# Healthy Shasta's Downtown Food Survey 2023

## Background:

Healthy Shasta is a local collaborative of 25 health partners dedicated to improving healthy options for physical and activity and healthy foods in Shasta County. As a part of these ongoing efforts, the Healthy Shasta Downtown Food Survey was conducted in collaboration with local food shops, community groups, and Healthy Shasta partners.

The primary objective of the survey was to gather input from the community regarding the availability of healthy food options in Downtown Redding. Through this survey, we aim to assess and understand the current landscape of healthy food choices in downtown and surrounding areas and contribute to community informed decision-making processes that support health and well-being in Downtown Redding.

## Methods:

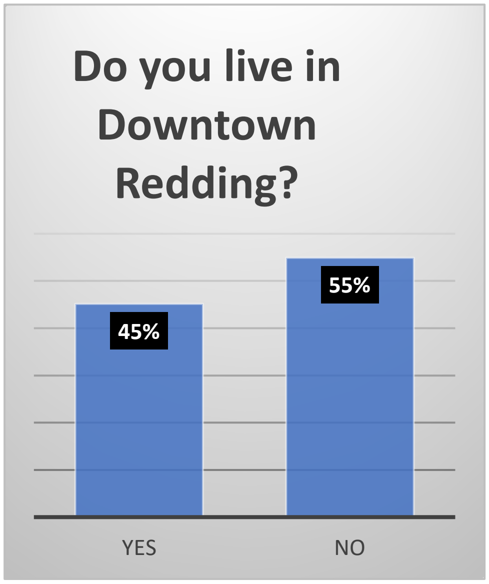
The Healthy Shasta Downtown Food Survey used a multi-faceted approach to ensure comprehensive data collection. Participants accessed an online survey platform via link or QR code. Additional outreach efforts were conducted at local in-person events held in Downtown Redding, where a paper survey was also offered. The survey was also shared with local community partners through various channels, including social media platforms. Survey data was collected over a two-month period during July and August of 2023.

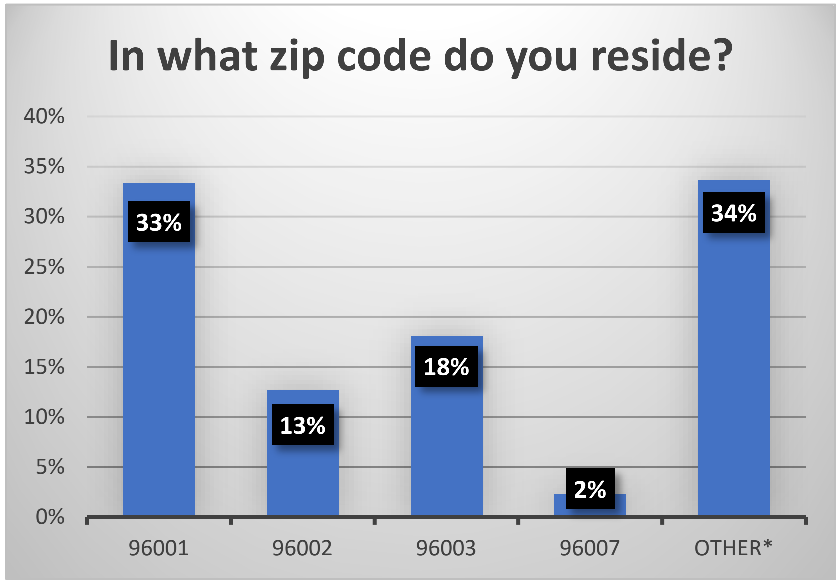
By employing a combination of online tools and in-person engagement, the survey team was able to gather data from a broad group of community members, adding credibility and larger applicability to the survey findings.

## Results:

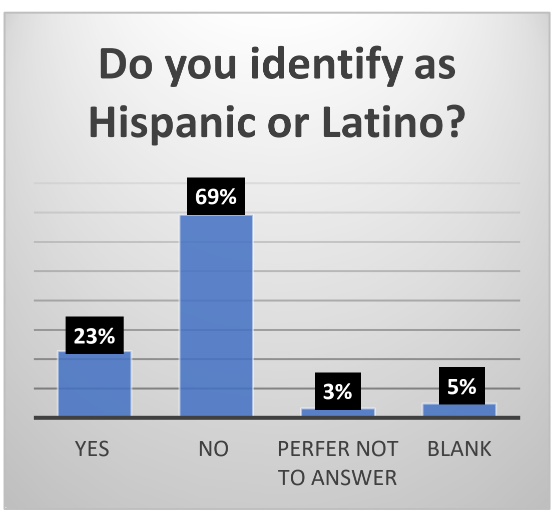
### *Demographics:*

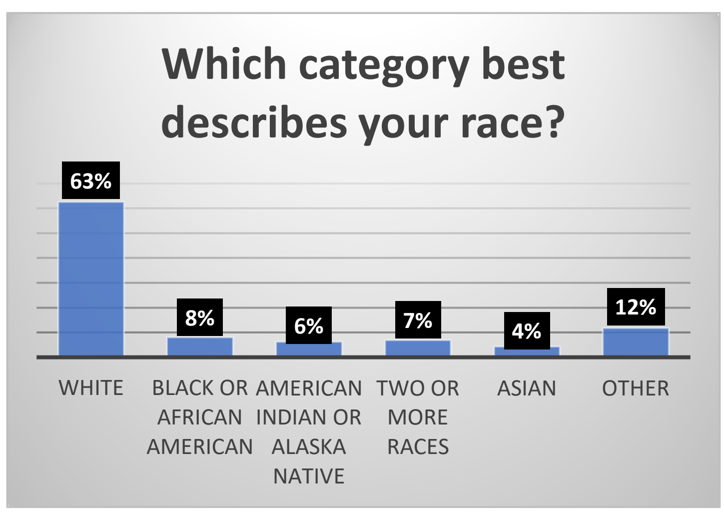
A total of 348 people participated in the survey. 45% identified themselves as residents of Downtown Redding. It is noteworthy that 33% of the participants resided in 96001 followed by 96003, 96002, and 96007. The "Other" category includes zip codes with under five participants.



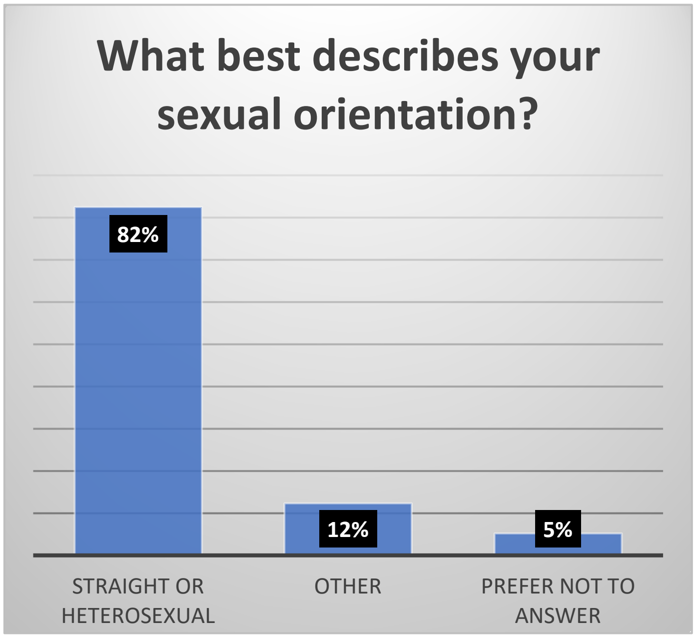



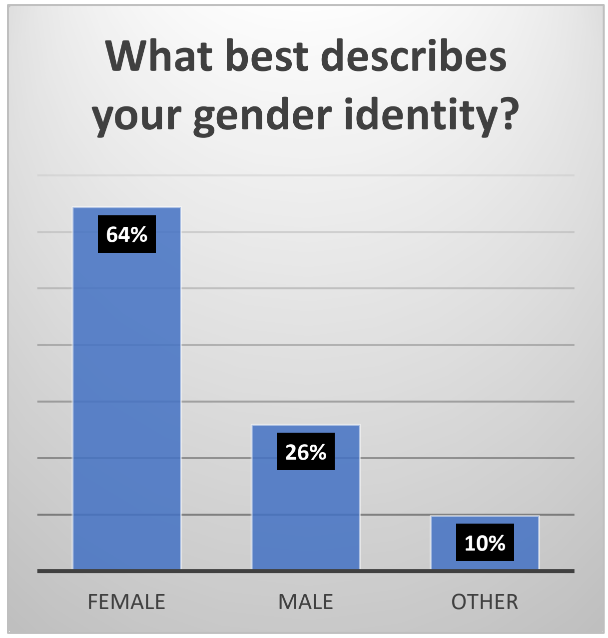

Further analysis of the demographic data demonstrated that the majority, 63%, of the participants identified as White and less than 10% identified as Asian, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, and two or more races, respectively. Notably, 23% identify as Hispanic or Latino. This demographic spread is slightly more diverse than that of the 2023 Census survey findings for Redding, CA as a whole.



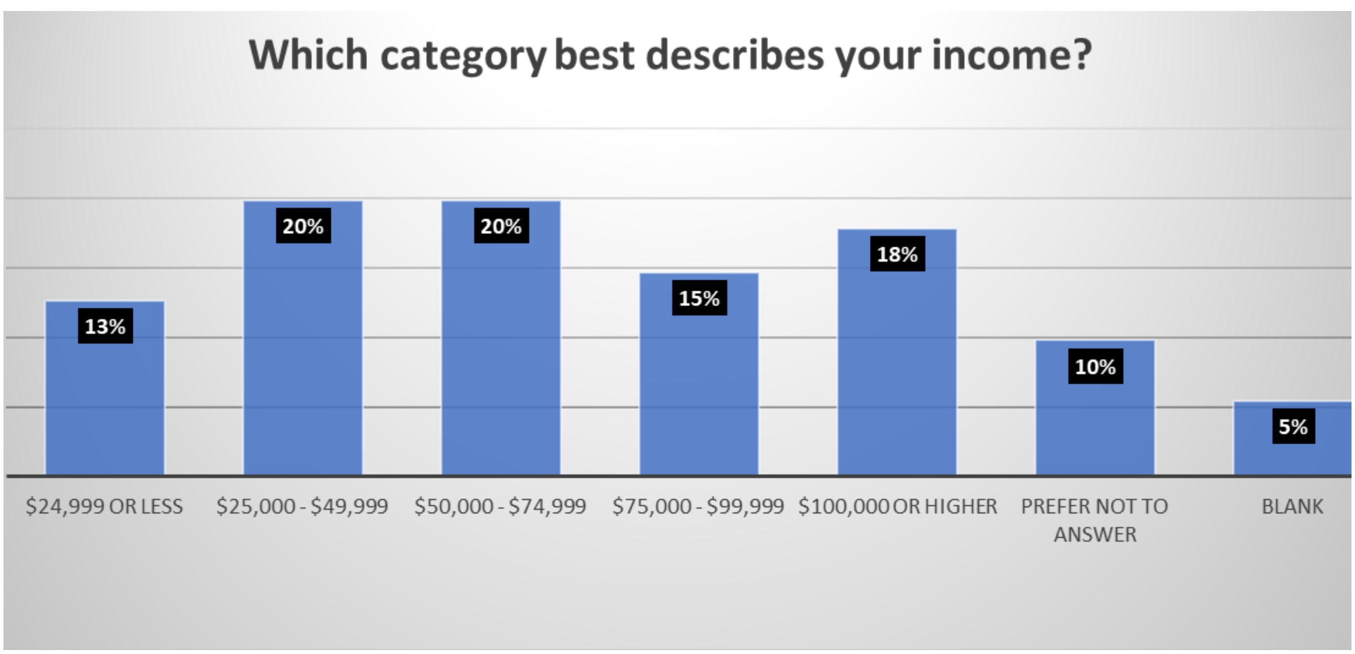



Gender and sexual orientation were also collected as participant demographics. A substantial number of participants identified as female (64%), 26% identified as male and 10% selected “other.” Most participants (82%) identified as straight or heterosexual and 12% identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or asexual (combined as “other”).

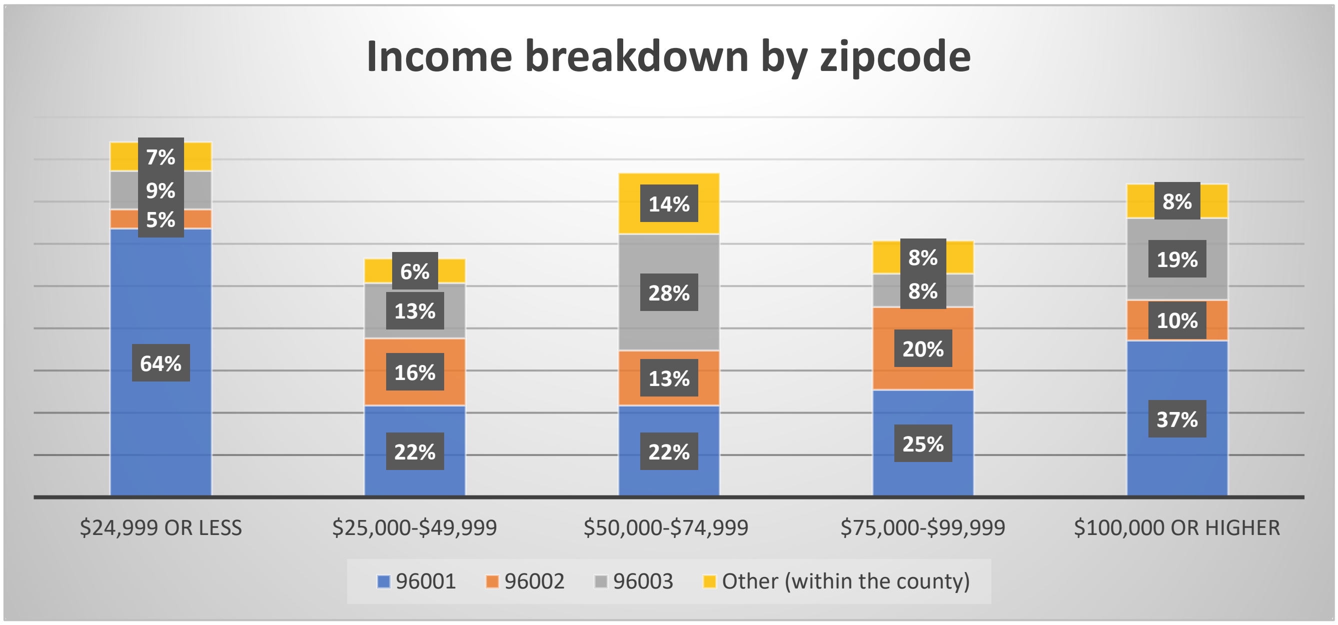



Thirty-three percent (33%) of participants reported an annual income of less than $50,000, while 20% fell within the income range of $50,000-$74,999. Only 18% reported an annual income exceeding $100,000. Income levels play a pivotal role in shaping food choices and dietary habits due to their impact on affordability of nutrient rich foods, nutrition knowledge and awareness, social factors, time constraints, and food preparation.



The next chart further breaks down the income by zip code. This chart was made based on the percentage of total answers for that category. For example, out of everyone who reported earning "$24,000 or less", 64% reported to live in 96001, 5% reported to live in 96002, 9% reported to live in 96003, etc. The total for each category does not add up to 100% because zip code responses outside of Shasta County were excluded from this breakdown.



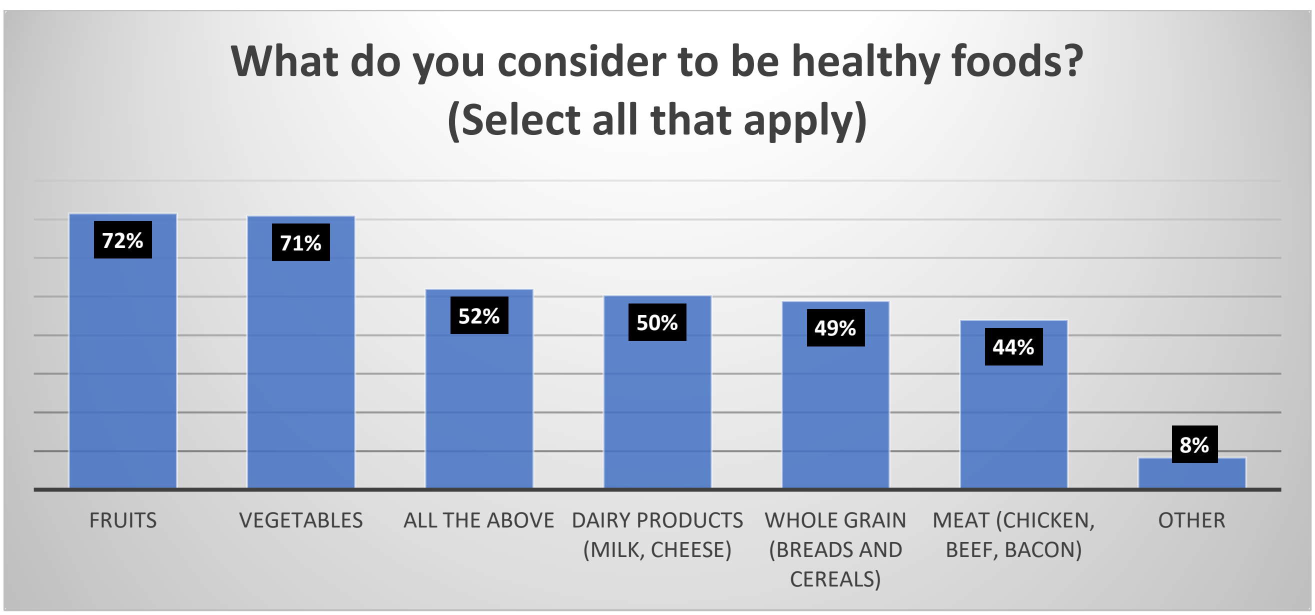
## *Eating Habits/ Choices:*

Among the surveyed participants, a substantial 68% expressed that eating healthy is “Very important” to them. This was followed by participants who identified healthy eating as “important” at 28%, and 4% indicated healthy eating as “somewhat important”. Remarkably, no participants reported that healthy eating was deemed “not important.”

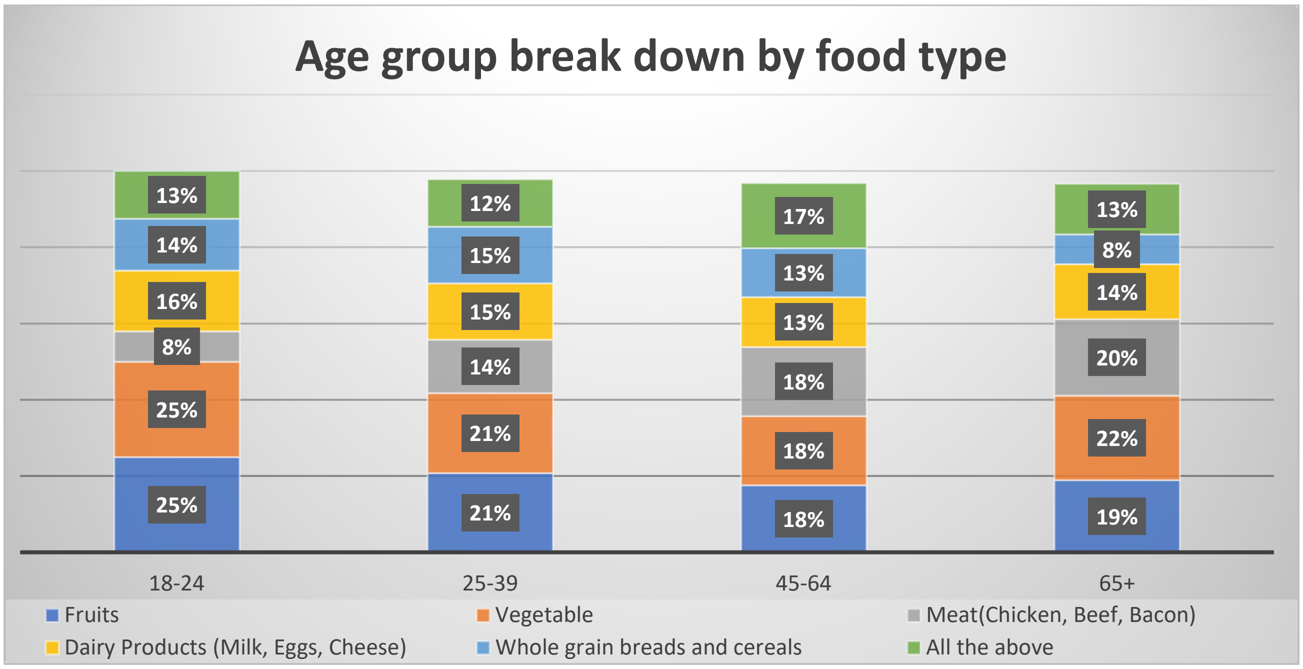
When asked to specify what they considered healthy foods, 72% of participants opted for fruits, closely followed by vegetables at 71%. Furthermore, 50% chose dairy products such as milk, eggs, cheese and 49% opted whole grains such as breads and cereals, while 44% selected meat such as chicken, beef, bacon. Interestingly, 52% of participants selected “all the above” showing an inclination towards all the mentioned foods. The varied responses regarding specific healthy food categories highlight the diversity of perspectives within the community.

Under the “other” section, some of the participants comments are:

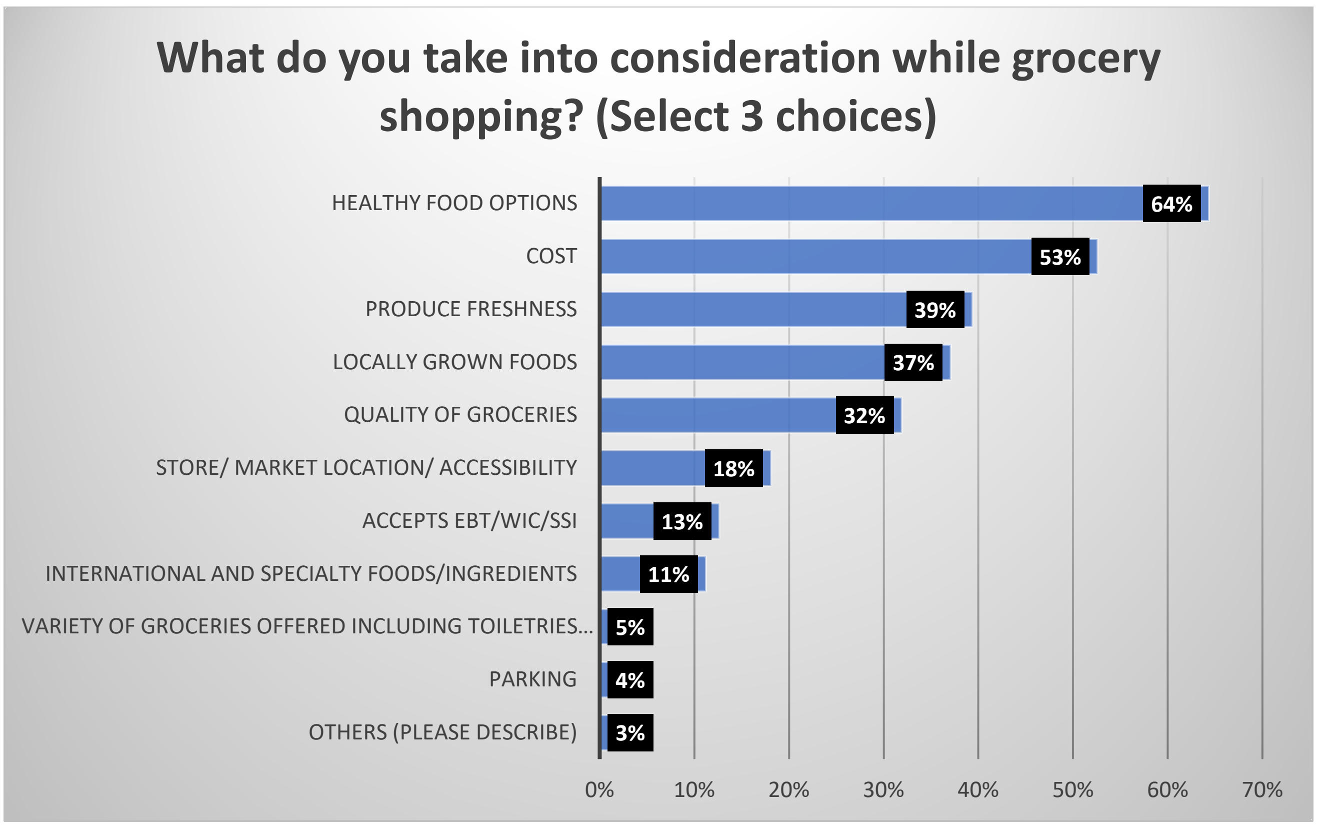
- “All of those things can be healthy when eaten in the proper portions! And depending on exactly what kind”.
- “Chicken, lean beef, fish -no processed meats”.
- “Nuts and seeds, fermented foods, organic only”.
- “Plant-based meats.”



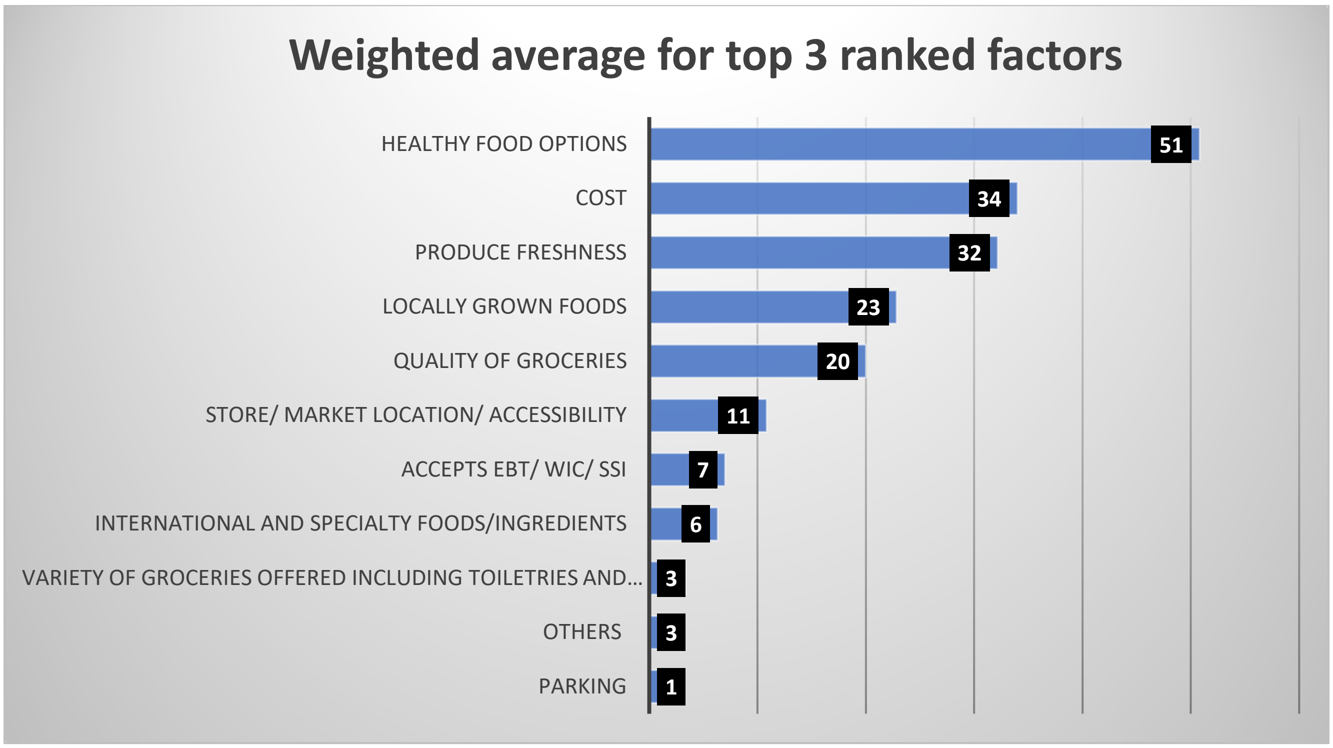
The chart below breaks down the answers with respect to age groups. This chart was made based on the percentage of total answers for that category. For example, out of the respondents aged 18-25 years old, 25% considered fruits to be healthy, 25% considered vegetable to be healthy, 8% considered meat (chicken, beef, bacon) to be healthy, etc. The total for each category does not add up to 100% because “other” were excluded due to small count. Age group 0-17 was also excluded due to small count. Though the changes in percentages are not drastic, meat (chicken, beef, bacon) seems to be considered a healthy food option more often for the 65+ age group. This could potentially demonstrate a small shift in social/cultural norms around the perspective of meat as a healthy food.



Participants were asked to select and rank the factors that influence their grocery shopping decisions. Impressively, 64% of participants prioritized healthy food options as their top consideration, underscoring a collective commitment to making nutritious choices while grocery shopping. This was followed by cost at 53%, another significant factor, indicating a balance between healthy food and budget consideration while shopping. This was followed by produce freshness (39%), locally grown foods (37%), and quality of groceries (32%). Additionally, 18% considered store or market location and accessibility ,and 13% expressed interest in whether the store or market accepts EBT/ WIC/ SSI cards. Other factors considered during grocery shopping, each with less than 10% importance, included parking, the variety of groceries offered and other miscellaneous considerations. Comments under “others” included “vegan options”, “organic food” and “avoid processed food”.

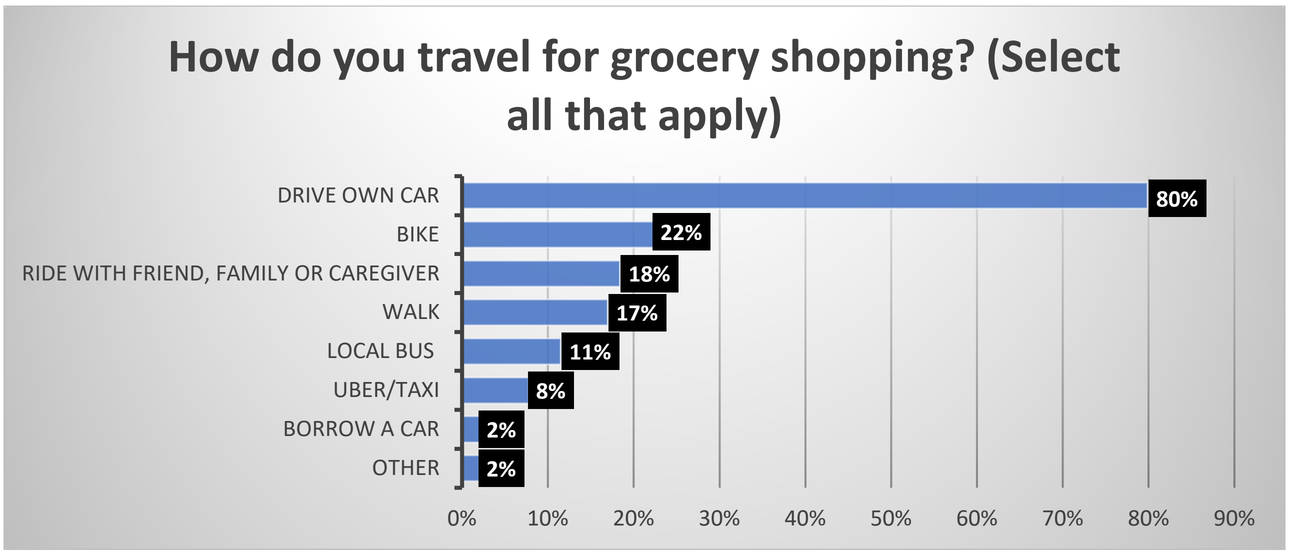


From the factors picked in the question above, participants were asked to rank them as first, second, and third in importance. We calculated the weighted average with 3 points for 1st ranking, 2 points for 2nd ranking, and 1 point for 3rd ranking. Healthy food options (weighted average = 51) were chosen as the top important factor which is in line with the percentage in previous question. It was then followed by cost (34) and produce freshness (32). Weighting the average rank score did not change the order of importance for each factor; however, cost and produce freshness were much more closely valued when participant rankings were factored in.



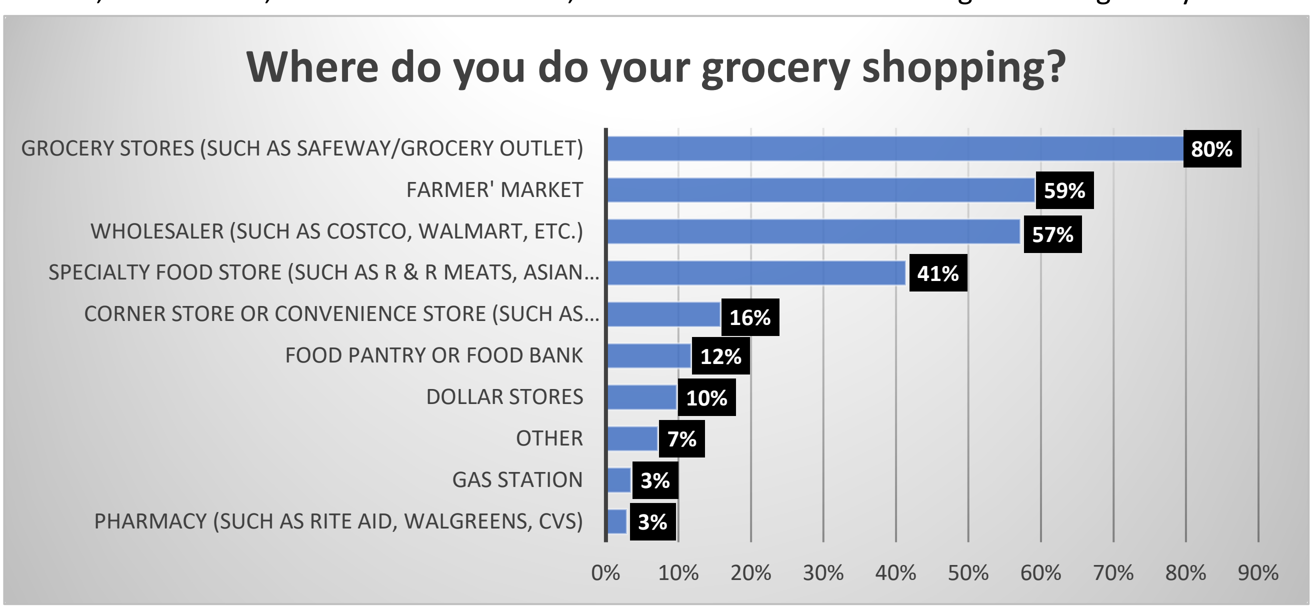
### *Transportation:*

In response to the selected modes of transportation for grocery shopping, the survey revealed a significant majority (80%) travel by car. Following car travel, 22% use bikes, 18% rely on rides with friends, family, or caregivers, 17% walked to the grocery store, and 11% used public transportation such as a local bus. Other preferred transportation methods with less than 10% of the responses included uber/taxi and borrowing a car. The survey results suggest a wide range of transportation preferences. Comments under "others" included "Doordash/Store Delivery", I would walk if there was a store within a half mile from where I lived".



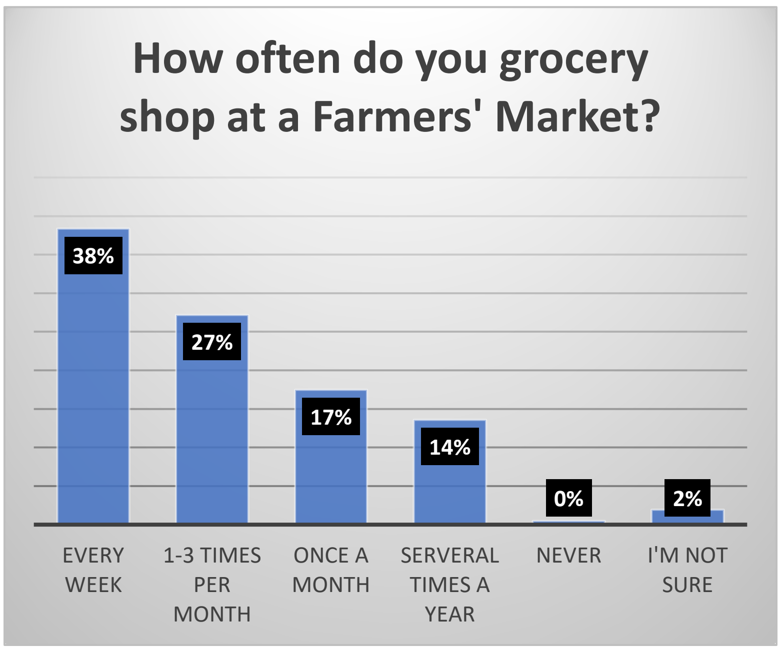

### *Store of choice for grocery shopping:*

Most participants (80%) frequent grocery stores such as Safeway and Grocery Outlet. This was followed by farmers' market at 59%, wholesalers such as Costco or Walmart (57%) and specialty food stores (41%.) Stores mentioned under the "others" section were Trader Joes, Winco, Sprouts, Holiday Market, Local Farms, and Orchard Nutrition, most of which would be categorized as grocery stores.

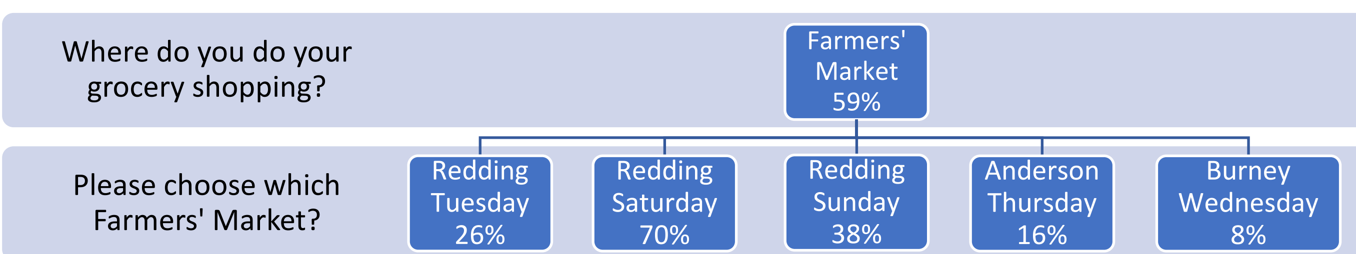


## *Farmers Markets:*

Healthy Shasta's Local Foods Local Places Collaborative has engaged in discussions with residents and other vested parties over the past several years around the creation of a farmers' market in the Downtown Redding core. In 2022, Healthy Shasta assembled a paper on farmers' market best practices throughout the West Coast to help inform local farmers and leaders about the considerations for adding a downtown market. Survey participants in this survey were asked about their farmers' market shopping practices, and 59% reported that they shop at a local farmers' market. Of those that shop the farmers' markets, 70% shop at the Saturday Redding Market, trailed by the Sunday Redding Market (38%), the Tuesday Redding Market (26%), the Thursday Anderson Market (16%), and the Wednesday Burney Market (8%).




- Among the 59% of participants who prefer the Farmers' Market for grocery shopping, the frequency varies, with 38% going every week, 27% 1-3 times per month, 17% once a month, and 14% several times a year.
- Of these 59%, 70% preferred going to Redding Farmers' Market on Saturdays, 38% on Sunday and 26% on Tuesday.

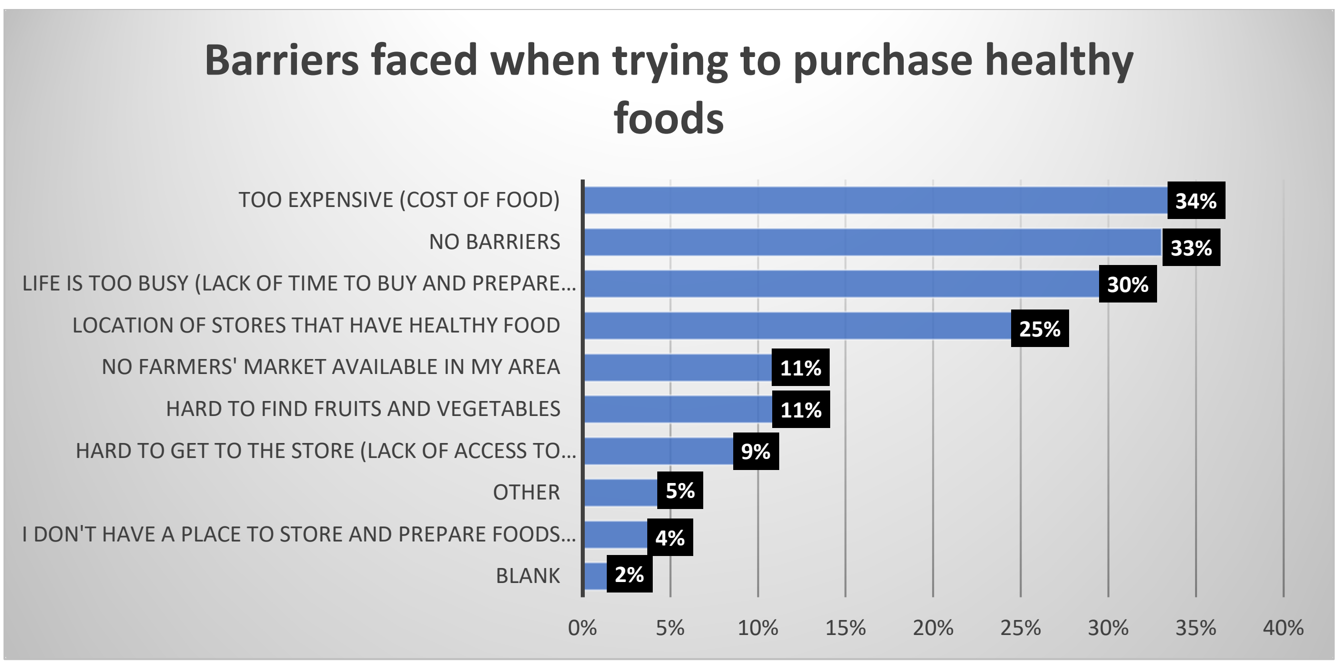


## *Barriers:*

Survey participants reported several challenges to purchasing healthy foods. Notably, 34% identified the cost of healthy food as the primary obstacle, thus underscoring the importance of financial considerations that influence individuals' ability to make nutritious choices. Lack of time for grocery shopping and to prepare food was selected by 30% of participants. Location of stores with healthy food was a barrier for 25% of respondents. Eleven percent (11%) of participants reported needing a farmers' market close by.

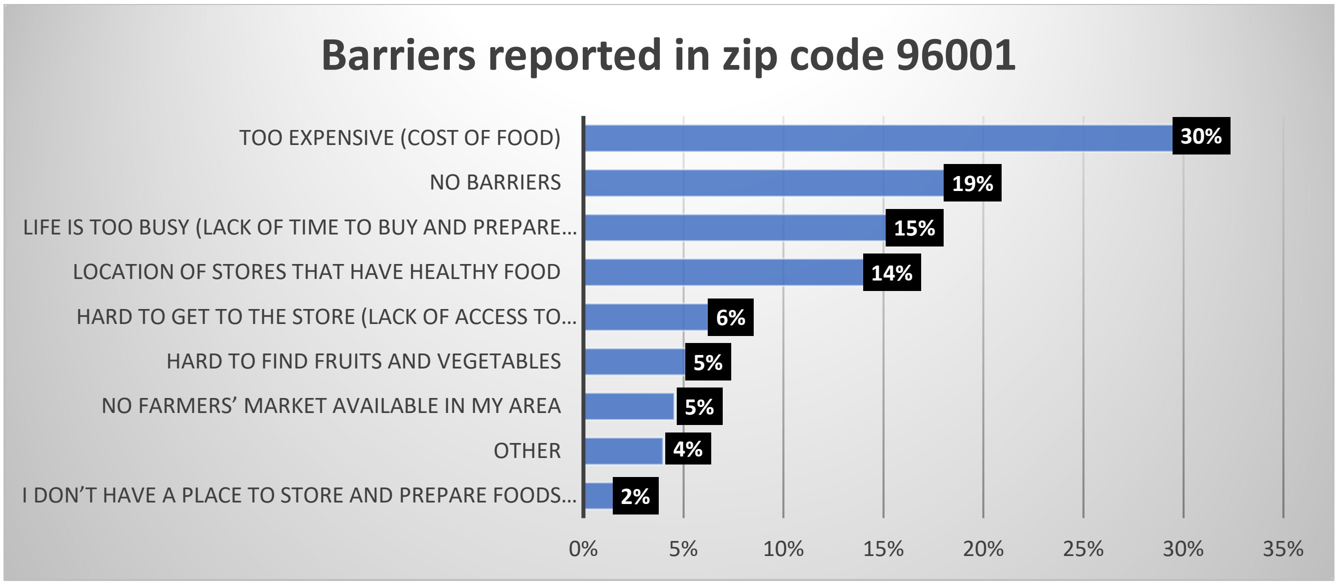
Comments mentioned under the "Others" section are as follows:

- "Current farmers market is too expensive".
- "Farmers Market not convenient. After work or a noon weekday market would be ideal".
- "Lack of free parking in downtown area".
- "Most healthy foods are not 'ready to cook', meaning you have to take time to prepare the meal".
- "No downtown grocery store".



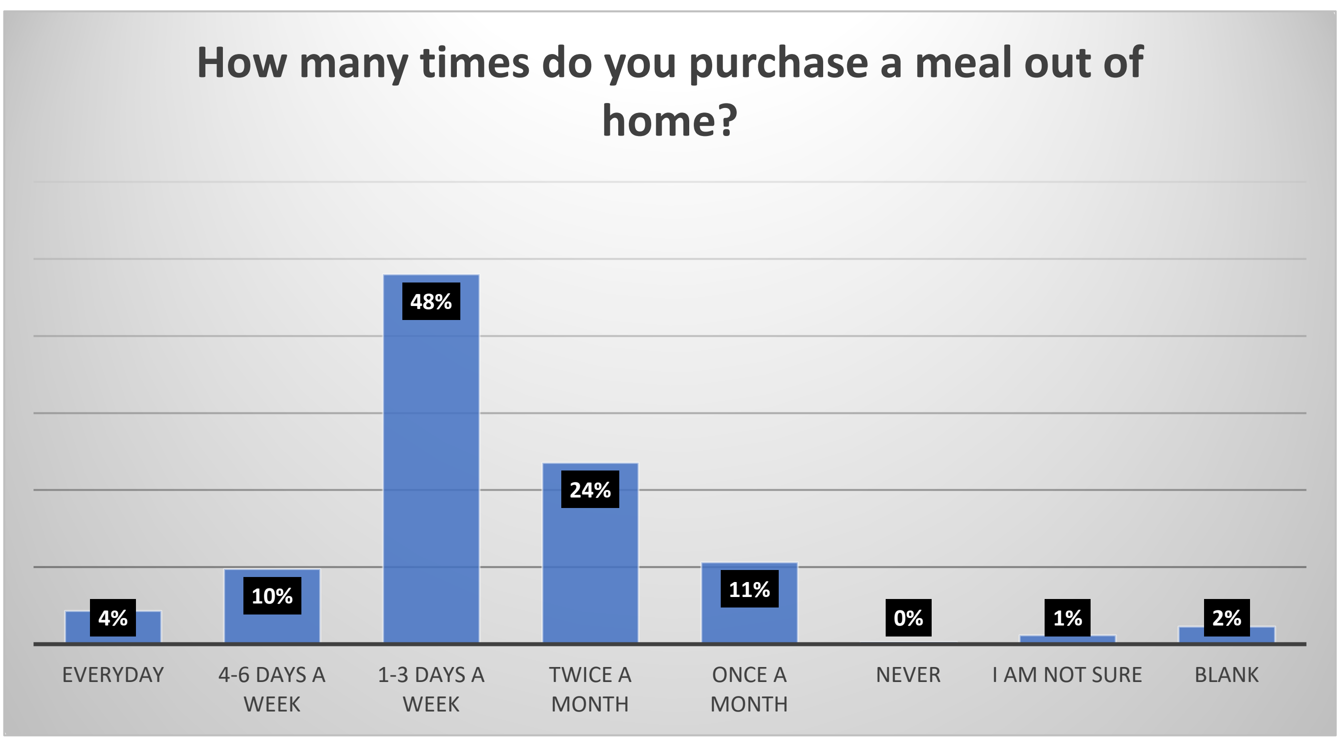

## *96001 Barriers:*

Cost remained the highest barrier after isolating the data analysis to participants in only the 96001 zip code. One interesting difference with the 96001 data was that a lower percentage of participants selected "no barriers" to accessing healthy food. Residents in the 96001 zip code reported lower incomes, which aligns with cost being the primary barrier to healthy food access for this community (see graph on next page.)




## *Dining Out:*

When asked about the frequency of purchasing meals outside the home, 48% of participants indicated doing so 1-3 times per week. This was followed by 24% of participants who reported dining out twice a month. 10% of respondents reported dining out 4-6 days per week and 4% dine out every day. All respondents reported dining out at least once per month.



*Additional Comments:*

- “A downtown farmers market in evening would be great!!”
- “A farmer's market in downtown Redding would be a dream! Or a corner store that has healthy options”.
- “A farm to fresh restaurant/grocery store would be great”.
- “A grocery store within walking distance to market center would be a dream”.
- “Affordable healthy options for purchase(s) are needed such as a "meal deals " for $5”.
- “Farmer's market meal kits would be a cool/convenient idea to explore”.
- “I will not pay for parking to get groceries. If added downtown without free parking I would choose to still shop at a grocery store with free parking”.
- “I would not attend a farmers market in downtown due to parking access”.

## Conclusion:

- **Preference for Healthy Eating:** Survey responses indicated a preference for healthy eating, where the majority consider fruits and vegetables as healthy options. Additionally, healthy foods and produce freshness are taken into consideration while grocery shopping.
- **Diverse Dietary Preference:** Participants reported a wide range of dietary preferences with fruits, vegetables, dairy products, meats, and whole grains all identified as components of a healthy diet.
- **Consideration of Factors while Grocery Shopping:** While the majority chose healthy food options as their preference, it was closely followed by cost. This emphasized the importance of both health and economic factors.
- **Transportation:** 22% of participants report riding a bicycle to the store, while 80% report driving their own car, which indicates a need for bike and auto parking at stores.
- **Variety in Grocery Shopping Destination:** Participants reported a variety of retail preferences with traditional grocery stores, farmers’ markets, and specialty stores all being popular.

## Recommendations:

- **Nutrition Education Programs:** Implement targeted nutrition education programs to help promote awareness of healthy food choices and address diverse dietary preferences.
- **Community-Specific Interventions:** Tailor interventions based on unique preferences and priorities in the community, considering factors such as cost, accessibility, and local sources.
- **Collaboration with Local Farmers’ Markets:** Foster partnerships with local farmers’ markets to support and promote their accessibility, potentially through community events, incentives, or outreach programs.
- **Downtown Grocery Stores and Parking:** Participant comments and responses related to accessibility, affordability, and transportation warrant consideration of free/validated parking options for future retail grocery developments in Downtown Redding.