

Have You Heard?

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SURVEY FINDS SHOPPERS PINCHING PENNIES AND FAT
What are American consumers thinking as they peruse the super-

market aisles? Grocery store managers want to know, and so do most food companies and health experts.

The Food Marketing Institute (FMI) for almost two decades has conducted an annual consumer survey which has provided many answers. The survey of about 1,000 men and women probes the attitudes and concerns of American food shoppers.

For store managers, a consumer's decision on where to shop is a key issue. High-quality produce and a wide selection of products have been the top two reasons consumers choose a particular store for some time. However, good/low prices climbed in ranking this year to tie with "high-quality meat for third place among leading factors in supermarket selection.

In the 1990 survey, whose findings were announced earlier this summer, 79% of consumers said they were completely or mostly confident in the safety of foods available in their supermarkets, just two points below the 1989 level. Yet during the past year, consumer confidence dropped to as low as 65% following scares

over alar and apples and Chilean grapes.

Much of the panic may have subsided, but pesticide residues in particular are still on shoppers' minds. Eighty percent say pesticides are a serious hazard. When asked to name the greatest threat to food safety, about one in five volunteered pesticide residues. However, the largest share (29%) identified "spoilage and germs" as the top food safety concern.

In general, 91 percent of consumers rated food safety as at least somewhat important as a factor in shopping for food.

FAT IS TOP DIET CONCERN

The fat content in foods has emerged as the biggest nutrition concern for consumers, topping

cholesterol and salt, jumping 17 percentage points over last year. 46 percent said fat is their top nutrition worry.

Overall, 65 percent said their diets could be at least somewhat healthier. However, women are more likely than men to pay a great deal of attention to the nutritional content of the foods they eat.

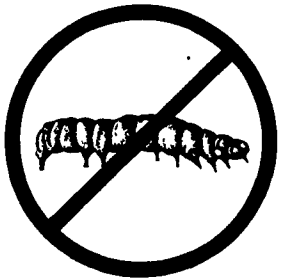
A recent Gallup survey, commissioned by the American Dietetic Association, found that women tend to be more interested and knowledgeable about diet and health. But despite this, women tend to feel guiltier about eating the foods they like, worry more about gaining weight and needlessly eliminate rather than moderate their consumption of certain foods.

Yogurt sales continue on a strong upward trend. The most recent figures show that yogurt

sales jumped 10 percent over the previous year. It's estimated that each person consumes 4.6 pounds of yogurt a year.

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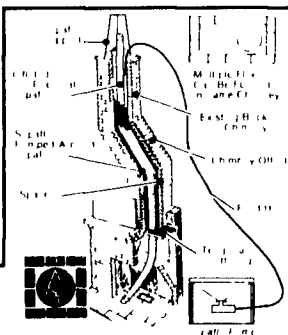
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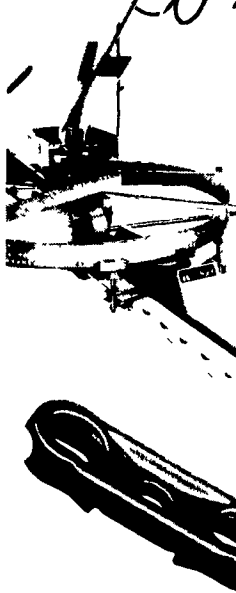
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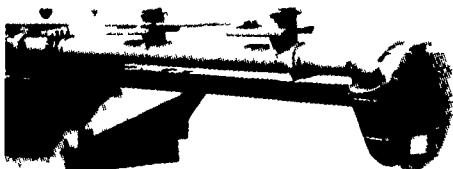
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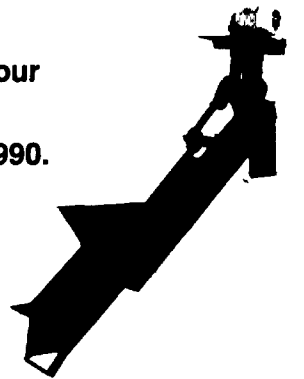
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