

Canadian Breakfast Habits Revealed: Majority Still Start Their Day with a Meal, Survey Finds

HALIFAX, April 17, 2024 — Breakfast is often referred to as the most important meal of the day, especially for children. **Ottawa's recent announcement to establish a national school food program** highlights the importance of ensuring our children have a nutritious start to their day, ready to learn and contribute to society. However, priorities change in adulthood, leading Canadians to adopt different habits when it comes to managing meals, particularly breakfast.

In partnership with **Caddle**, we surveyed 9,165 Canadians in March 2024 about their breakfast habits, including whether they eat breakfast, why they may skip it, their preferred choices, and where they eat their first meal of the day.

Majority of Canadians Still Eat Breakfast Daily

A total of 57.2% of Canadians eat breakfast every day. While 12.8% eat breakfast 5 or 6 times a week, 12.9% eat breakfast 1 to 3 times a week. Only 5.8% never eat breakfast. Among generational groups, **Gen Z** (born between 1997-2005) has the highest rate of breakfast skippers at 9.0% and the lowest rate of daily breakfast consumption at 48.8%. The **Greatest Generation** (1900-1945) has the highest rate of daily breakfast consumption at 74.8%, while **Boomers** (1946-1966) have the lowest rate of breakfast skippers at 4.1%.

<i>Generations</i>	<i>Eating Breakfast Daily</i>	<i>Never Eats Breakfast</i>
<i>Gen Z (1997-2005)</i>	48.8%	9.0%
<i>Millennials (1981-1996)</i>	54.6%	6.1%
<i>Gen X (1965-1980)</i>	55.1%	5.2%
<i>Boomers (1946-1964)</i>	66.6%	4.1%
<i>Greatest Gen (1900-1945)</i>	74.8%	7.8%

In terms of provinces, the **Atlantic Region is the kingdom of breakfasts**, with the highest daily breakfast eating rates. **British Columbia** has the highest rate of breakfast skippers in the country, while **Prince Edward Island** has the lowest.

<i>Provinces</i>	<i>Eating Breakfast Daily</i>	<i>Never Eats Breakfast</i>
<i>Newfoundland and Labrador</i>	69.4%	3.2%
<i>Prince Edward Island</i>	66.9%	1.3%
<i>New Brunswick</i>	64.8%	4.8%
<i>Nova Scotia</i>	62.2%	1.4%
<i>Quebec</i>	60.4%	5.1%
<i>Saskatchewan</i>	59.7%	2.6%
<i>Manitoba</i>	58.8%	3.5%
<i>Ontario</i>	57.2%	6.0%
<i>Alberta</i>	53.1%	5.6%
<i>British Columbia</i>	52.5%	9.0%

Reasons for Skipping Breakfast

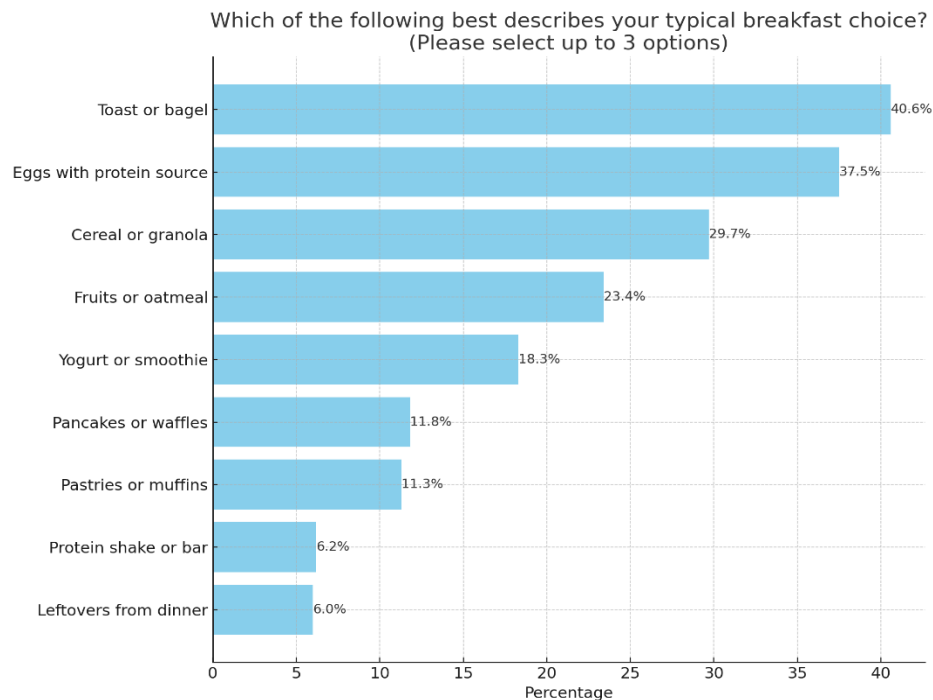
A total of 37.1% of Canadians say they don't eat breakfast because they **are not hungry** in the morning. While 20.3% say they **don't have enough time**, 19.0% prefer to eat a meal later in the day. A total of 8.0% skip breakfast because they are **fasting or trying to lose weight**.

Gender Differences

Differences between men and women **are not significant**. While 4.7% of women never eat breakfast, 6.3% of men skip breakfast every day. A total of 58.7% of women eat breakfast every day, compared to 56.7% of men.

Where People Eat Breakfast

Most Canadians eat **breakfast at home**, with 80.3% doing so regularly. A total of 11.3% eat breakfast at work, 2.3% regularly eat breakfast at a restaurant, and only 1.7% eat breakfast in transit, in a car, or on public transportation.



What Canadians Eat for Breakfast

Respondents were allowed to pick three choices as preferred options for breakfast. The top choice in Canada for breakfast is **toast and bagels** at 40.6%. Second on the list are **eggs** and a protein side like bacon, ham, or sausages at 37.5%. **Cereal and granola** come third at 29.7%. **Fruits and oatmeal** come fourth at 23.4%, followed by **yogurt and smoothie** at 18.3%, followed by **pancakes and waffles** at 11.8%, **pastries and muffins** at 11.3%, **protein shakes** or bars at

6.2%, and **leftovers from dinner** at 6.0%. All generations prefer toast and bagels except for the **Greatest Generation**, which prefers cereals and granola.

Coffee is King

Coffee remains the beverage of choice for breakfast, with 52.6% preferring **coffee** with breakfast. **Water** is second at 13.2%, followed by **tea** at 11.4%, **juice** at 9.2%, and milk at 8.7%. Even though coffee is the preferred beverage for all generations, **Baby Boomers** and the **Greatest Generation** are at least twice as likely to prefer having coffee with breakfast than **Gen Zs**.

<i>Generations</i>	<i>Coffee as preferred beverage for breakfast</i>
<i>Gen Z (1997-2005)</i>	30.4%
<i>Millennials (1981-1996)</i>	46.9%
<i>Gen X (1965-1980)</i>	55.4%
<i>Boomers (1946-1964)</i>	66.2%
<i>Greatest Gen (1900-1945)</i>	81.2%

Quotes

Dr. Sylvain Charlebois, Director of the Agri-Food Analytics Lab at Dalhousie University, commented, "*Our survey sheds light on the evolving breakfast habits of Canadians. It's fascinating to see how generational differences and regional variations play a role in how people start their day. This data is crucial for understanding consumer behavior and can significantly impact the food industry and policy development.*"

Janet Music, Research Coordinator at the Agri-Food Analytics Lab, stated, "*The survey results provide a comprehensive overview of Canada's breakfast landscape, highlighting the importance of convenience and personal preferences in meal choices. Understanding these trends is essential for tailoring products and services to meet the needs of different demographics and lifestyles.*"

For more information and access to the full report, please visit <https://www.dal.ca/sites/agri-food.html>.

About the Agri-Food Analytics Lab

The Agri-Food Analytics Lab at Dalhousie University is a research unit dedicated to providing valuable insights into the food and agriculture sectors. Their interdisciplinary team of experts researches various aspects of the food supply chain, offering data-driven solutions to inform industry stakeholders and policymakers.

Methodology: The survey conducted in March 2024 and a total of 9,165 respondents. This number is both the weighted and unweighted total, indicating that each respondent was counted once in the analysis, and any adjustments made to ensure representativeness did not change the total count of respondents. The margin of error for the survey, assuming a 95% confidence level, is approximately 1.71%. This means that the results of the survey are expected to be within ± 0.63 percentage points of what would have been obtained if the entire population had been surveyed, 95 times out of 100.

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Disclosure: Funding for the survey was provided by Dalhousie University and Caddle.