

Breakfast

The cultural transformation of the American breakfast

During the 20th century, cereal especially helped redefine breakfast as a health and wellness moment. Breakfast beverages also arose to give us a heavy dose of scientific nutrition to start our day. “Starting our day right” became a cultural mantra echoed in interviews across America to this day. In essence, breakfast transformed from an energy/satiety occasion to an eating occasion focused on emerging notions of targeted nutrition.

2014: What we’re seeing today in the field is actually an ironic, even mystifying, partial return to the demand drivers of the 19th-century farmer, even though today’s consumers don’t require as many calories. The difference is in the cultural rationale and context behind the change.



What we eat for breakfast when...

Alone

53% of breakfasts are alone

Common breakfast items	31%
Eggs	23%
Breads/rolls/tortillas	22%
Dairy (milk, yogurt)	21%
Fruit/fruit snacks	13%

Immediate Consumption (IC)*

10% of breakfasts are IC

Eggs	43%
Breads/rolls/tortillas	27%
Common breakfast items	22%
Cheese	15%
Dairy, not cheese	15%
Sausage	12%

Snacking*

35% of snacking occurs in the morning hours

17% of snacking occurs in the **early morning**

18% of snacking occurs in the **mid-morning**

*Traditional meal structure of **3 meals** has dissolved into flexible modern meals with **endless permutations of meals and snacks** interspersed throughout the day.