



# MENU QUEST

The Pursuit of Culinary Distinction

**Smithfield**

## Trend Watch

### Today's Consumers Seek Protein-Packed Satisfaction on Menus

As consumers become more concerned about the quality of foods they choose, many are including a healthy helping of protein in their diets. Popular diets that are on the rise include the low-carb, paleo and ketogenic diets, all of which incorporate protein as a substitute for a perceived less healthy component, such as sugars, salts and saturated fats.

In response, operators are scrambling to add healthier, protein-inclusive items to their menus to satisfy consumer demand. And why not? Protein not only adds muscle mass, but its amino acids make up proteins that are required for healthy cells, bone formation, and nail and hair growth. Most appealing to many consumers, protein can contribute to weight loss because even smaller portions of protein are more filling, and therefore can help people from overeating. In addition, lean muscle burns calories throughout the day, which can also help with weight loss.

### Protein by the Numbers

*Consumption of beef, chicken, pork and turkey has each been on a steady incline, reaching a record high in 2018 in the U.S. Expect this demand to continue into 2019.*

*USDA, June 4, 2018*



*More than a third of consumers indicate interest in trying the paleo and keto diets.*

*Technomic Healthy Eating CTR, 2018*



*Consumers' interest in low-carb, high-protein diets is leading operators to promote this health fad on the menu.*

*Technomic Healthy eating CTR, 2018*





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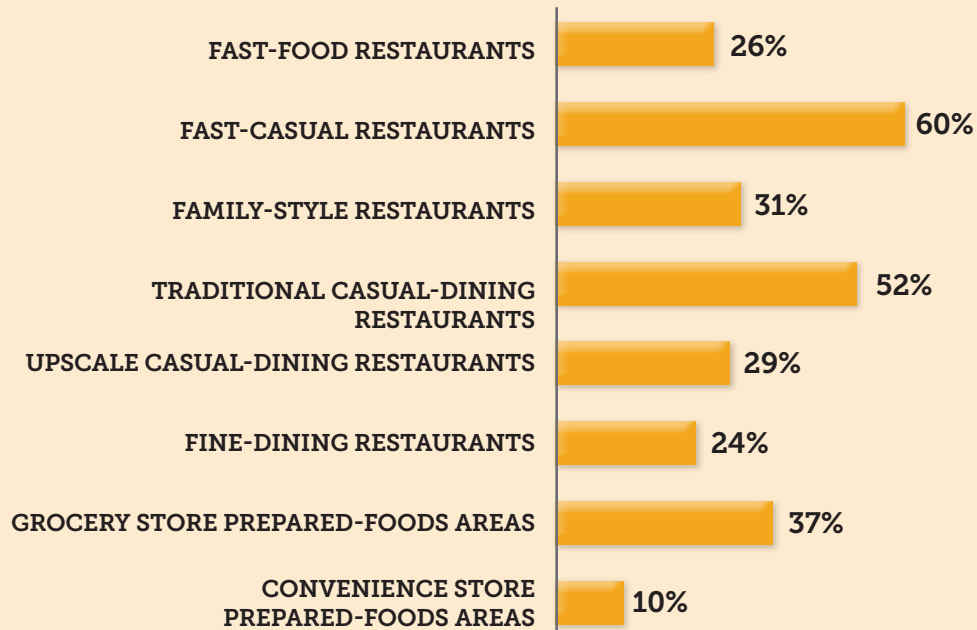
## Trend Watch

### What 'Healthy' Means to Consumers

Consumers differ widely about what they consider to be healthy eating. The only consistency is that many consumers lately seem to be evolving their attitudes. According to Technomic Healthy Eating CTR, 2018:

- 1.** Data show that consumer definitions of health are continuing to change, with 40% saying they have changed theirs over the past two years.
- 2.** Consumers define healthy foods as anything from items high in nutrients to items that simply leave them feeling full and energized.
- 3.** The number one component of a perceived healthy meal for consumers is protein. Seventy-one percent of consumers consider items to be healthier if they are high in protein.
- 4.** With protein as the focus, carbs are going away, and protein is taking center stage.

### MOST VISITED FOODSERVICE LOCATIONS FOR HEALTHY OPTIONS





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### The Keto Diet: How Much Protein?

The ketogenic diet is a high-fat, low-carb diet that is believed to have many health benefits. These include benefits against diabetes, cancer, epilepsy and Alzheimer’s disease. The diet stresses minimizing carbohydrate intake and substituting fat instead. This carb reduction puts your body into ketosis, a metabolic state that is efficient at burning fat for energy. The keto diet is protein-friendly. But the amount of protein added varies with each dieter. A typical keto diet includes about 20% of protein, whereas a high-protein keto diet can contain up to 35% protein.<sup>1</sup>

While those consumers adopting this diet can easily follow it at home, operators have lagged behind, so the pressure is on to add keto-friendly items to their menus. Besides a variety of choices from suppliers like Smithfield, who offer an exhaustive portfolio of protein items, others being added by operators include jerky, bacon, pork rinds and cracklings.<sup>2</sup>

1. Health Line, July 2018 2. Mintel, July 2018

### What's on the Menu?

Many forward-thinking operators have already added items to their menus to satisfy protein-seeking consumers. Below find just a sampling of current offerings.



#### Core Life Eatery

Signature Bowls: Korean BBQ Pork, Spicy Thai Chicken Rice and Noodle bowls.



#### Burger Lounge

Paleo Burger: Grass-fed beef with bacon, zucchini, grilled tomato and tomato relish.



#### Asian Box Street Food

The Miss Jones: Lemongrass pork, chilled noodles, sauce tossed veggies, caramel egg, crispy shallots, bean sprouts, fresh herbs, chopped peanuts and fish sauce.

**Smithfield has all the products you need to add deliciously satisfying protein-infused selections to your offerings. Visit [smithfieldfoodservice.com](http://smithfieldfoodservice.com) for more.**

For everything you need to know about Smithfield pork, download our Pork. Solved. app.



**Stay tuned for the next Trend Watch, where we feature insights, ideas and secrets from some of the top BBQ Pitmasters across America.**