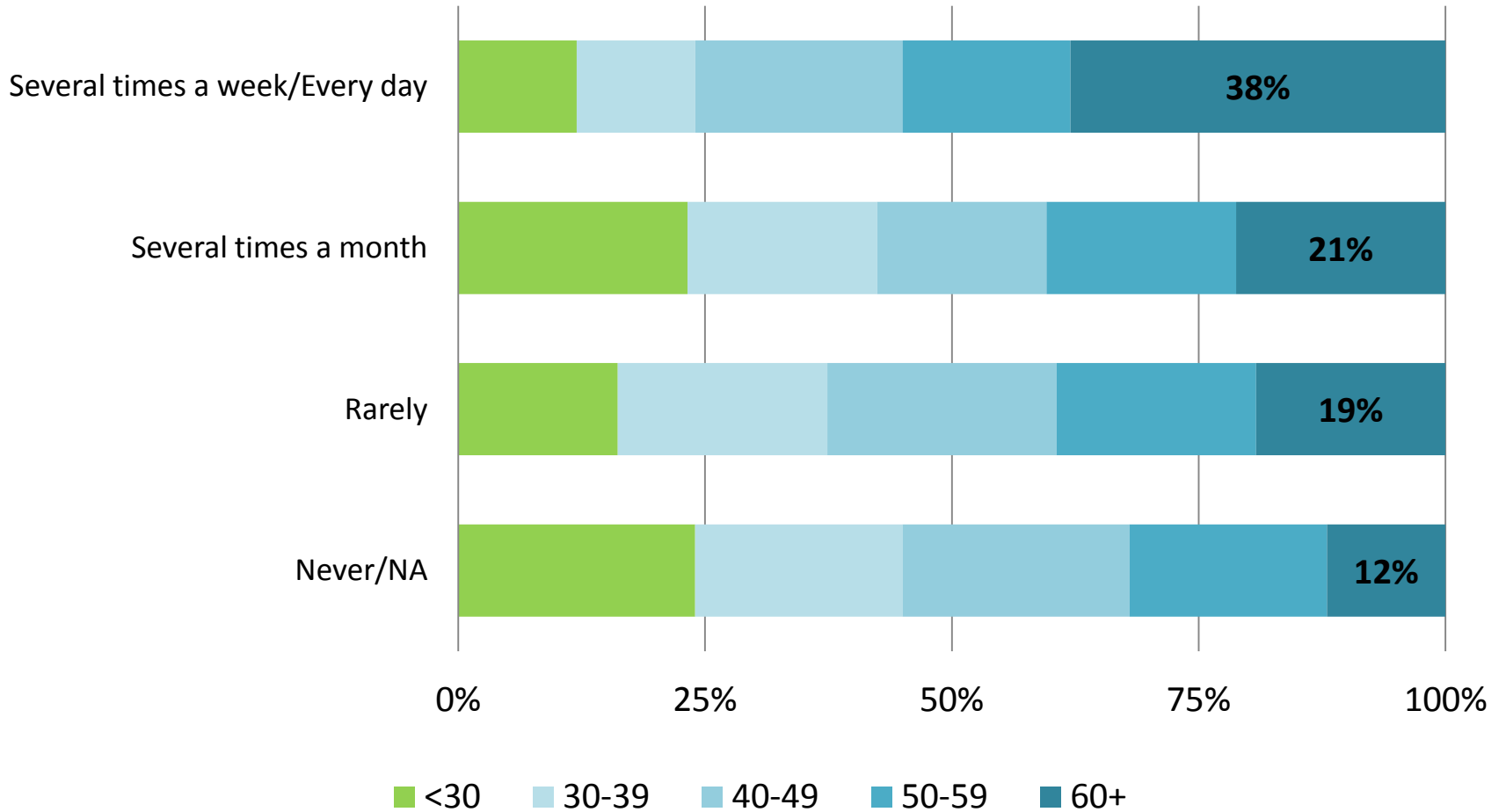


- Most respondents said they rarely ate out at restaurants
- Eating out weekly or daily was most common among seniors, and those with higher incomes



Eating at sit-down restaurants, by age

n=1143





Eating out for social interaction

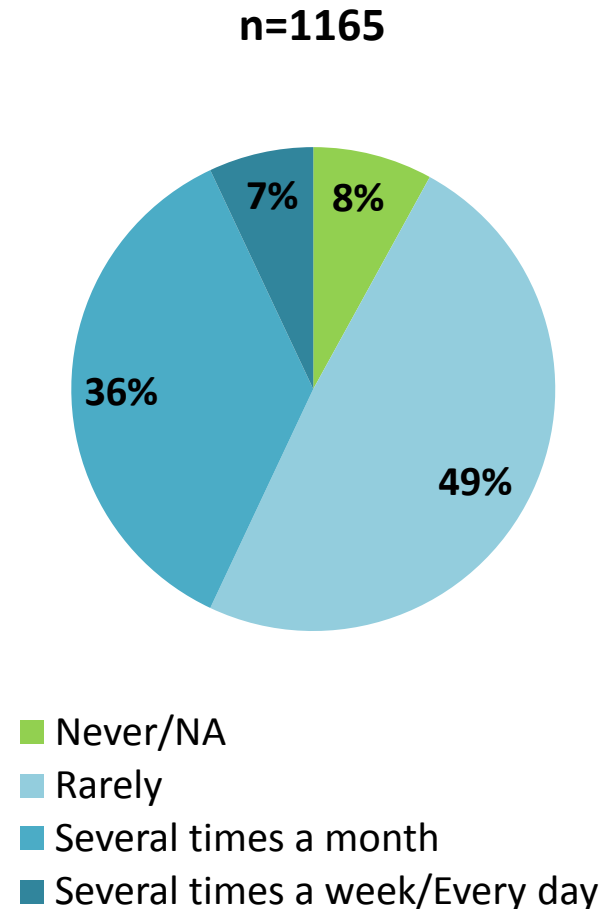
“I eat out quite a bit too. And I happen to like Wendy’s because they got the chilli and they got the baked potato, you know, the things that I like and are pretty good for you. For supper time, I go over to Wendy’s about a couple of times a week at least...They all know me there...when you live alone, things kind of change a bit ...You don’t want to be home eating by yourself all the time. At least there you’ve got people around.”

-Seniors Focus Group



How often do you eat at fast food restaurants?

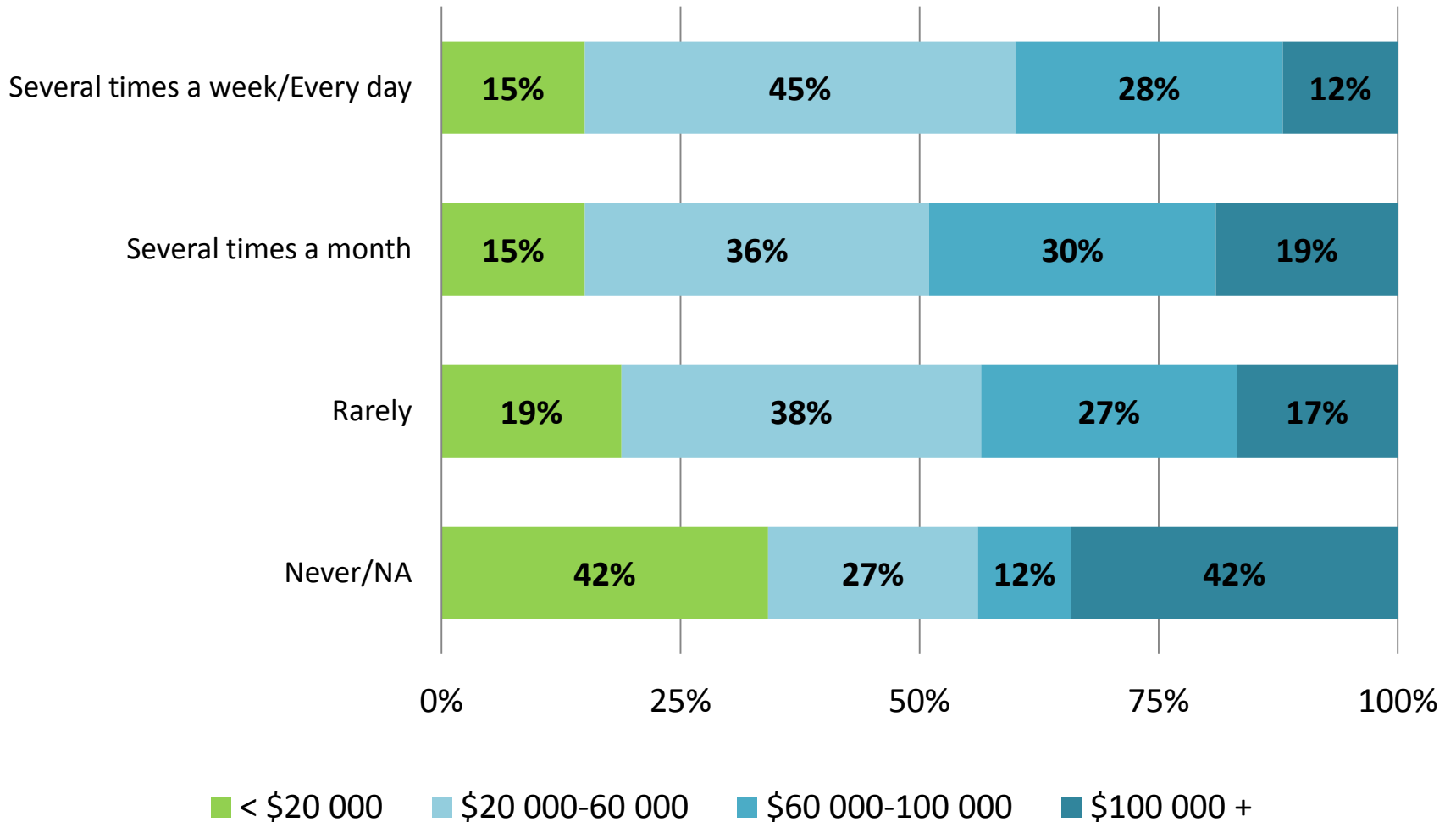
- Most respondents said they ate fast food rarely or several times a month
- Eating at fast food restaurants frequently was most common among middle income respondents





Eating at fast food restaurants, by income

n=1054





Changing society and families...

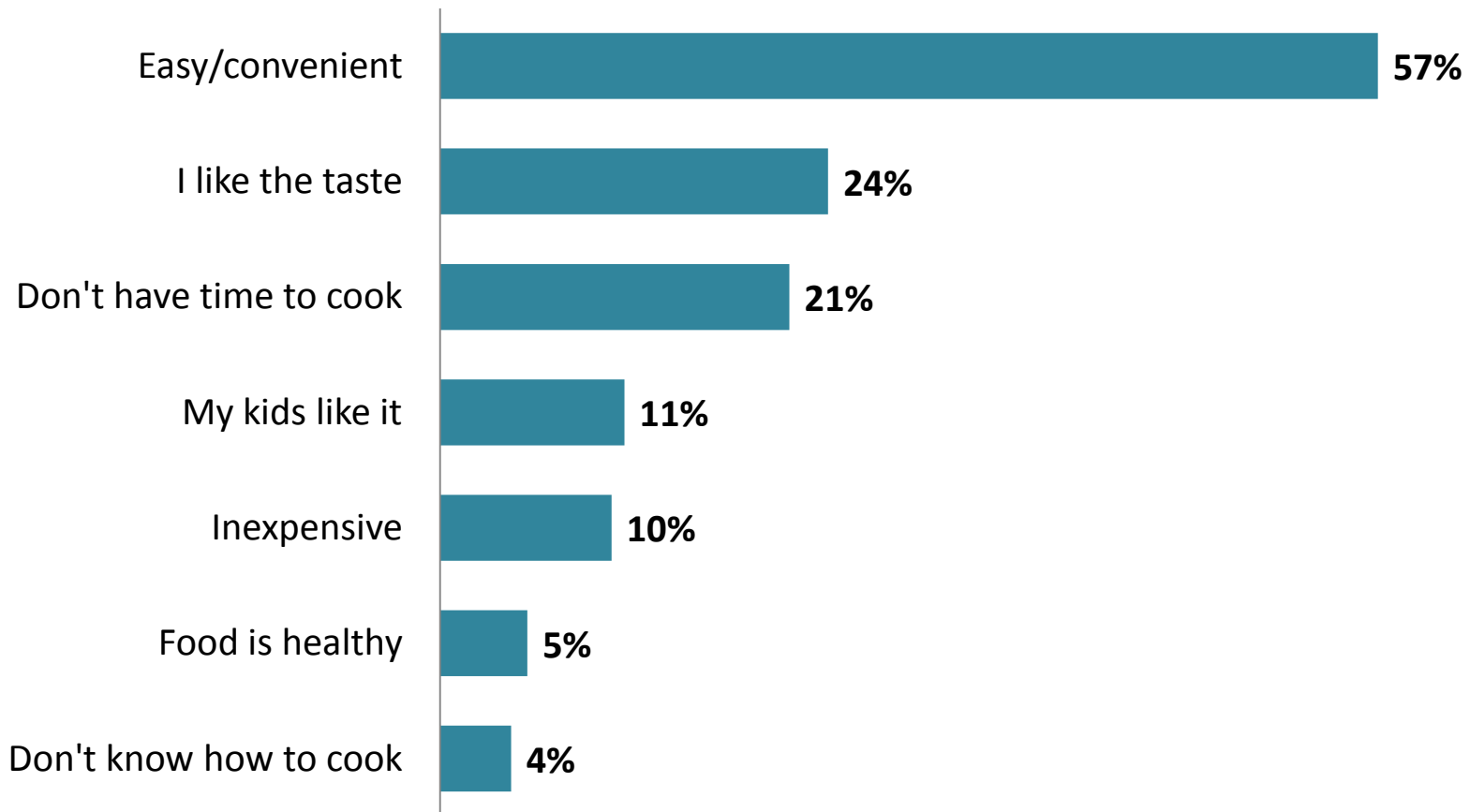
“They never have time just to eat and talk with their children....and I know sometimes if they don’t have time to eat they stop at McDonalds. The whole family thing is changing and it’s not the families we used to know. They are so different. I have a hard time keeping my mouth shut.”

Low Income Focus Group, Chatham



If you eat at restaurants frequently, what are your reasons?

n=505



Let's Talk



Summary: Eating out at restaurants

- Seniors eat out at restaurants because they don't want to eat alone, need social interaction
- Middle income families eat out at fast food restaurants because they are busy, no time to cook
- People like eating at restaurants because it's convenient

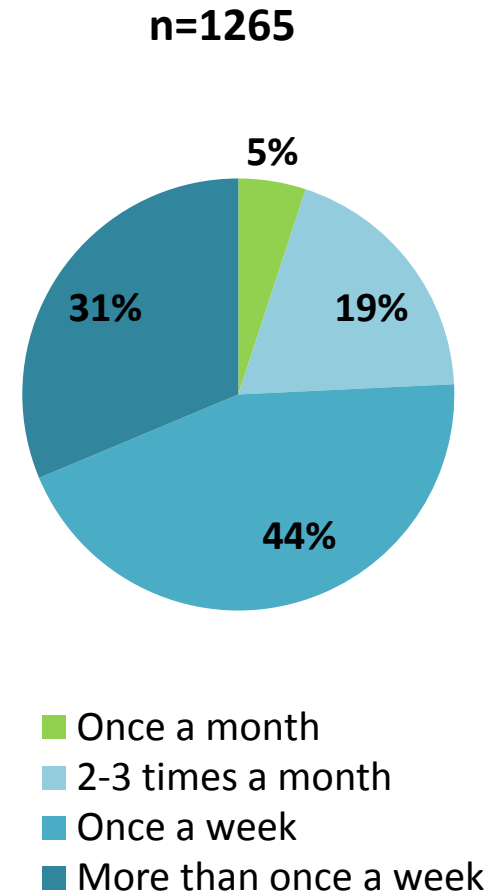
ACCESSIBILITY AND AVAILABILITY OF FOOD





How often do you buy food/groceries?

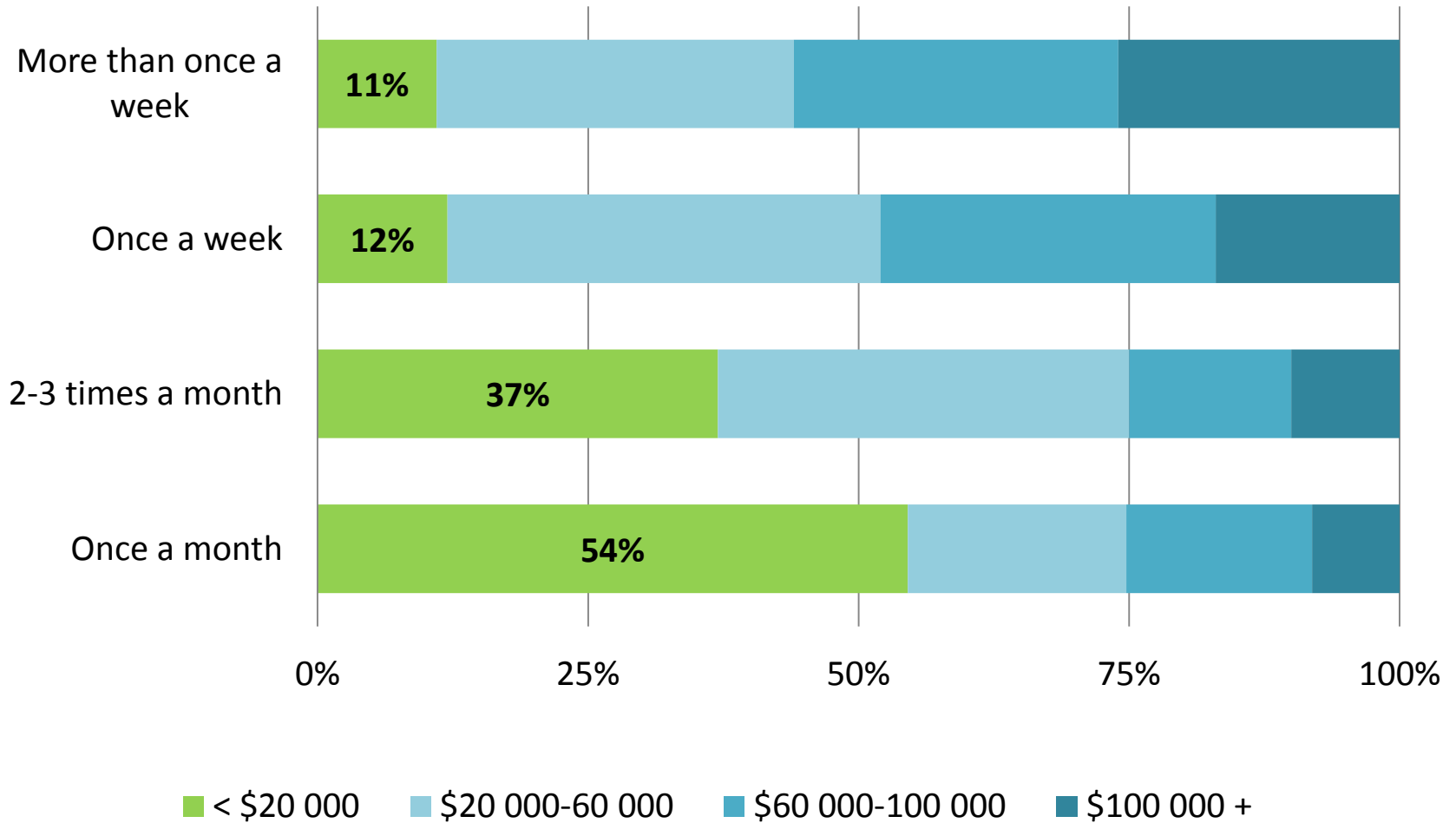
- Overall, most respondents shop for groceries once a week or more
- Shopping less frequently is more common among lower income respondents





Frequency of grocery shopping, by income

n=1125



Let's Talk



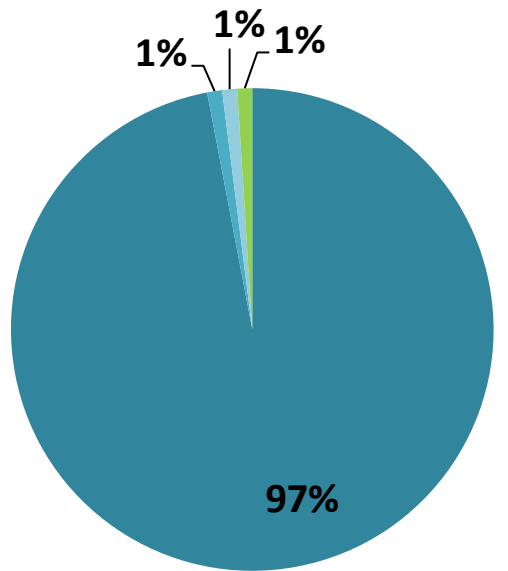
Frequency of grocery shopping

- Shopping less frequently has important implications for freshness of food, food spoilage
- Many low income respondents talked about their preference for buying foods that would “fill them up” and not spoil in the fridge



Where do you buy most of your food?

n=1261



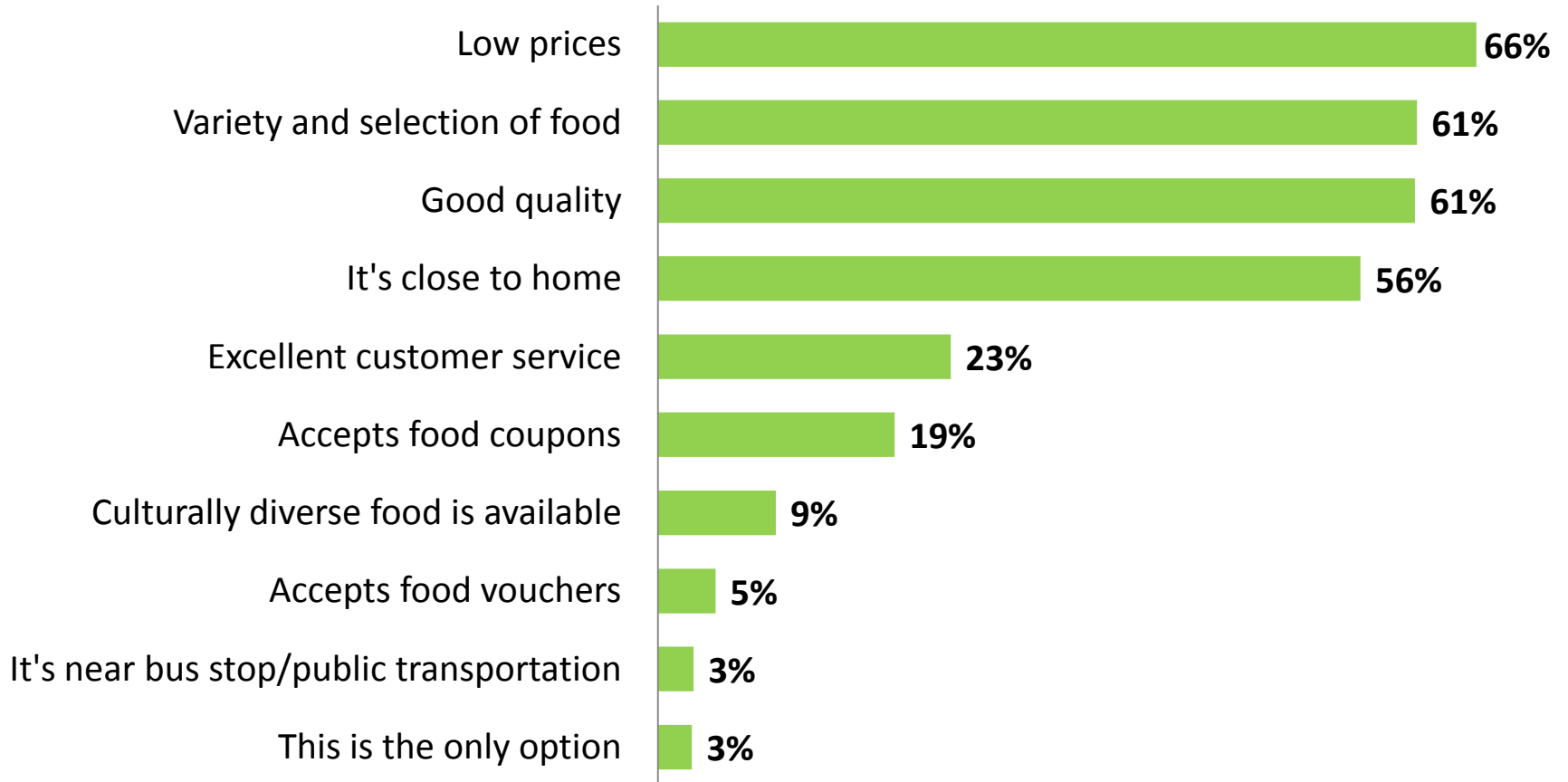
- Grocery store
- Variety/convenience store
- Farmer's market
- Farm/roadside stand

- Virtually everyone in CK gets most of their food from grocery stores (97%)
- But people prefer to shop at different stores for a variety of reasons



Why do you buy most of your food at your preferred location?

n=1261





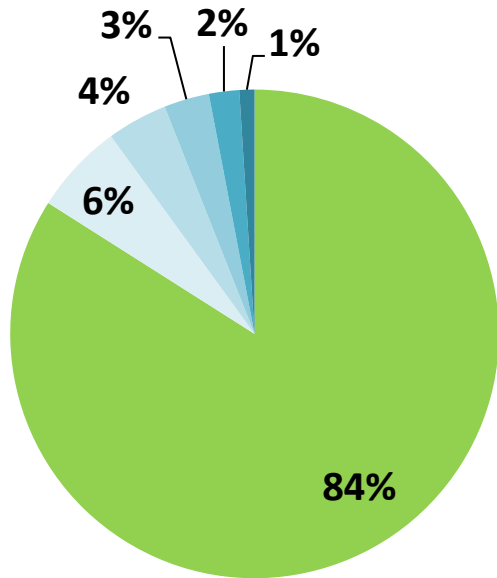
Choice of preferred shopping location

- <\$20 000 – choose low prices
- \$100 000+ – choose variety, selection and quality
- Other reasons: price matching, one-stop shopping, convenience, proximity to other amenities



How do you get to the grocery store?

n=1269



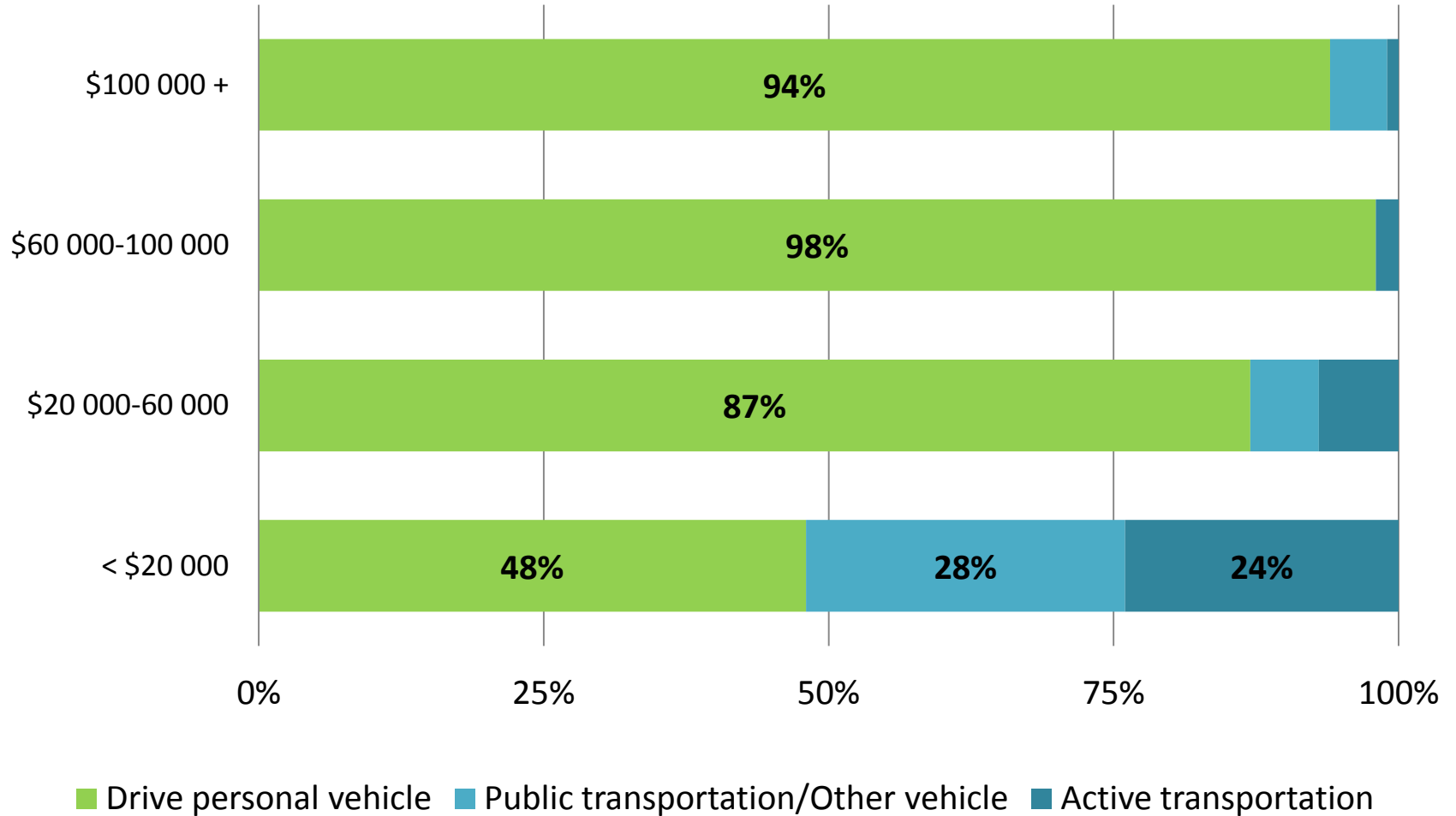
- Drive personal vehicle
- Walk
- Share ride with family member/friend
- Bus or public transit
- Bicycle
- Taxi

- The vast majority of respondents drive their personal vehicle to the store...
- ...But only if their income was more than \$20 000



Method of transportation, by income

n=1129





Getting to the store can be a major challenge without a vehicle...

“I take the walker, it takes me 3 routes going back and forth and sometimes four to bring all my stuff back from the [grocery store]. And I do that all in one day.”

“And if you have to carry it, it hurts ya so bad that you’re so tired when you get home that you don’t want to eat the stuff. You just want to relax.”

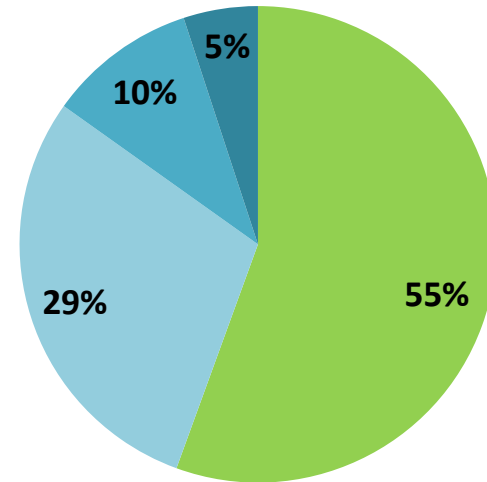
-Low Income Focus Group, Chatham



How long does it take you to get to the store?

- Most respondents are able to get to their preferred grocery store in less than 10 minutes
- But: the lower your income is, the longer it takes you to get there

n=1267

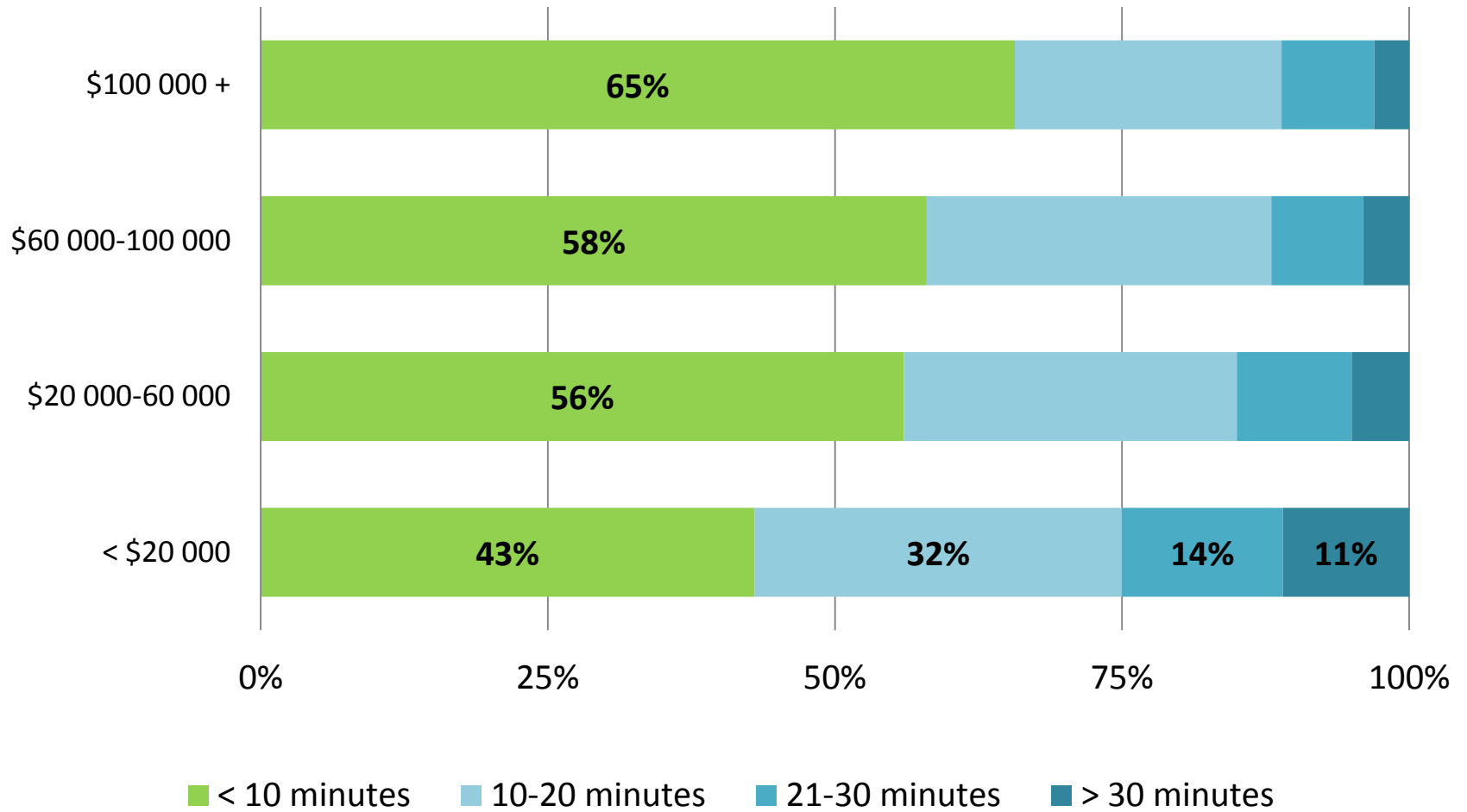


- < 10 minutes
- 10-20 minutes
- 21-30 minutes
- > 30 minutes



Travel time, by income

n=1127





Getting to the store: time and distance

“From my house I have to take two buses, or my mum will come and help me when I go get groceries. It’s five or ten minutes from my house [to drive] but on the bus it’s like two hours.

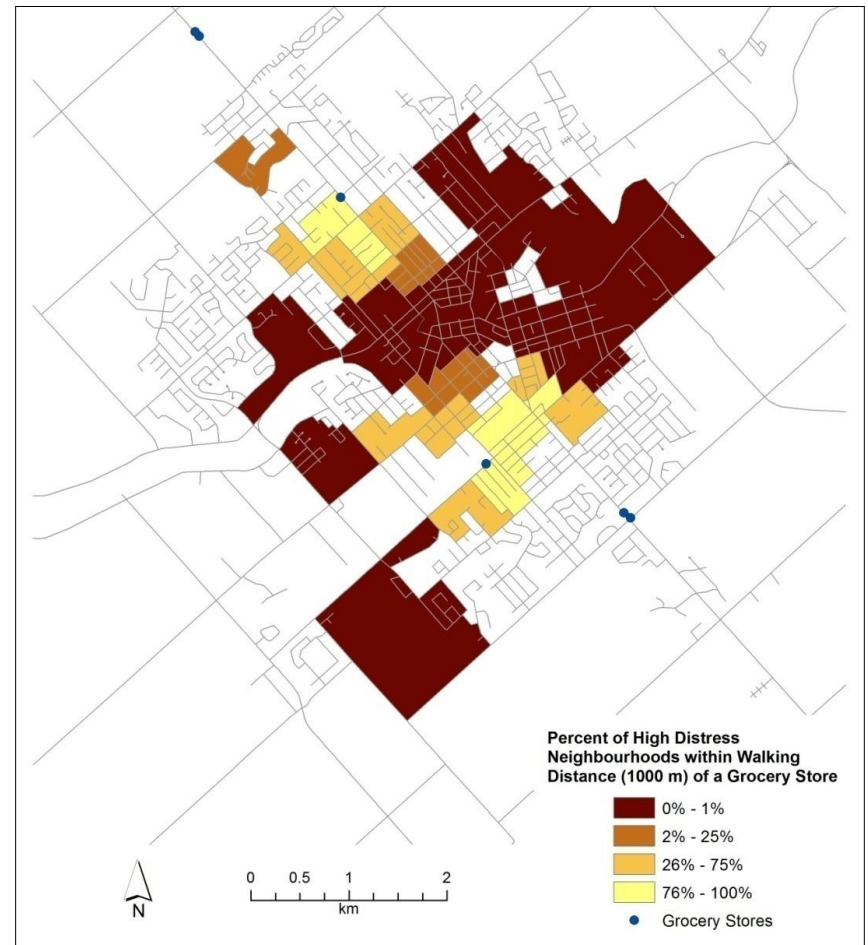
If I walked it would be three hours! I’m not walking to No Frills.”

-Low Income Mothers Focus Group



Issue of food deserts

- Large food deserts exist throughout Chatham
- On average, poorest neighbourhoods have **3 variety stores and 3 fast food outlets** closer than the nearest grocery store
- Unequal access to healthy foods may further worsen health inequities due to socio-economic disadvantage





What is it like to live in a food desert?

"I find it's transportation for me - I have to shop at places around my house because I can't just get in my car, go get groceries, bring them back."

"Yeah there's no grocery stores close to my house."

"It's harder to get the groceries when you don't have somebody to drive you...or somebody to call up."

"You don't get fresh produce."

"No. I don't really. I go to places like Giant Tiger and stuff."

-Youth Focus Group



What is it like to live in a food desert?

“I think [the location of grocery stores] causes a lot of decisions that we might think as of not really financially responsible but if you’ve only got say \$20 does it make more sense to go to the KFC that’s around the corner and get a million toonie Tuesday meals, or does it make sense to spend half of that or more on a cab ride to a grocery store and end up with \$4 for stuff...if you factor in the transportation.”

-Employment and Social Services Staff Focus Group



Food deserts are a huge issue...

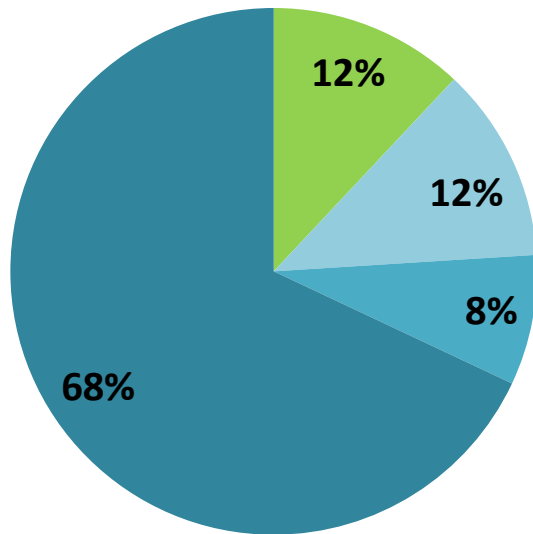
“Food deserts are critical...one of Chatham-Kent’s biggest issues. It ties into the larger concern we have right now with unemployment and our low income citizens. I think that is a huge issue. If you can’t get access to healthy food or food in general besides fast food, that has so many ripple effects...I think that is one of the biggest priorities and one of the biggest problems that Chatham-Kent is facing. A lot of folks do not have the economic means to access healthy food.”

-Municipal Staff Focus Group



How often do you buy food/groceries at a convenience store?

n=1224



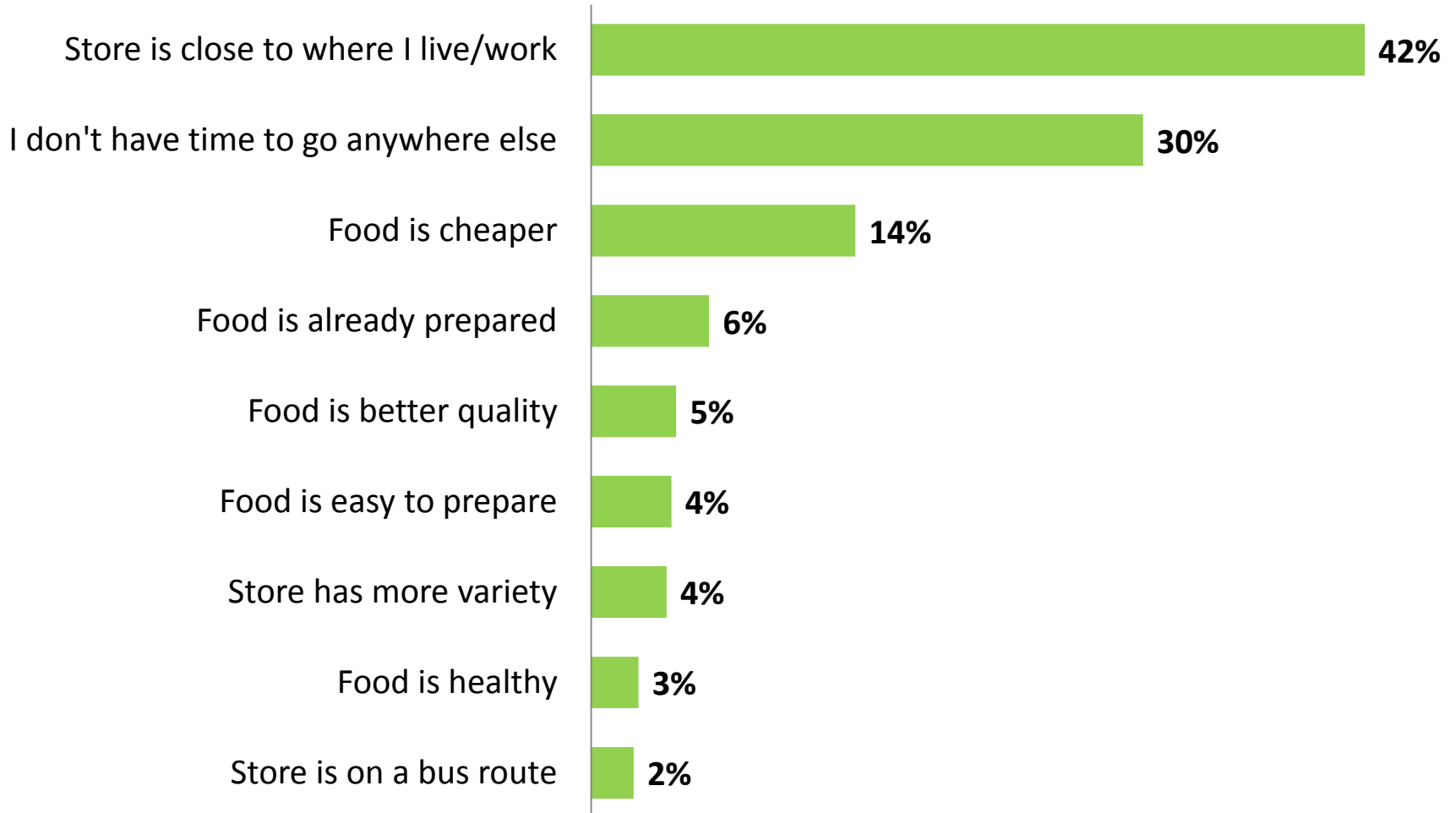
- More than twice a month
- Once a month
- Less than once a month
- Never

- 68% of respondents said they NEVER shopped at convenience stores
- However, shopping at convenience stores was more common among:
 - Males
 - < 30 age group
 - < \$20 000 income group



WHY do you shop for food/groceries at the convenience store?

n=395





WHY do you shop for food/groceries at the convenience store?

“It’s just right there - you can just walk down for one thing. You don’t need to drive across town or even walk 5 minutes to go to a grocery store and pick up a loaf of bread, when you can just go there for an extra \$0.25 or \$0.50 for bread.”

-Youth Focus Group

Let's Talk



Shopping at convenience stores

- **HOWEVER:** focus groups revealed that respondents didn't consider places like Giant Tiger, Shopper's Drug Mart or Dollarama as "convenience stores"
- Many residents, especially youth and low income respondents frequently shopped at these locations



Shopping at “convenience stores”

“Well I like The Bargain Shop. Things are \$2 cheaper than what you can get at the grocery store. I see people going out [of] there all the time.”

“Also Giant Tiger - I’ve bought stuff there.”

“Ya, I’ve bought stuff there.”

“They do have good prices.”

-Seniors Focus Group

Facilitator: “Are there any other places that you shop at that we haven’t talked about?”

“Dollarama. I spend lots at Dollarama.”

-Youth Focus Group

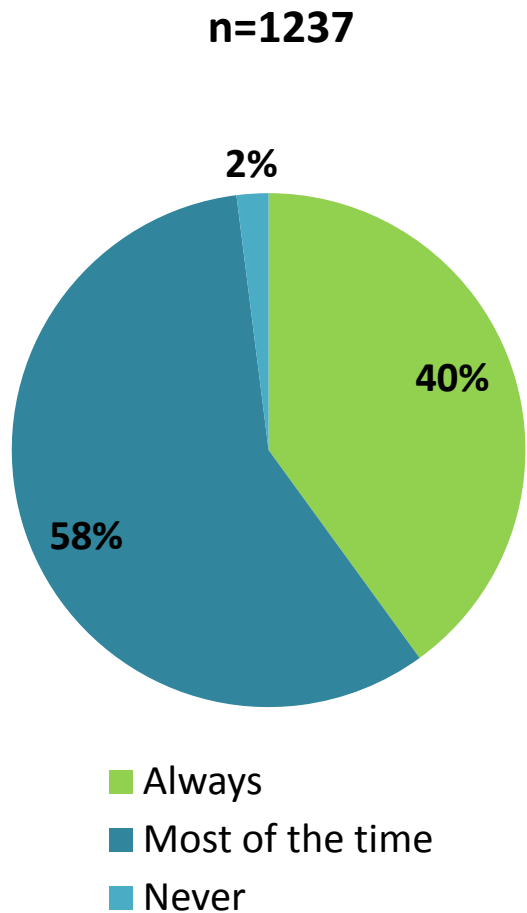
Facilitator: “Is the Dollar Store somewhere you would go to pick up [food items]?”

“Yeah. I live there.”

-Low Income Mothers Focus Group



Are you able to buy the **TYPES** of food that you want in CK?

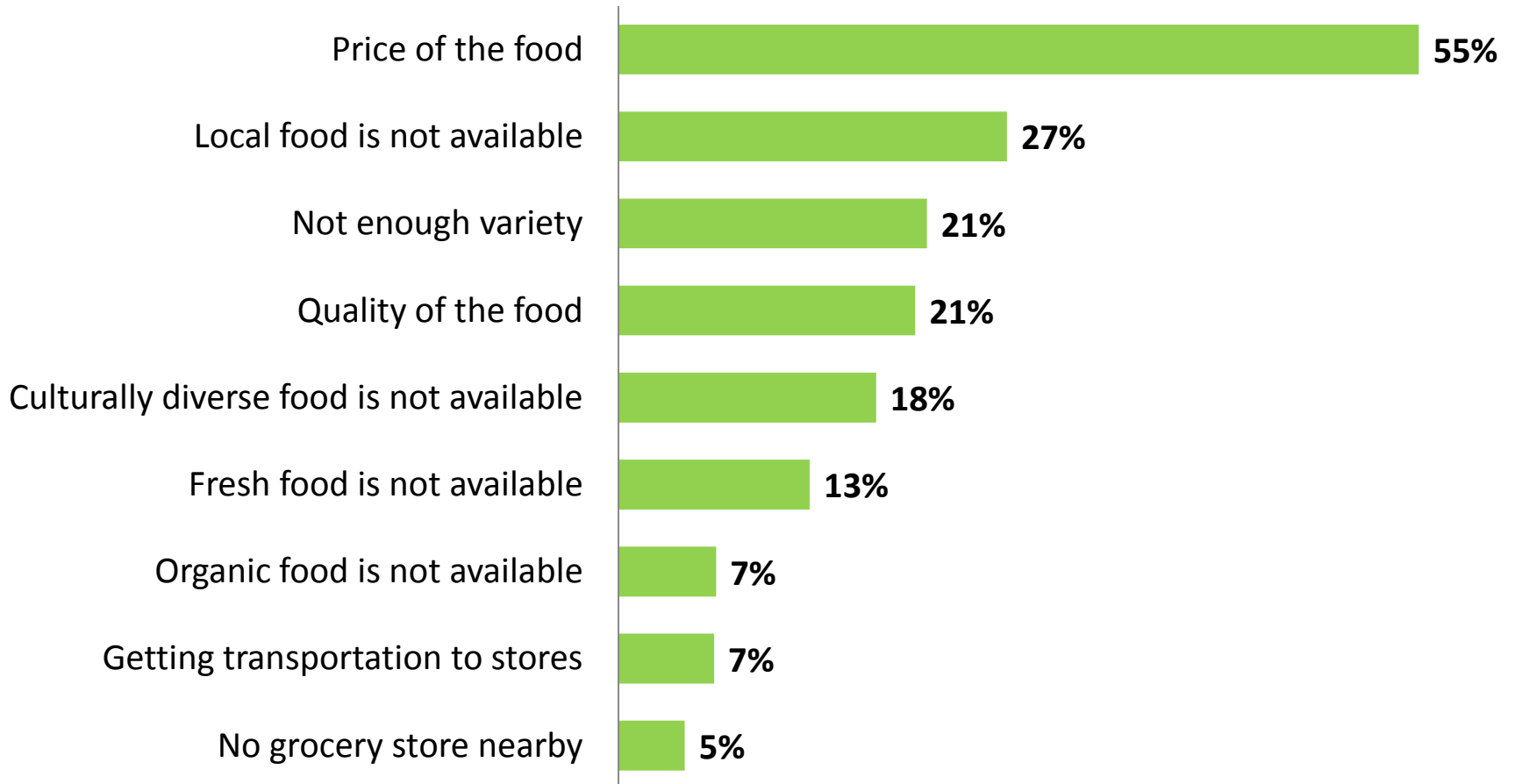


- 40% of respondents said they were always able to buy the food they wanted in CK
- 58% of respondents said they were able to buy the food they wanted in CK most of the time



What prevents you from buying the food that you want in CK?

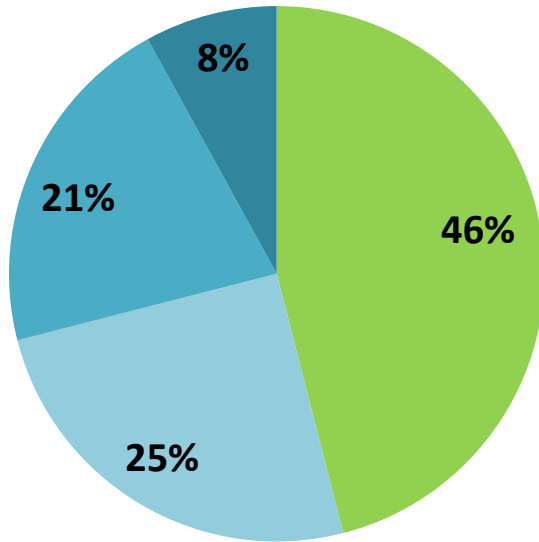
n=739





How often do you buy food/groceries outside of CK?

n=1264



- Never
- Less than once a month
- Once a month
- More than once a month

- Nearly half of respondents (46%) NEVER shop for food outside of CK
- BUT: >25% of respondents shop for food outside of CK once a month or MORE



If you buy food outside of CK, WHERE do you go and WHY?

another area **available** better **bulk** Canada cannot **cheaper** cheese city

convenience **Costco** COSTS cottage deals **different** family farmer farms find

foods free freshness from fruit gluten good great **grocery** have here home **items**

Kent Kroger Lambton larger **Leamington** like live **local** location **London**

lower **market** meat **Michigan** more much need occasionally often **only** options

other outside pick **Port Huron** **prices** produce products purchase quality reasons

Sarnia school **selection** shopping specialty stands **States** stop **store** time Toronto town travel

trip **variety** vegetables **visiting** when where while **Windsor** work



Many people shop outside of CK to save money

“Windsor or London because they have Costco.”

“Costco - Because I can buy in bulk at a great price.”

“Costco because they have great prices and lots of selection and I like to buy in large quantities.”

“Michigan - Cheaper prices and different brands.”

“United States, when I'm doing other shopping there. It's SO much cheaper there.”

“United States because there is more variety for diabetics and the cost of groceries is so much lower.”



Others shop outside of CK to get specialized items

“London as their Saturday market offers a great variety of natural, local food choices.”

“Covent Garden Market in London because of the taste and quality.”

“Usually [I go] to Toronto –maybe four or five times in a year - I shop a lot - maybe few hundred dollars from there, they have lots of Chinese food. Sometimes maybe we [also] go to London and to Windsor if we want to have traditional Chinese food.”

-Immigrant and Newcomer Focus Group



However, some residents feel shopping outside of CK is wrong...

“...In the coffee shop [people brag] that they go to the States every weekend and get their supply of groceries. I dislike that immensely and I make it quite plain that I don’t think it’s the right thing to do. I know it’s nice to buy your milk for a dollar a gallon over there and then bring it back and get the eggs for a dollar a dozen. Unfortunately, that’s why we don’t have a grocery store [in Thamesville] anymore because we weren’t shopping there.”

-General Focus Group, Thamesville

Let's Talk



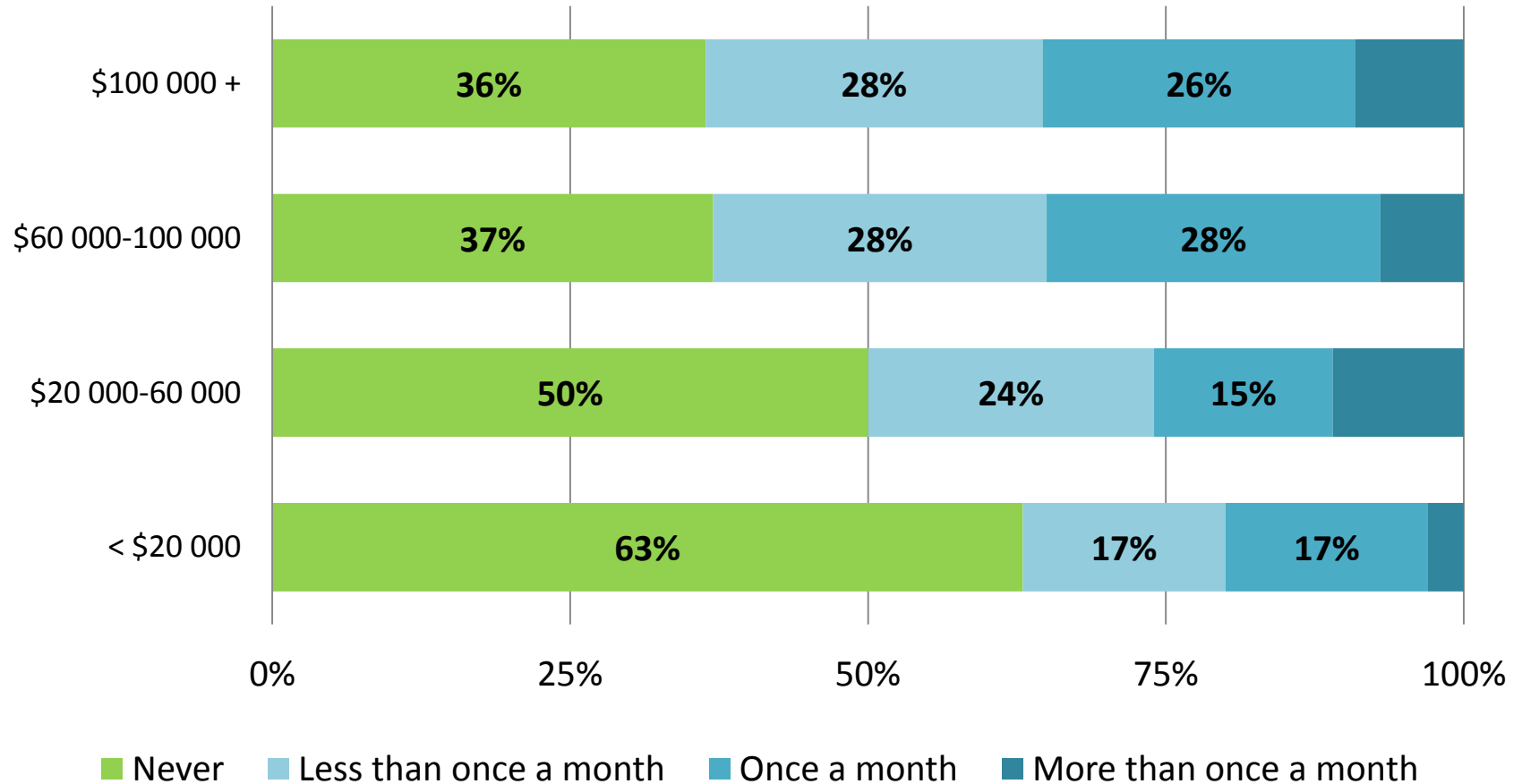
Who's shopping outside of CK?

- Only those with the means to do it
- People overwhelmingly shop elsewhere to save money, but those who need to save money the most aren't able to leave CK
- Most respondents with incomes <\$20 000 say they never shop outside of CK



Frequency of buying food outside of CK, by income

n=1122





Who's shopping outside of CK?

“Our clients [at the Food Bank], they use their money and spend it locally, they’re not the kind of people that’ll go across the border, they’re not the people who’ll go to Windsor or London or wherever and shop, these are the people who shop locally, and where are the politicians to support them?”

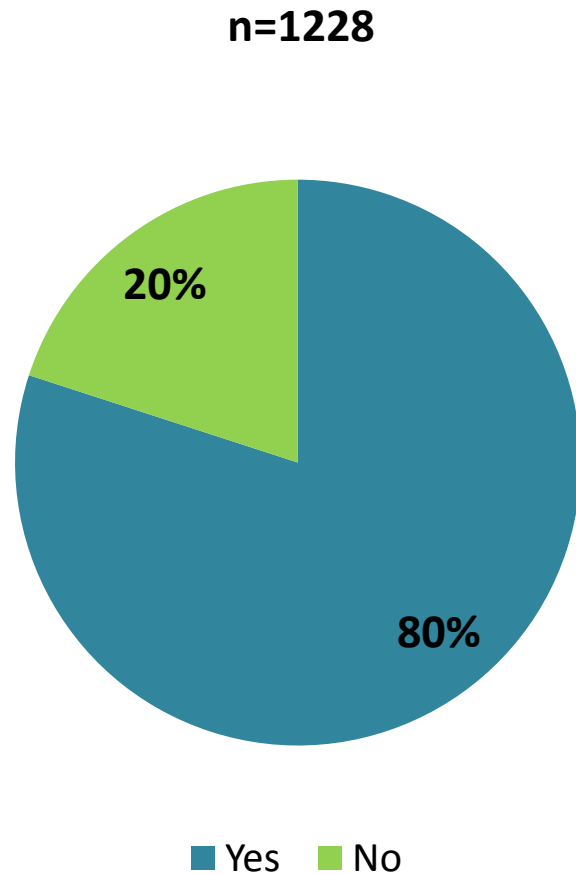
-Food Charity Volunteers Focus Group



AFFORDABILITY & FOOD SECURITY



Do you have enough money to buy the food that you need?

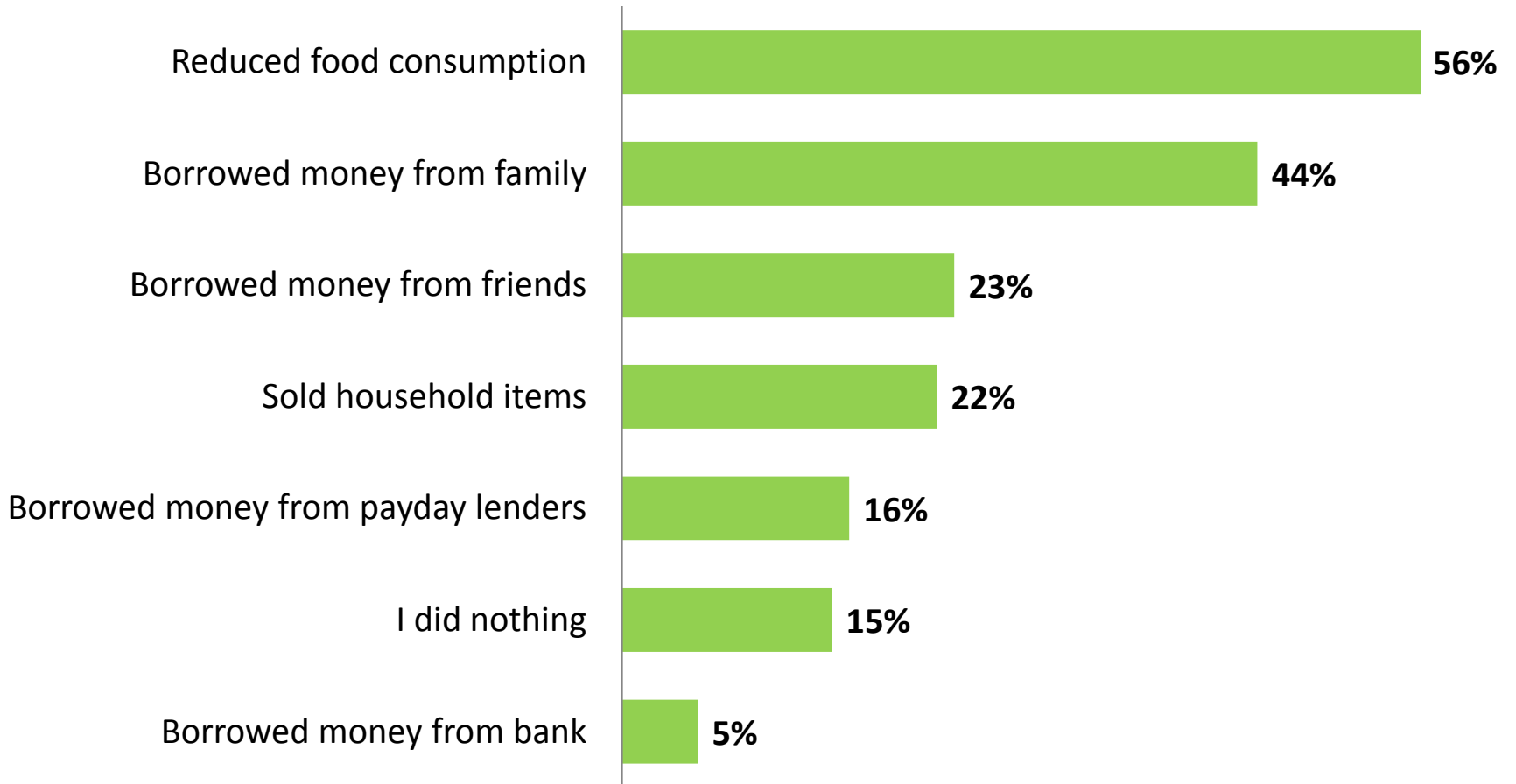


- 20% of respondents did NOT have enough money to buy food they needed
- Food insecurity most common among:
 - Household income <\$20 000
 - Younger respondents



What have you done to get extra money for food?

n=245



Let's Talk



Reducing food consumption...

“Another case worker and I heard a term today that I’d never heard of, it’s called “sleep two days before,” meaning they sleep the day away two days before their monthly check, because you’re more hungry during the day then you are at night. So they sleep the two days before their monthly check and they are up during the night because they aren’t as hungry. And then the first of the month comes and they get food.”

-Employment and Social Services Staff Focus Group



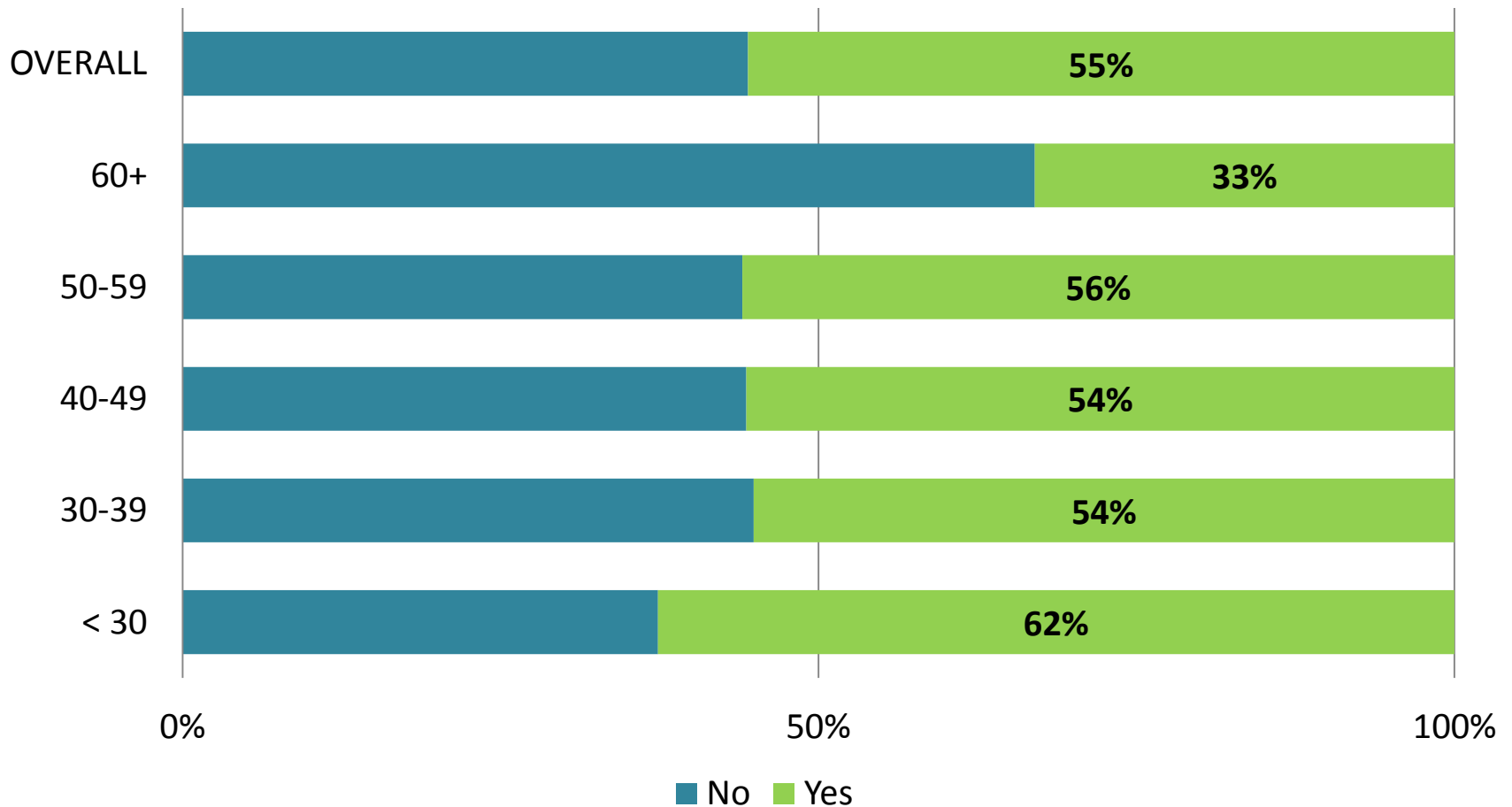
Have you ever used food assistance programs to supplement your diet?

- Overall, 55% of respondents who couldn't afford enough food said they had used food assistance to supplement their diet
- BUT: This was much higher among low income youth than low income seniors



Have you ever used food assistance programs to supplement your diet?

n=260





Using food assistance – differences between generations

- Low income seniors talked about the importance of food skills in making their dollars stretch:

“You have to get VERY creative about making a dollar do the work of ten. It’s incredible. Poverty is, in one sense a wonderful thing, because it really makes you work and it makes you stretch everything– I can make a potato do 15 different things.”

- In contrast, low income youth talked about struggling to know what to do with things that weren’t pre-prepared or from a box



How do low income youth feel about using food assistance?

- Food bank use was associated with feelings of shame, desperation and inadequacy

“When I go to a food bank, I feel like I shouldn’t be on my own, because I can’t afford it. It makes me feel like I can’t be on my own.”

“You gotta be pretty desperate [to go to the food bank]. And you gotta allow yourself to be vulnerable. You have to tell another person that you cannot afford to survive.”

-Youth Focus Group



LOCAL FOOD



What does local food mean to you?

“For me its basically getting [food] as close to home as possible. Whether it’s a garden when its garden season, going out to a garden and picking it fresh, or going to the grocery store and finding as much close to home as possible.”

-General Focus Group, Dresden

“[Local means] supporting your community.”

“Yeah, definitely.”

“It’s worth it.”

“You can trust it too. You know what’s in it.”

-Youth Focus Group

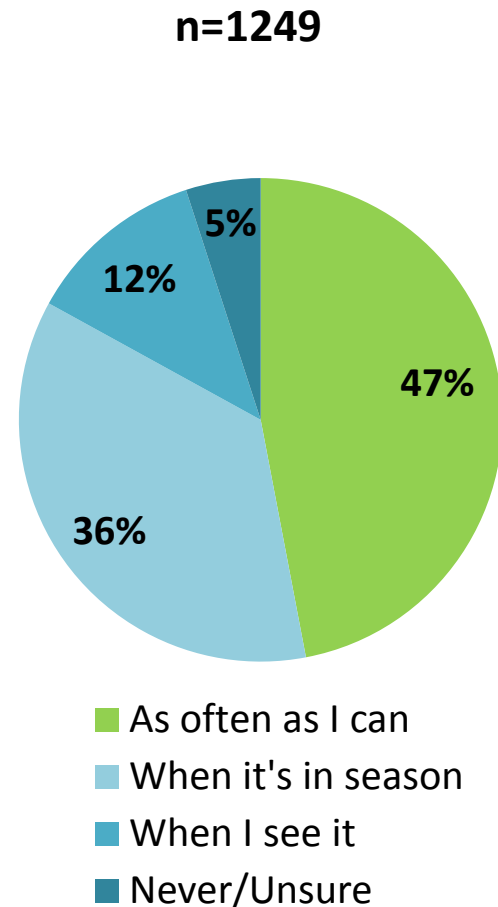
“Locally grown food is high prices.”

-Immigrant and Newcomers Focus Group



In the last year, how often have you bought food grown or produced in CK?

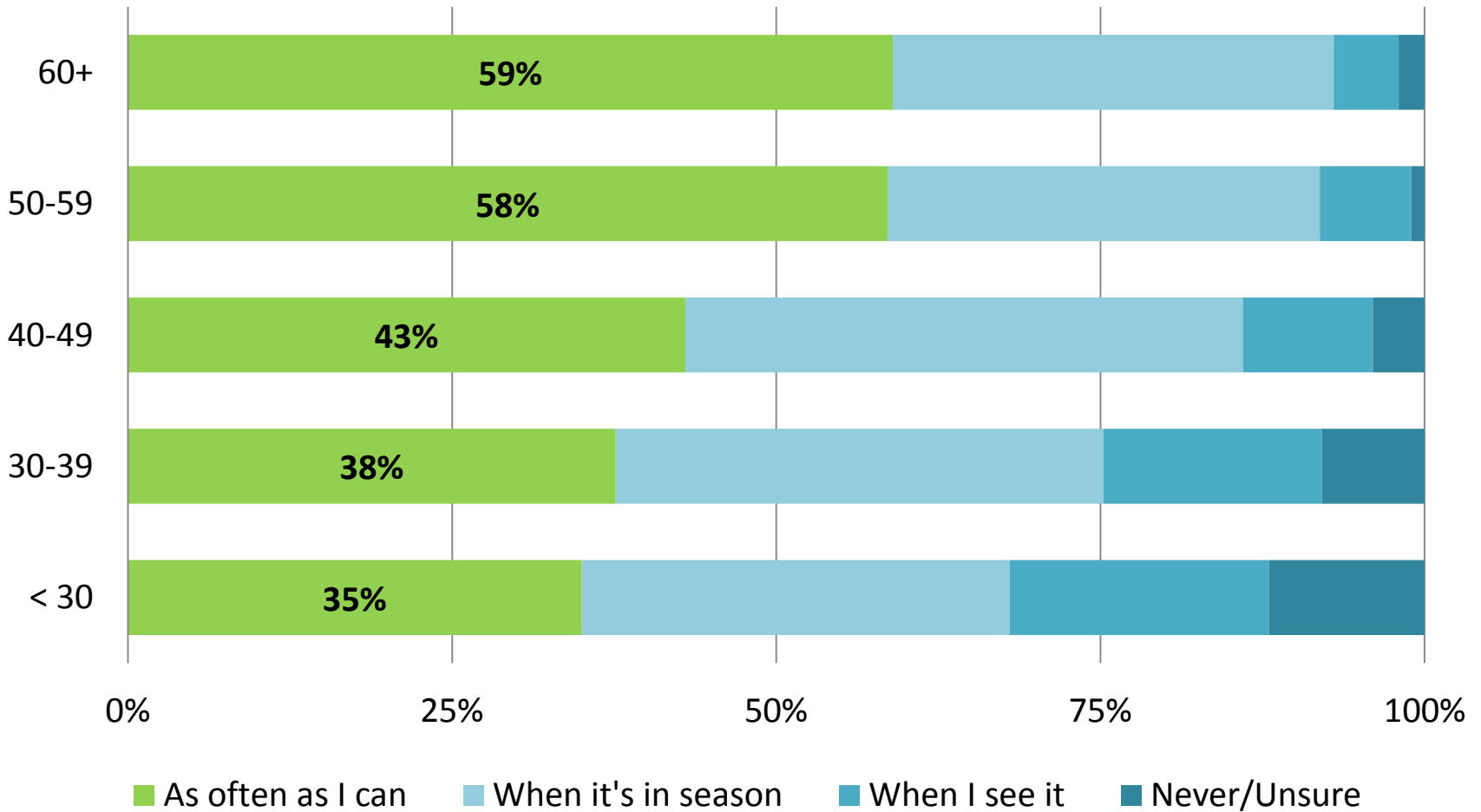
- Overall, respondents placed value on food grown in CK, with 47% buying it as often as they can
- Another 48% bought local when it was in season or when they saw it
- Frequency of buying local food was more strongly related to AGE than to INCOME





Frequency of buying local food, by age

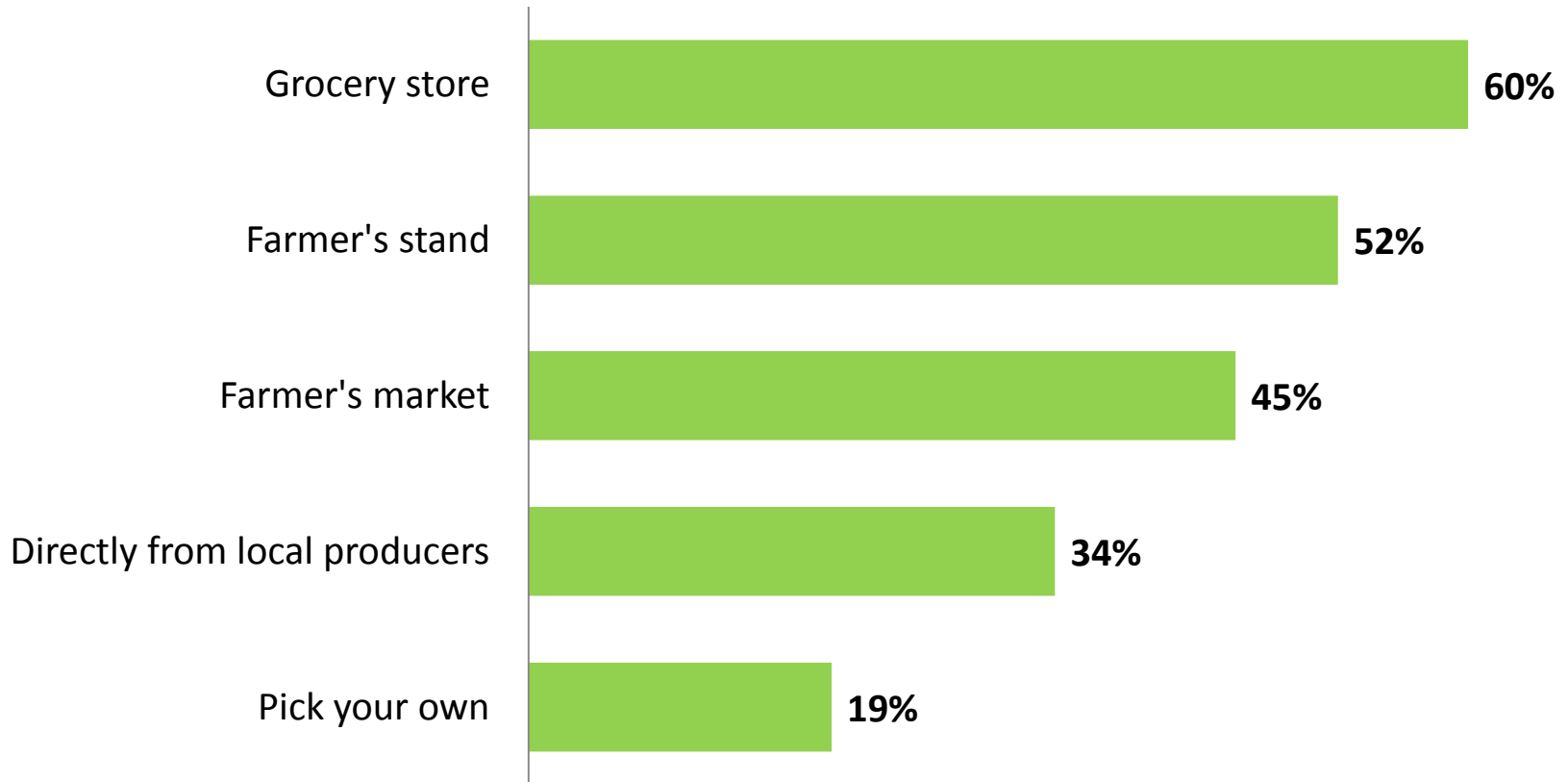
n=1224





If you buy food grown in Chatham-Kent, where do you buy it?

n=1180





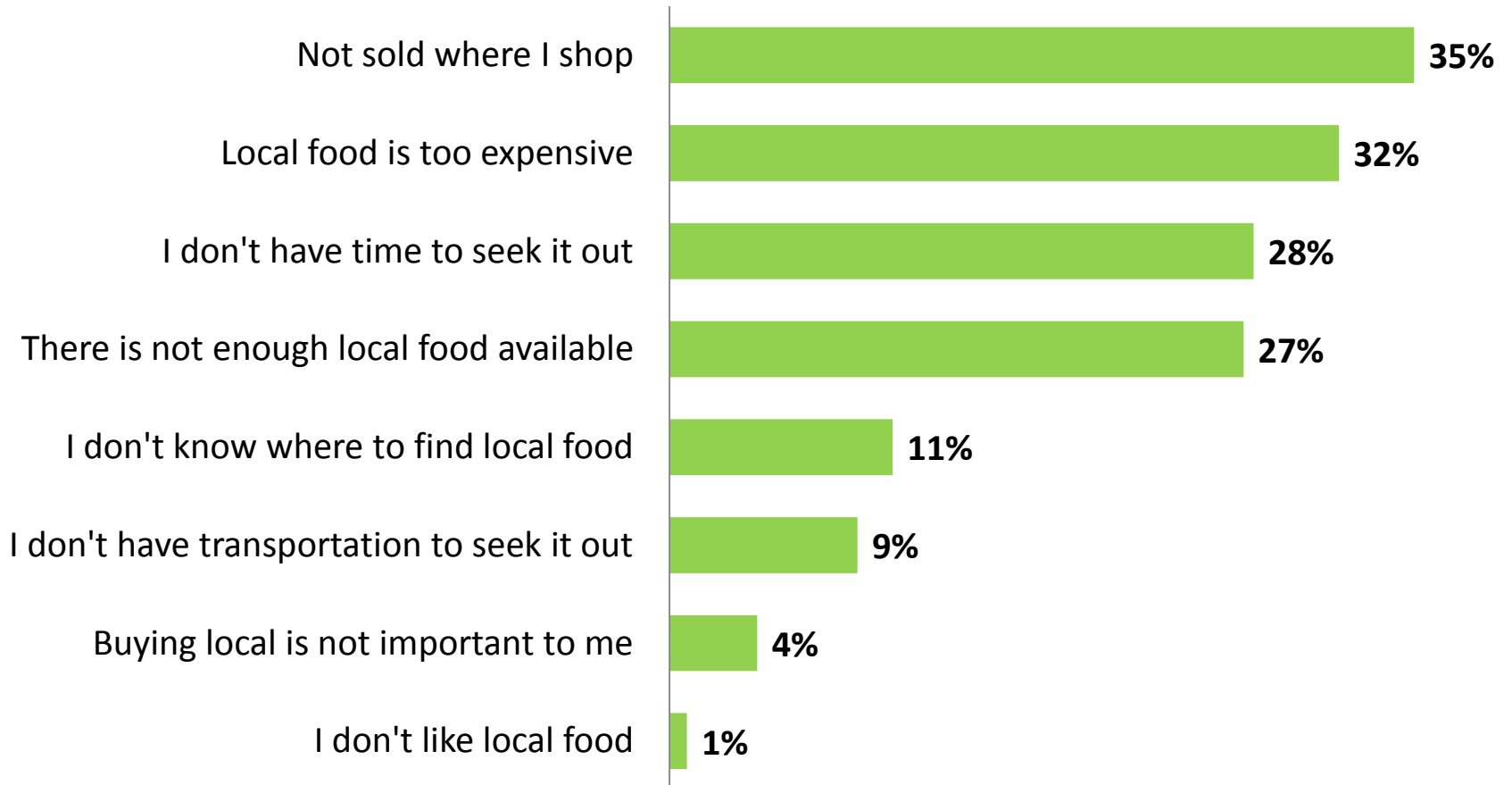
If you buy food grown in Chatham-Kent, where do you buy it?

- Those with lower incomes were more likely to buy from the grocery or farmer's market
- Those with higher incomes were more likely to buy from farmer's stands, pick your own, directly from local producers
- Accessibility is related to income



What prevents you from buying more local food from CK?

n=838





What prevents you from buying more local food from CK?

n=838





Buying local food: Challenges

- Major challenges identified were time and effort

“[Buying local in CK] is a whole way of life. It has to be really important to you because you have to plan your whole life around it. You have to make a trip every Saturday morning to the farmer’s market, you have to drive out to the orchard or whatever. It’s not convenient.”

-General Focus Group, Chatham



Local food: What about cost?

- Perception that the cost of local depends on where you buy it

“At a grocery store if it is local, usually it is more. At a market you would get a better deal.”

-Seniors Focus Group

“If you go to Gypsy King or Sarah’s it’s less than if you’re in the grocery store because they are adding their mark-up to it.”

-Seniors Focus Group



Local food: What about cost?

- Perception that local can be economical in bulk, but requires food skills, ability and knowledge

“I think [local costs] more than in the store. Unless you buy in bulk. Like if you buy squash bulk, you can maybe buy it for fifty cents a squash, where as in the store, it can be 3 something.”

“But if you buy a case, it’s really economical.”

“Yeah when you buy a big amount.”

“I buy a lot of squash, then I just freeze it. I can it or put it in the freezer.”

-General Focus Group, Thamesville



Local food: What about cost?

- In August 2012, conducted a sample of fruit and veg available throughout CK, in grocery stores, markets, farm gates/stands, convenience stores
- Average cost of fruit and vegetables available in August in CK:
 - From CK: **\$5.30/kg**
 - From ON: **\$5.03/kg**
 - From Canada: **\$4.26/kg**
 - From outside Canada: **\$4.99/kg**

Price of local is something we are still investigating!



Summary: Purchasing local food in CK

- Largely a factor of availability, convenience
 - People want to buy local food at the grocery store where they shop for the rest of their food
- Strong relationship with age, more so than income
 - Older residents most likely to purchase local food
 - Cost is a barrier, but not the most important one
- Local food outside the grocery store may be cheaper, but harder to get

A photograph of a woman and a young girl sitting at a table, eating together. The woman is in the foreground, smiling and looking towards the camera. She is wearing a light blue striped shirt and has her hair pulled back. She is holding a piece of food in her hand. The girl is in the background, also smiling and looking towards the camera. She is wearing a white shirt and is holding a piece of bread. The background is slightly blurred, showing a wooden cabinet and a white wall. The overall tone is warm and positive.

**WRAP UP:
BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER**



Major themes: Access and availability

- Location of grocery stores in CK has created food deserts
- Very difficult to access healthy food in CK without a vehicle (grocery stores, farmer's stands, markets)
- Accessing local food is not easy for anyone in CK – have to organize your whole life around it



Major themes: Local Food

- Perceived as fresher, tastier, healthier, but also more expensive
- Some residents are willing to pay more for it, some are not, some residents simply can't
- Above all, people want greater convenience, more local produce in grocery stores
- Perceived as important to support the community, people recognize that farmers need to make a living



Major themes: Disconnect with Local Food

- Farmers worry people are becoming more and more disconnected from where food comes from, we don't understand it anymore and thus don't value it

“For people to not understand what’s happened and what goes into their food before it gets to their plate, and what the farmer in the field is actually doing to produce food for them, if they actually understood what is happening they would value the food and they would value that it came from Canada or CK.”

-Farmers Focus Group

Let's Talk



Major themes: Value of Food

- When we lose sight of where food comes from, food itself loses its value – only value becomes “cheap”
- Interesting parallel: When food become too cheap and abundant, it become disposable – we waste a vast amount of food compared to other cultures

“I don’t like when we go to someone’s house and they throw food in the garbage – I hate it...so many people need food right now.”

“[In Canada] it is kind of normal I think. They don’t want [something], they throw it in the garbage.”

-Immigrant and Newcomers Focus Group



Major themes: Value of Food

“Particularly North Americans, locally here, but not just here, we don’t think about what we are wasting because we are very much a throw-away society. If you think of how little people in other parts of the world have to subsist on, they eat every little part of the vegetable – they don’t throw away a whole head of lettuce because a few leaves are rusty. They are eating the core and the root.”

-General Focus Group, Ridgetown



Major themes:

Food knowledge, awareness and skills

- Knowledge of food, where food comes from is being lost in younger generations
- People are losing the ability to cook, feed themselves
- Critically important for young low income individuals
– most vulnerable group



Major themes: Education & Food Skills

“Like a lot of my fruit and vegetables when they go on sale and I have them in [the fridge], they tend to go bad because other than my peppers and spaghetti I don't know what to do with them.”

-Low Income Mothers Focus Group

“We’ve raised a generation of children that can do quantum physics but can’t make good nutritious choices for themselves or cook or prepare food.”

-General Focus Group, Chatham

Let's Talk



Major themes: Low income challenges

- Poorest access to fresh healthy food
- Very difficult to access grocery stores, don't supply food banks with fresh healthy food (not enough donations, too expensive to buy)
- Lacking food skills which would help to stretch their dollars



Low income challenges – Food Skills

“We make big salads, bean salad, and [the clients] love it. They love the bean salad. Because it’s made up.

We [also] add [beans] into soups...open a can and add it. [They’ll say] ‘This is great soup.’

But if you offer them a can of beans, they’re not gonna take it. No they don’t. It will sit there. They don’t take the cans ‘cause they don’t know how to make it, what to do with it.

It’s making [beans] so that they’ll eat it. And they don’t realize that you haven’t started from scratch.”

-Food Charity Volunteers Focus Group



Suggestions for CK: What can we do?

- Focus on accessibility - healthy local food should be accessible for everyone
- Focus on education – food knowledge, food awareness, food skills
 - Bring food programs back into our schools, focus on kids while they are young
- Focus on promotion and branding of local food
 - CK logo/sticker to promote our products, make them easier to find



Major themes: Focus on kids, schools

“Every school aged child goes to school so [food] needs be part of the school curriculum so that nobody is left out. That would solve problems of poverty across the board because, you know, they are learning how to cook. Every single person is learning how to cook. If they have gardens at school, every single person is learning how to grow. Grow, cook, eat. And I’m not talking like veal parmesan or something super fantastic like that. I’m talking good old fashioned poor man’s food that everyone can cook and everyone can eat and no one is going to go broke over it. You’ve got \$80 a month for groceries, here’s how to make that \$80 stretch.”

-General Focus Group, Chatham

Let's Talk



Closing thought...

- **Food is survival - equipping people with the skills and knowledge to feed themselves in a healthy way is giving them the tools to survive...**

“If the power went out for two weeks, I could survive because I know how to survive. But all the young kids wouldn’t.

You’re right, they wouldn’t survive. You knew how to keep your milk, dig a hole in the ground down deep enough where it was very cold.

Kids don’t know how to survive. It’s not that they couldn’t it’s that they don’t know how to.”

-General Focus Group, Thamesville