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# Industry Insights

A roundup of noteworthy foodservice findings  
for the week of Oct. 18, 2021



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# BBQ Holdings Goes on Acquisition Spree

BBQ Holdings Inc., the multibrand parent company behind Famous Dave's, continued its ongoing run of acquisitions with the recent purchase of Fresh Acquisitions, which owns the five-unit Tahoe Joe's steakhouse chain, as well as the intellectual property for several defunct buffet chains, including Old Country Buffet, HomeTown Buffet and Ryan's.

BBQ Holdings views the acquisition of Tahoe Joe's as a co-branding opportunity with its core brand Famous Dave's, potentially combining the respective menus by adding certain items. They currently have similar agreements in place with Texas T-Bone

Steakhouse and Italian eatery, Johnny Carino's.

Earlier this year, BBQ Holdings acquired Bakers Square and Village Inn for \$13.5 million. In 2020, they purchased Granite City Food & Brewery and Real Urban BBQ.

## BBQ HOLDINGS INC. RECENT CHAIN ACQUISITIONS

Chain Name	Menu Type	Deal Announced
Tahoe Joe's Famous Steakhouse	Steak	October 2021
Furr's Fresh Buffet	Family Casual	October 2021
Old Country Buffet	Family Casual	October 2021
HomeTown Buffet	Family Casual	October 2021
Ryan's	Family Casual	October 2021
Bakers Square	Family Style	June 2021
Village Inn	Family Style	June 2021
Granite City Food & Brewery	Varied Menu	March 2020
Real Urban BBQ	Barbecue	February 2020

# Evolution of Protein Among Supply Disruptions

Supply chains across the country have been hit with massive disruptions this year, causing some stores to have barer shelves than usual and pricier items as a result. The costs of meat, poultry, eggs and fish have gone up almost 6% from July 2020 to July 2021, according to [the Department of Labor](#),\* causing operators to shift toward more economical and varied protein options.

Here are some interesting takeaways from the list of fastest-growing proteins year over year.

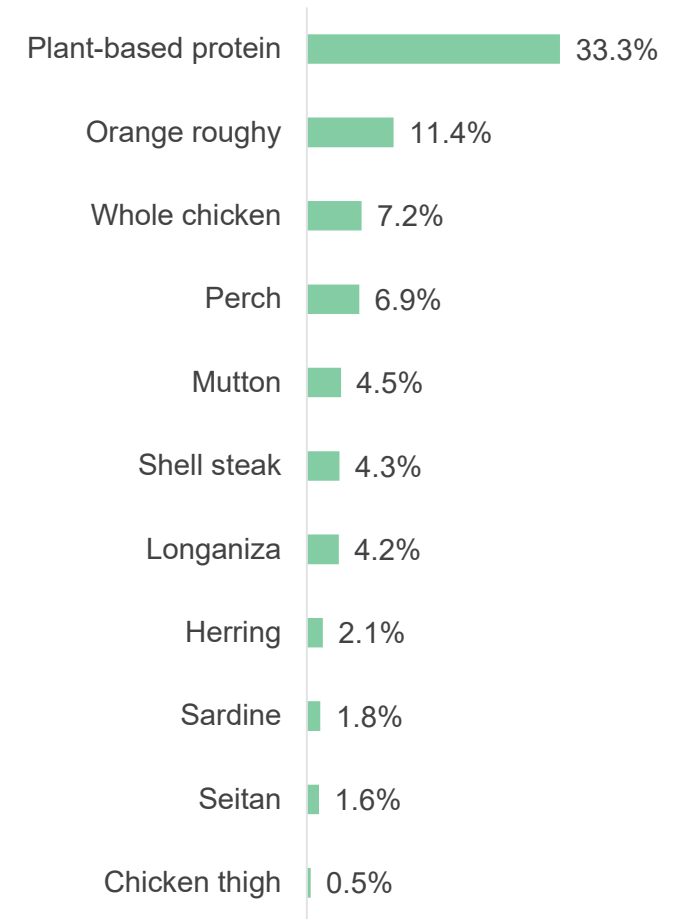
As the costs of meat and poultry grow, a number of operators are turning to plant-based proteins, whose mentions are up 33% year over year, including seitan (+2%).

Whole chicken mentions grew 7% on menus, appealing to economically minded consumers who prefer to pay one bundled price for a family feast that can provide several cuts of poultry in one and save them days of cooking.

Given skyrocketing prices and supply shortages on chicken wings, chicken thighs (+1%) became a convenient and more affordable alternative.

Operators are turning to preserved fish and seafood amid supply chain issues, including sardines (+2%), an omega-rich small fish preserved in oil, and herring (+2%), an often-pickled fish, both of which are known for their longer shelf lives.

## FASTEST-GROWING PROTEINS



Source: Technomic Ignite Menu, Q2 2020-Q2 2021

# Price Sensitivity for Starters and Sides Amid Inflation

On average across all segments, consumer price thresholds for appetizers, small plates and sides have increased about \$1.95 since 2019. Nevertheless, fair prices are still key for purchases. Inflation pressures add to operators' costs, and many have passed these increases along to guests, who are currently willing to absorb higher prices.

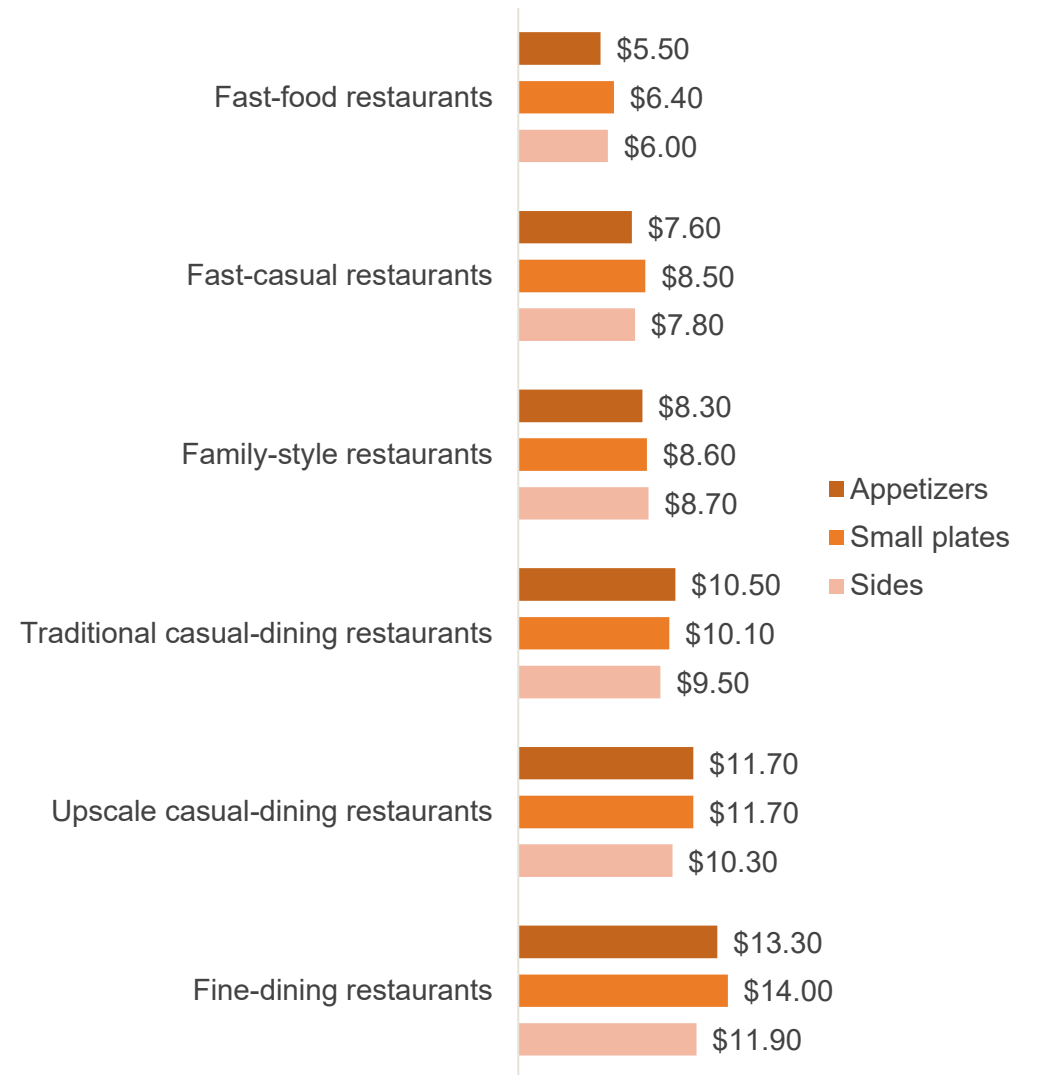
However, restaurant guests have noticed these rising prices, impacting ordering behavior for most. Menu inflation is more likely to reduce basket or affect menu mix and order frequency than to erode brand loyalty.

With rising prices, it will be critical for operators to update value propositions. While complimentary appetizers perennially carry potential to draw in traffic, they also risk cannibalizing sales.

Although consumers are aware that costs in general are rising, transparency about the impact of inflation on the restaurant and refined messages that underscore the value consumers receive through quality or uniqueness of these items can help consumers to justify that increased expense—and make the additional purchase with their order.

Base: 1,500 consumers total; Varies based on those who visit each segment  
 Source: Technomic Ignite Consumer featuring the 2021 Starters, Small Plates and Sides Consumer Trend Report

WHAT IS THE MOST YOU ARE WILLING TO PAY FOR \_\_\_\_ AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS? (MEANS)



# Top Burger Toppings Around the World

Proteins, buns, cheeses and sauces all help define the burger as the global menu icon that it is.

But nothing adds more creativity and diversity of flavors to this universally appealing handheld than toppings—a key element of any good burger.

As part of Technomic's new *Global Burger Category Report*, we polled consumers across 25 countries on their topping preferences. Here's what they told us:

- 67% of consumers like a burger with tomato, making it the top

topping

- 65% like lettuce on their burger for a close second place on the list
- Onions and bacon are the next most liked, at 61% and 57%, respectively
- French fries—somewhat surprisingly—round out the top five at 49%
- 75% of consumers in both Chile and Mexico like a burger with avocado, more than double the global average of 34%

- 48% of consumers in Thailand and 42% in Australia say they like some pineapple on their burger
- 43% of consumers in China like a burger topped with shrimp

Technomic's new Global Menu Category Report series offers 360-degree views, international insights, operator trends and expert analysis on key global categories such as burger, pizza, chicken and beverage.

[Learn more here.](#)



Base: 4,658 global consumers who order burgers

Q: What types of toppings would you consider ordering for your burger at a restaurant or other dining location? Select all that apply

Source: Technomic Global Foodservice Navigator Program

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