

US sustainability shoppers prioritize product selection

Article

Nearly every modern consumer has at least some concern about the environment, but the influence that worry has on shopping behavior is far more nuanced.

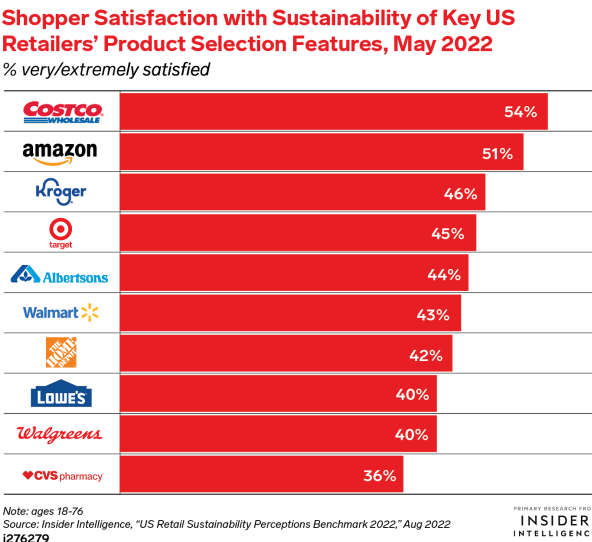
In our 2022 US Retail Sustainability Perceptions Benchmark report, we analyze the top sustainability features that consumers look for when shopping at general merchandise retailers.

Product selection was ranked the most important category of features by shoppers.

Consumers want to see a selection of sustainable products on retail shelves, but some details are more important than others. Products free of harmful or synthetic materials was the most important feature overall—but the importance of the the other features in the Product Selection category varied.

Key Findings:

- Prioritize products that advertise both sustainability and personal health and wellness benefits.
- A retailer’s sustainability perception is susceptible to the sustainability perceptions of the brands it carries.
- Sustainable packaging is highly important for the cross-section of respondents who were the most concerned about shopping sustainably.

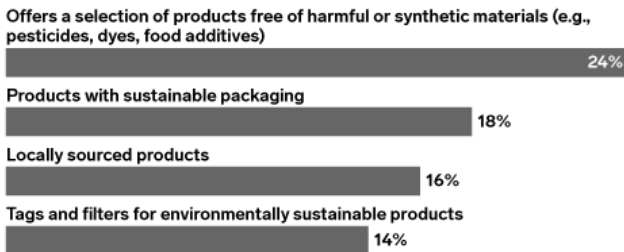


Costco Wholesale had the highest satisfaction rate for sustainable products. Amazon also performed well in this category with more than half of respondents saying they were either “very” or “extremely” satisfied with Amazon’s selection of sustainable products.

Retailers performed best in the Product Selection category overall. All the retailers in this benchmark received their highest satisfaction rating in this category.

Product Selection Features From Retailers that Are Most Important to US Shoppers, May 2022

% of respondents who called each feature "extremely important"



Note: ages 18-76

Source: Insider Intelligence, "US Retail Sustainability Perceptions Benchmark 2022," Aug 2022

276161

eMarketer | insiderintelligence.com

Products that are free of harmful or synthetic materials was the most important feature in this category—it was also the most important feature overall. Consumers care about sustainability, but they also want products that are safe and not harmful to their own health. The combination of sustainability and personal health and wellness benefits is likely what made this feature the most important overall.

Don't underestimate the importance of packaging. While it was not the most important feature in the Product Selection category, three of the six most important features overall involved environmentally friendly packaging practices. For retailers, consistency is important: They need to ensure products advertising sustainable packaging are also shipped using sustainable packaging materials.

Read the full report.

This was originally featured in in the Retail By the Numbers newsletter. For more retail insights, statistics, and trends, [subscribe here](#).