

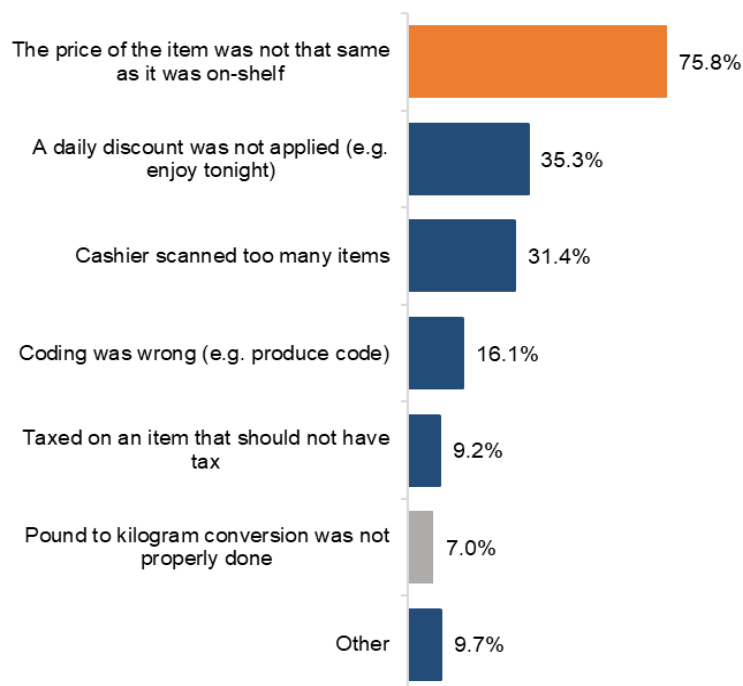


More than two-thirds of Canadians have seen a mistake on their grocery receipts in the last year, new poll suggests

HALIFAX, NS. (March 21, 2023) – Customer service at the grocery store is a crucial aspect of the sector. Customer service encompasses all interactions between customers and grocery store staff, including assistance with product selection, resolving customer complaints, and providing a positive shopping experience. Moreover, when dealing with customer complaints, it is essential to resolve them promptly and effectively. With higher food prices these days, consumers are expecting an error-free experience at the grocery store. In this report, we look at how customer service in the grocery industry is perceived, and how complaints, in particular, grocery receipt errors, were dealt with by grocers over the past year.

Working with Caddle, we conducted a cross-national survey in early March, 2023, which included 5,525 respondents. The survey covered the last 12 months, and examined reports of receipt mistakes at the grocery store, damaged food products which were unnoticed at the time of purchase, and recalled food. The survey also looked at how consumers dealt with the issue and how they felt grocery stores responded.

What was the nature of the mistake? (Please select all that apply)





Mistakes on receipts

First, a total of 67 percent of consumers have seen a mistake on their receipt at least once in the last year. This is more than expected. The most common mistake was that the price at the till was not the same price displayed on the shelf. While 78.5 percent of respondents said the wrong price was showing at the cash register, 35.3 percent of respondents said a daily discount was not applied. A total of 31.4 percent of respondents claimed that the cashier accidentally scanned an item too many times.

Frequency of mistakes

A total of 67.0 percent of respondents said they check their receipts for mistakes at the store on their way out, after paying and before getting home. The rest do this at home. Not all Canadians have the habit of checking receipts for mistakes. While a total of 49.5 percent of respondents will always check their receipts for mistakes, 3.3 percent will never check their receipts. As for frequency of mistakes, 79.2 percent of respondents claim that they find at least no mistakes on their receipts, 10 percent of the time. A total of 15.2 percent will find at least one mistake on their receipt, 25 percent of the time.

Provinces	Percentage of respondents who have noticed mistakes on receipts in the last 12 months
New Brunswick	61%
Manitoba	61%
Prince Edward Island	63%
British Columbia	65%
Ontario	66%
Alberta	69%
Quebec	69%
Nova Scotia	74%
Saskatchewan	77%
Newfoundland and Labrador	84%



Reaction to mistakes

Most Canadians will report errors to their grocers. A total of 84.0 percent of consumers have complained after noticing a mistake on their receipt. Of those who did not complain, 39.4 percent felt it was not worth the money. A total of 31.1 percent felt they did not have the time. As for how satisfied they were with grocers' treatment of complaints, most respondents have been satisfied.

Damaged products

Many Canadians have purchased a product which was damaged without noticing this at the grocery store. A total of 64.2 percent of Canadians have purchased a damaged product and noticed it when they got home. Of those respondents, a total of 50.4 percent returned the product with their receipt. While 33.2 percent threw out the product, 10.7 percent consumed the product regardless.

Recalled products

Recalls of food products happen all the time, and for a variety of reasons. A total of 70.0 percent of respondents have purchased at least one recalled product in the past. Of that group, while 57.0 percent were able to return their products with a receipt, a total of 40.1% were able to return their product without a receipt. In 2.9 percent of cases, the grocer refused to take the product back.

Satisfaction

A total of 87.1 percent were either satisfied or very satisfied with how grocers treated their complaint or error on receipts. This is a very satisfactory level in terms of savings to the consumer. A total of 20.6 percent of Canadians believed to have saved at least \$50 a year when reporting mistakes to their grocer.¹

More generally, a total of 73.9 percent of respondents have visited a grocery store's customer service desk for a complaint or problem. Of that group, 81.7 percent felt it was either a good or a great experience dealing with customer service.

¹ Many years ago, the Retail Council of Canada along with the Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers instituted a national scanner price voluntary code. Consumers are entitled to a discount of up to \$10 for each scanning error at participating food retailers, including Walmart, Sobeys, Loblaws, Costco, and Metro. In the province of Quebec, it's the law. Grocers must give the discount. But elsewhere in the country, retailers should comply with the code and give you a discount, and retailers are obligated to display a description of your rights as a shopper at check out areas.



Provinces	Are you typically <u>VERY</u> satisfied with how your question / complaint is handled by the grocery store?
Newfoundland and Labrador	46.0%
Quebec	40.4%
Alberta	39.1%
New Brunswick	33.0%
Prince Edward Island	32.2%
Manitoba	31.9%
Ontario	31.9%
British Columbia	31.8%
Saskatchewan	30.4%
Nova Scotia	25.8%

Information on receipts

Many receipts will mention to consumers that they can participate in a survey. A total of 74.0 percent of respondents have noticed consumer surveys on receipts. Of that group, 24.7 percent will either always fill out surveys, or will often do so. A total of 45.1 percent will rarely or never fill out surveys.

Many have also noticed that their receipt mentions the amount saved while shopping at that grocer's store. While 82.2 percent of respondents noticed a total of savings on their receipt, 57.7 percent of that group believe the amount to accurately reflect what they saved that day while grocery shopping.

"This report provides us with an interesting glimpse of how consumers and grocers react to issues and problems, while food prices are increasing at record levels," said Dr. Sylvain Charlebois, Director of the Agri-Food Analytics Lab at Dalhousie University. "Despite concerns about food prices, it is clear most Canadians are pleased with how complaints and problems are addressed by grocers. Consumers need all the help they can get," Charlebois added.

End of report.

AGRI-FOOD ANALYTICS LAB/LABORATOIRE DE SCIENCES ANALYTIQUES EN AGROALIMENTAIRE

<https://www.dal.ca/sites/agri-food.html>



Download the preliminary results of the survey in English and French at <https://www.dal.ca/sites/agrifood.html>.

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Methodology for survey: Caddle is one of the most credible active panels in the Canadian market. A representative survey of Canadians was conducted in March 2023. A total of 5,525 Canadians participated in this survey. Margin of Error: +/- 1.2%, 19 times out of 20. Any discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

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