



**Technomic**<sup>®</sup>

# Industry Insights

A roundup of noteworthy foodservice findings  
for the week of April 5, 2021

# Store Brands & Digital Orders Boost Kroger Co.

Capping off a strong year of results driven by pandemic-fueled grocery demand, Kroger notched same-store sales growth of 10.6% during the quarter ending Jan. 30.

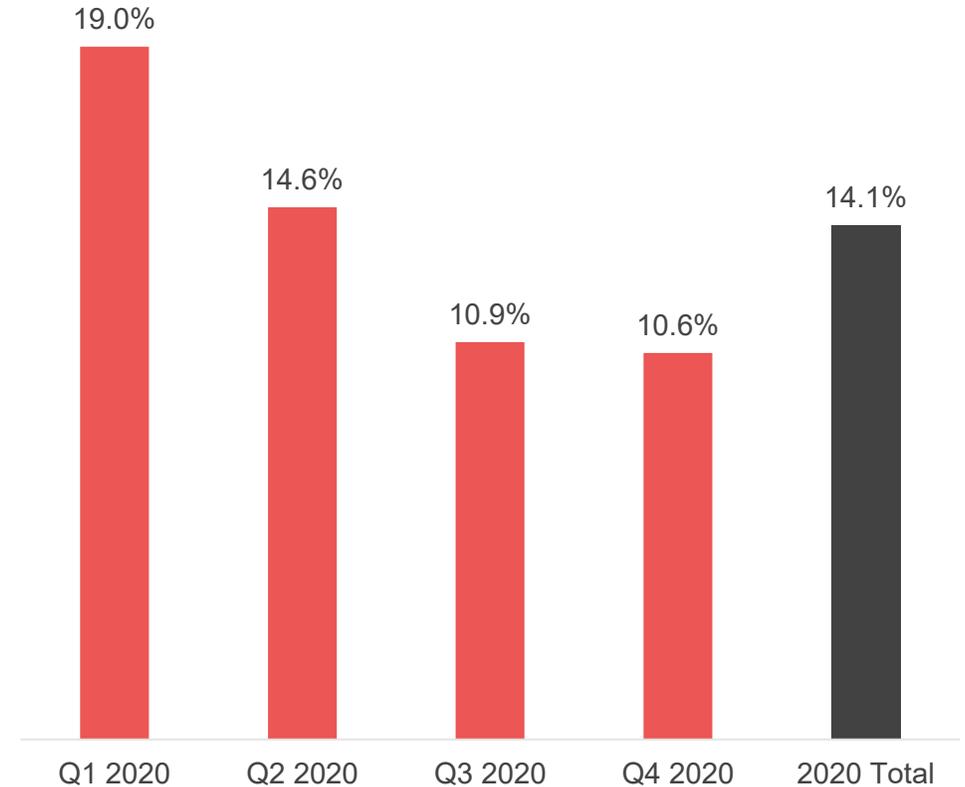
Full-year same-store sales for Kroger hit 14.1% as the company achieved double-digit increases during each quarter of 2020.

Kroger's digital sales increased 118% during the fourth quarter and 116% for the year. The company continued to expand pickup and delivery to its existing supermarkets, now covering 98% of stores under the Kroger Co. network of stores.

Exclusive brands across Kroger Co. had a record year as well, hitting \$26.2 billion in 2020, up 13.6% from 2019. Kroger currently has more than 10,000 items in this category across its various banners.

Sources: Technomic Ignite company data

**KROGER QUARTERLY SAME-STORE SALES**  
YEAR-OVER-YEAR CHANGE (%)



# Basics Get Upgraded

Independent operators are giving classic and popular appetizers, entrees, condiments and desserts the spa treatment by incorporating more upscale elements to the traditional recipes. This tactic gives consumers a more premium dining experience, something that, once more diners return to in-restaurant eating, will be much anticipated. And for operators, these upgrades can be as simple as cross-utilizing ingredients (such as from the bar into the kitchen, as seen in the spirit-infused ketchup example) or creating deconstructed premium versions of kid favorites (as seen in the

upscale classic snacks example). Here are a few examples:

## Revamped Matzo Ball Soup

Duck Fat Matzo Ball Soup—matzo balls with duck fat in chicken broth, with chicken, fennel, parsley, celery, carrot and scallions (Rubinstein Bagels in Seattle)

## Chicken and Waffles Riffs

Chicken and Waffle—roasted chicken, bacon-chive waffle, chicken jus, maple syrup and local butter (Abe & Louie's in Boston)

## Spirit-Infused Ketchup

Perro Borracho—turkey sausage, applewood-smoked bacon, tequila ketchup and lime mayo (La Llorona Cantina Mexicana in Philadelphia)

## Upscale Classic Snacks

Millionaire's Twinkie—caramel creme, chocolate, shortbread crumble and gold leaf (White Limozeen in Nashville, Tenn.)



Facebook post announcing Rubinstein Bagels' Duck Fat Matzo Ball Soup  
Image Source: Rubinstein Bagels Facebook

# Checking in on Chicken

Chicken remains widely available on menus and is menued in numerous portable ways that are well-suited to today's largely off-premise world.

This presents opportunity for chicken suppliers and concepts to leverage increased consumption to grow sales. As evidenced by the widely publicized "chicken sandwich wars" between top fast-food chains, chicken-dish innovation does not demand out-of-the-box thinking in order to increase diner appeal. Leaning on chicken's natural craveability when prepared in traditional

ways has proven effective in generating excitement about items that feature chicken.

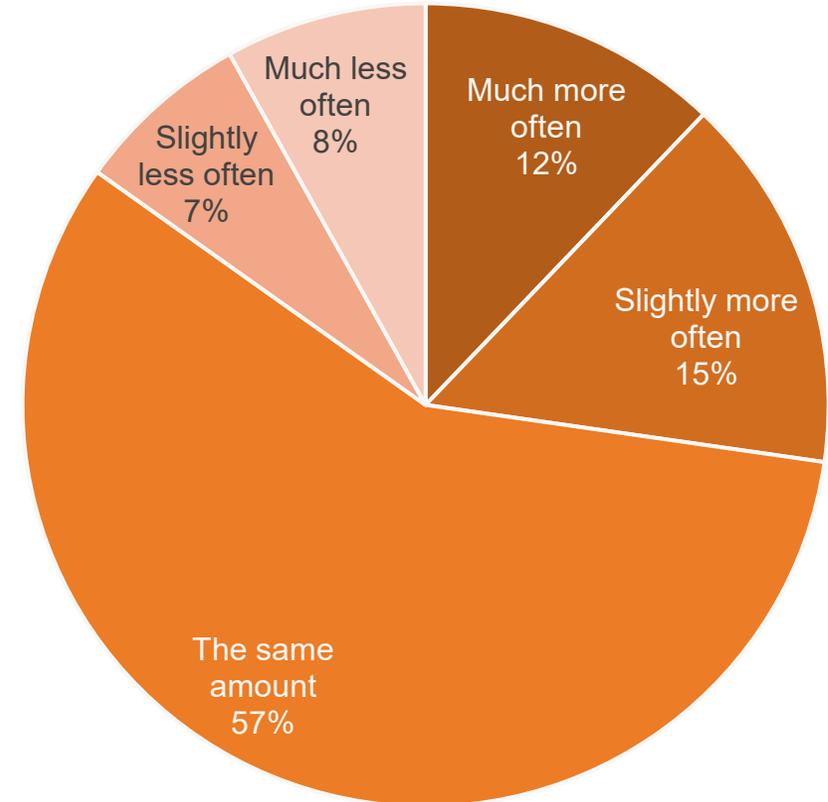
Additionally, most consumers say their chicken orders from foodservice are the same as before the pandemic, pointing to protein loyalty.

Base: 1,788 consumers

Q: Are you ordering meals that include the following proteins from restaurants and other foodservice locations more often, the same amount or less often since the coronavirus pandemic was declared a national emergency in March?

Source: Technomic Ignite consumer data featuring the Technomic 2021 Center of the Plate: Poultry Consumer Trend Report

"COMPARED TO BEFORE THE PANDEMIC, I'M NOW ORDERING MEALS THAT INCLUDE CHICKEN FROM RESTAURANTS OR OTHER FOODSERVICE LOCATIONS..."



# The World's Favorite Pizza Proteins

Meat, poultry and seafood are widely popular pizza toppings the world over, and often serve as the centerpiece for both chef-created and design-your-own pizzas.

We asked consumers across 25 countries which proteins they would order from a list of about 30 options, ranging from pepperoni and duck to tuna and pulled pork.

Here are some consumer favorites:

While many might guess the world's top protein on pizzas is pepperoni, it's actually a tie between chicken and ham, both drawing 53% of consumers globally.

Base: 4,266 global consumers who would order pizza

Q: Which meat or protein toppings would you consider ordering for pizza at a restaurant or other dining establishment? Select all that apply.

Source: Technomic Global Foodservice Navigator Program

Pepperoni is still quite popular, with 43% of consumers saying they would top a pie with it, making it No. 3 on the list.

Rounding out the top five proteins are bacon at 41% and salami at 34%.

Among seafood options, shrimp and tuna tie for favorite at 29%.

Other notable toppings include ground beef at 32%, chorizo at 23% and duck at 11%.

Members of Technomic's [Global Navigator Program](#) will soon be able to access the full 2021 global pizza report, including country-specific protein data along with other consumer preferences, trends and chain rankings.



Image Source: Shutterstock

## COVID-19 DISRUPTION INDEX

**COVID-19 Disruption Index** is powered by [Shortest Track](#), utilizing AI, machine learning and disparate sets of data resources to quantify the potential risks that U.S. businesses face from the spread of the COVID-19 virus at the market level.

The highest index possible is 1.00, which is not good and reflects markets that are extremely disrupted. The index is updated on a weekly basis.

The COVID-19 Disruption Risk Index shares weekly updates through a business lens, rather than a health lens, and incorporates more than 20 different data signals to measure disruption and predict future impact. These signals include infection rates, deaths, state-level restrictions and social distancing requirements, population densities and mobility, group size limitations and lifestyle risk factors contributing to spread. More information is available [HERE](#).

### Change Versus Previous Week and Month

Change versus previous week/month allows users to see if the market is becoming more or less disrupted over time. Changes that are positive (+) show a move toward becoming increasingly more impacted by COVID-19 (not good). Changes that are negative (-) show a trend toward being less impacted by COVID-19 (good).

**Ignite Subscribers:** [Download full market report](#)

TOP 5 MOST DISRUPTED MARKETS BY INDEX POINT CHANGE (VERSUS PREVIOUS WEEK)		COVID-19 DISRUPTION INDEX (MAX: 1.00, HIGH DISRUPTION)	PERCENT CHANGE VERSUS LAST WEEK	PERCENT CHANGE VERSUS LAST MONTH
1	Athens-Clarke County, Ga.	0.477	20.23%	22.98%
2	Macon-Bibb County, Ga.	0.492	19.46%	21.45%
3	Gainesville, Ga.	0.457	21.21%	23.77%
4	Warner Robins, Ga.	0.466	20.60%	22.61%
5	Albany, Ga.	0.458	21.02%	23.12%

Notes: Data updated March 30, 2021

Source: [Shortest Track](#)

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Since 1966, we have produced in-depth research focused on the foodservice industry.

We provide insights into consumer, industry and menu trends in the U.S., Canada and 23 countries around the world.

Our team of experts helps leaders in the industry make complex business decisions, set strategy and stay ahead of the curve.

**Have questions about this report?**

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