



National Pasta Association

NIQ Insights
March 2026



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Emily is a passionate storyteller at NielsenIQ. She has spent her career in market research working closely with large manufacturers to drive value and help them create impacts in the marketplace.

She has tailored experience supporting major brands, diving into category dynamics and consumer sentiments.

When not digging into research, Emily is an avid Indiana Hoosiers fan and enjoys finding new restaurants and coffee shops in Chicago.

Executive Summary

State of the Consumer and Economic Uncertainty

- Rising prices with diminishing consumer confidence and uncertainty ahead
 - Imported pasta drove dry pasta growth despite price increase
- Consumers are feeling worse off financially than they did a year ago, with high income households are driving total store growth and pasta growth

Pasta Performance

- Dollar growth slows to +0.4%, driven by Dry Pasta flat performance, Fresh and Frozen Pasta driving growth
- Overall promotions ramped up while lifts declined
- SKU rationalization in the Pasta set underscores need to prove incrementality at the shelf

Shifting Commerce

- Club and Amazon driving Total Food & Beverage growth, with value retailers also gaining share of pasta category
- Online continues to be a growth engine for Pasta and Pantry Goods
- With more consumers shopping pasta online, omnichannel strategy should be a priority for Pasta brands

Brand Trust

- Private Label is competitive on quality and value as the price gap to National Brands widens
- Private Label is gaining share both across the store and in the Pasta space

Trends to Watch

- Multigrain and Rice are gaining share of the Pasta category
- High Protein and Fiber are emerging growth drivers in the Pasta category

State of the Consumer and Economic Uncertainty

Big picture concerns—food, economy, war— *are on the rise*



Still, US is generally more positive than the rest of the world

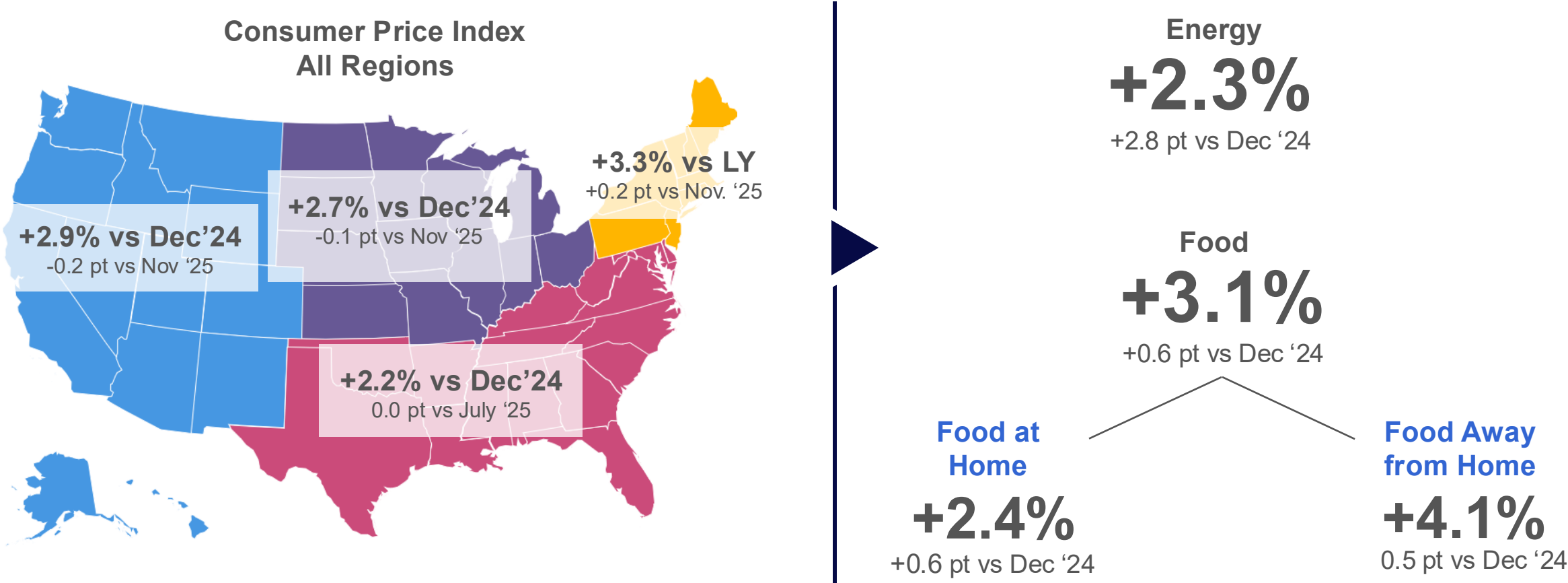
		July 2025	% change vs last year	Global
1	Increasing food prices	14%	-6.1	15%
2	↑ Economic downturn <i>(was #3 in 2024)</i>	11%	3.2	10%
3	↑ Global conflict/War <i>(was #12 in 2024)</i>	11%	6.9	14%
4	↑ Political unrest	11%	3.2	5%
5	Increased housing costs	5%	-2.2	5%
6	↑ Job security <i>(was #13 in 2024)</i>	5%	1.3	6%
7	↓ Ability to provide basics <i>(was #2 in 2024)</i>	5%	-2.9	5%
8	↓ Increasing utility bills <i>(was #6 in 2024)</i>	5%	-2.3	7%
9	↓ Self/Family welfare/ Happiness <i>(was #8 in 2024)</i>	4%	-1.0	6%
10	↓ Immigration <i>(was #7 in 2024)</i>	4%	-2.4	3%

Source: NIQ 2025 Consumer Outlook survey , US and Global, Note: In China, verbiage reflects the following: "Geopolitical uncertainty", "Economic environment"

Inflation holds at 2.7%, led by food and regional price variations

Regional price shifts remain modest, but food (especially dining out) continues to drive upward pressure.

Annualized % Chg vs December '24

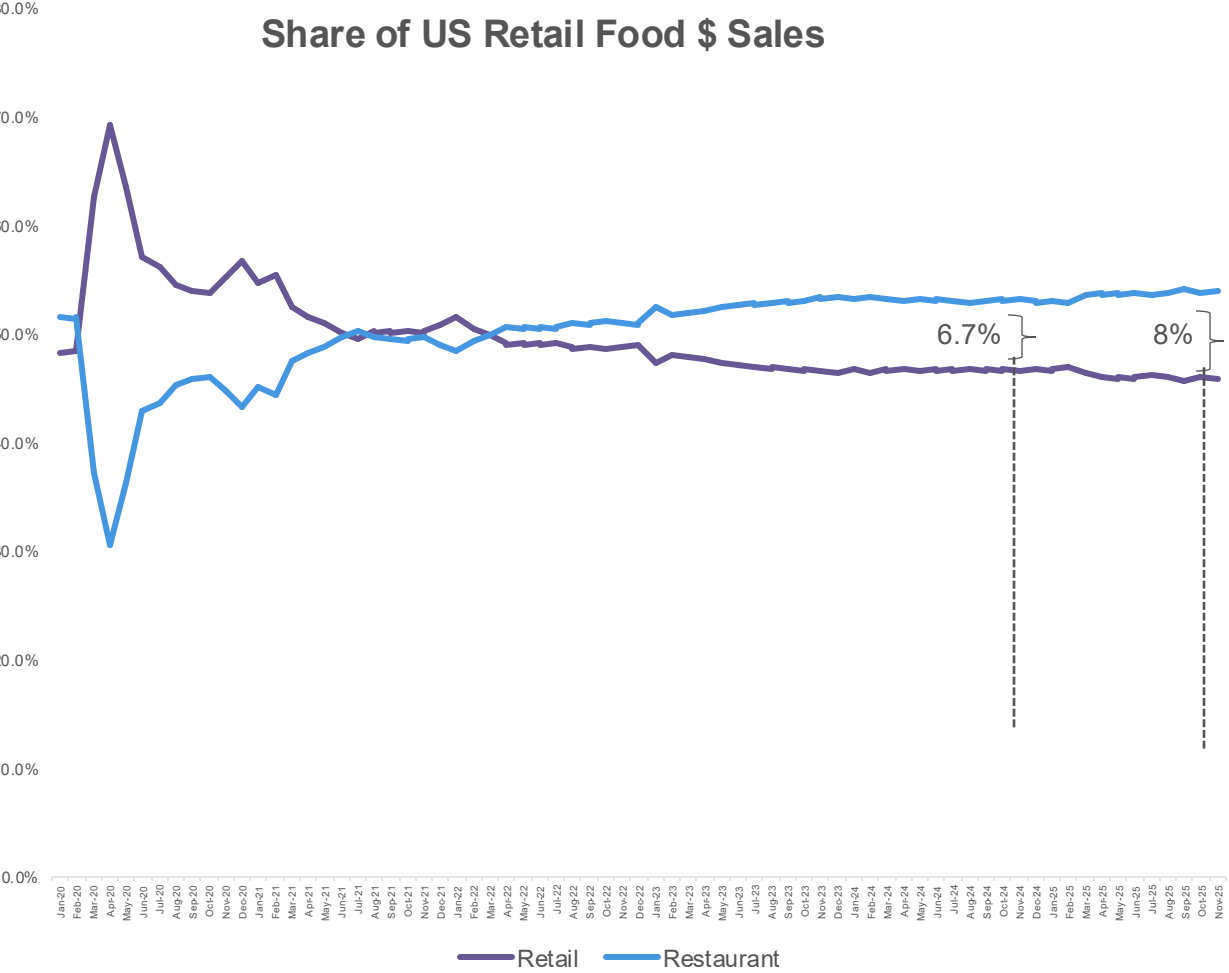


Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics - Consumer Price Index | vs. LY | Slide updated in in January 2026 (data updated monthly, through December '25)

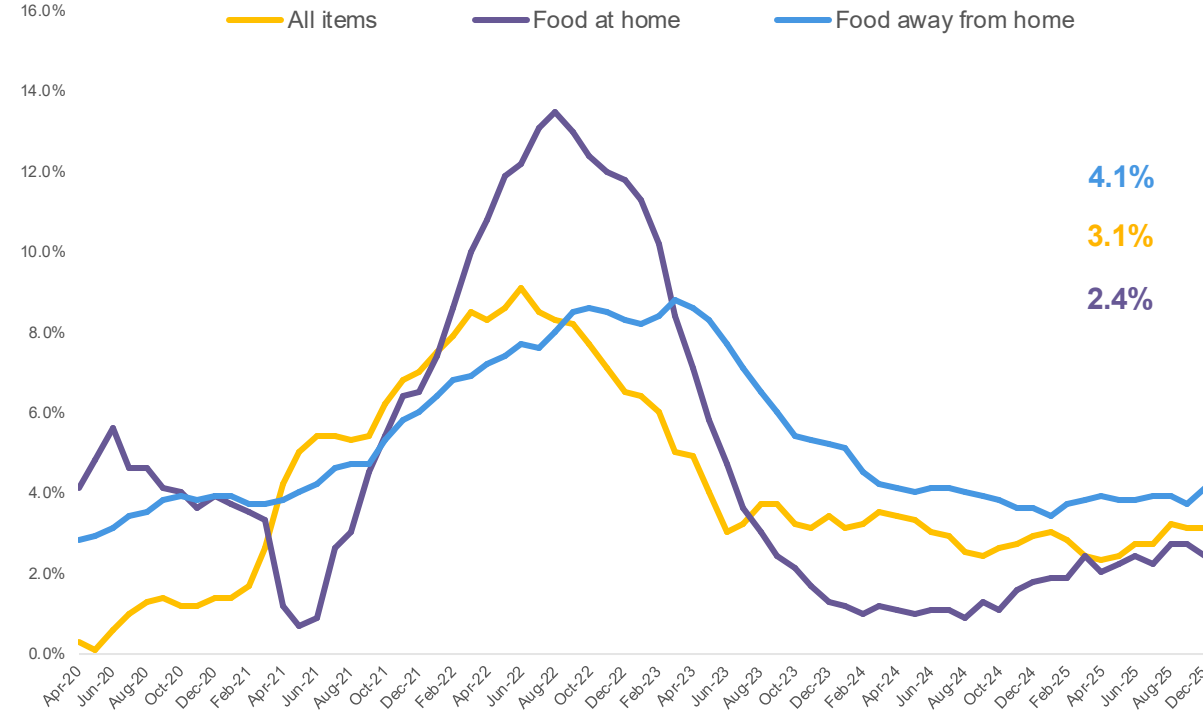
US Food sales share stable as restaurant costs outpace retail

Restaurant prices lead with 4.1% increase vs YA; retail food inflation slower at 2.4%

Share of US Retail Food \$ Sales



Consumer Price Index



Sources: US Census Bureau - Food & Beverage Stores + Food Service & Drinking Places | Slide updated in January 2026 (data updated monthly, through December 2025)

Market sentiment: guarded spending in an easing inflation environment

Despite easing inflation and rising wages, declining confidence and increased savings signal restrained spending and uncertainty in the market

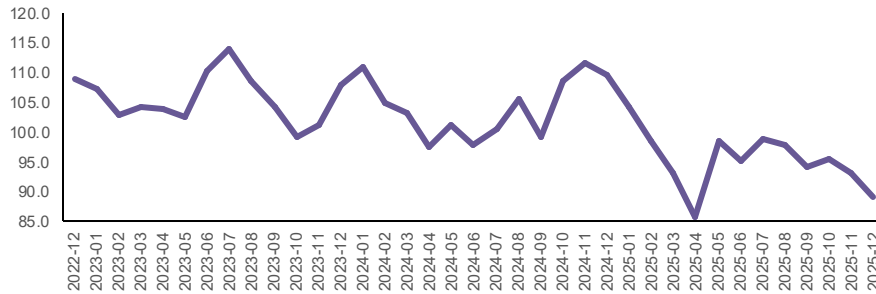
Consumer Confidence

89.1

▼ -3.8 pts Dec '25 vs. Nov '25

▼ -20.4 pts Dec '25 vs. YA

Consumer Confidence



Unemployment

4.4%

▼ -0.1 pts (Dec '25 vs. Nov '25)

▲ +0.3 pts (Dec '25 vs. YA)

Unemployment rate decreased vs last month; increased vs. YA

Savings Rate

4%

▼ -0.6 pts (Sep '25 vs. Aug '25)

▲ +0.2 pts (Sep '25 vs. YA)

Savings Rate increased vs last month and vs YA

Latest Data Available – Sept '25

Average Wages

\$37.02

▲ +\$0.12 (Dec '25 vs. Nov '25)

▲ +\$1.34 (Dec '25 vs. YA)

Average wages continue to climb in the new year

Consumer Price Index

2.7%

-(0.2 pts. vs. YA)
incl. all items

🍍 3.1% CPI for Food

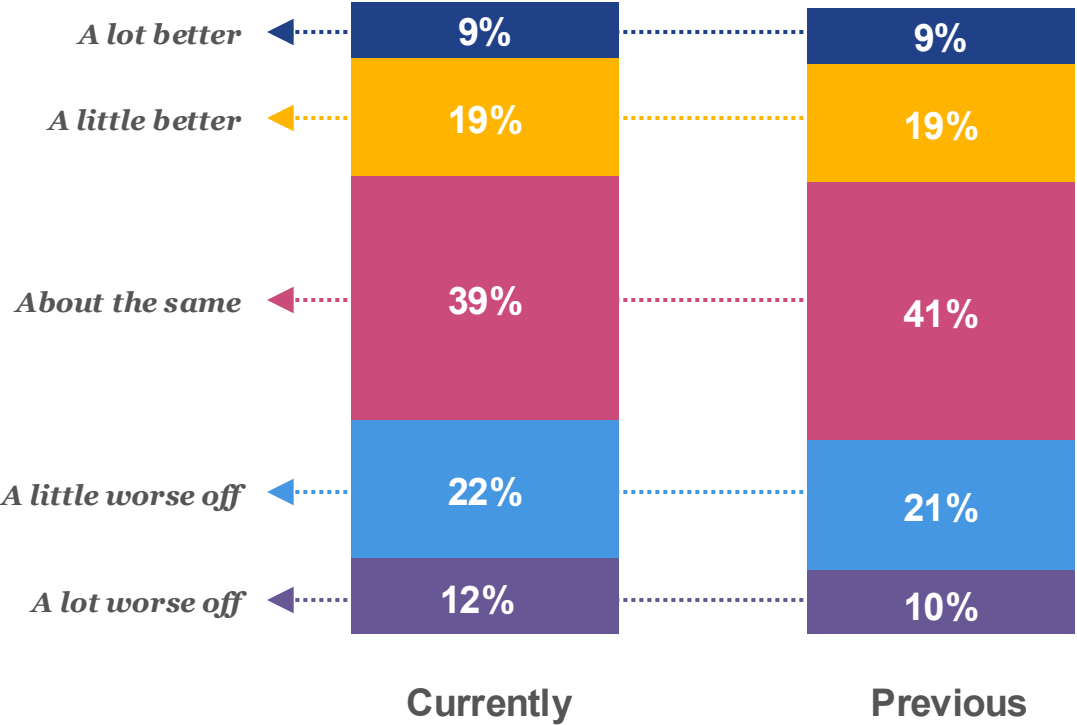
📦 2.6% all items ex. Food and energy

Inflation is easing compared to 2024, but cost pressures remain, discretionary spending may stay subdued as households prioritize essentials.

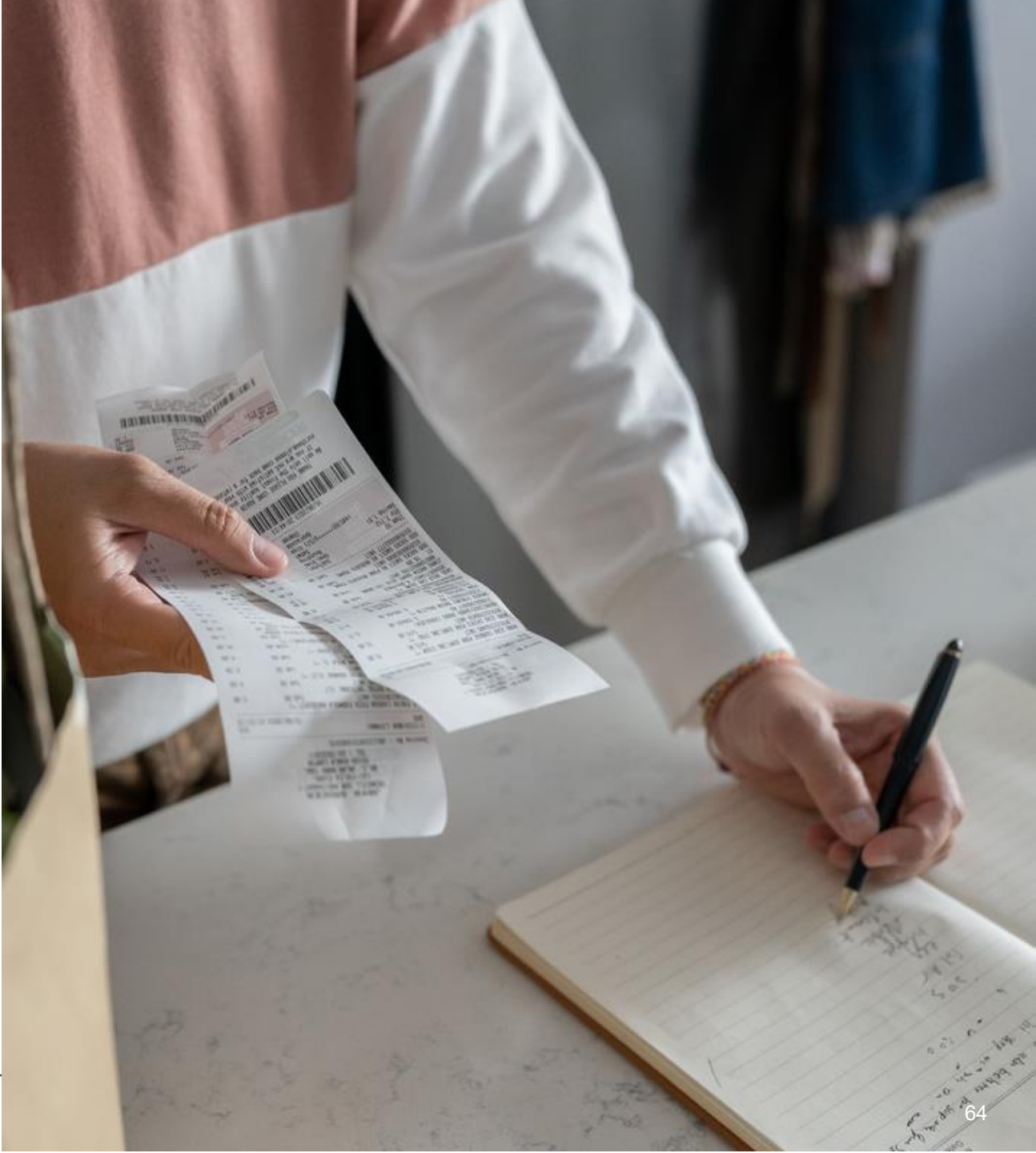
Sources: [Consumer Confidence Board](#); [Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis](#); [Bureau of Labor Statistics CPI](#) | Slide updated in January 2026 (data updated monthly, through December '25)

More consumers feel *worse off financially* than they did a year ago

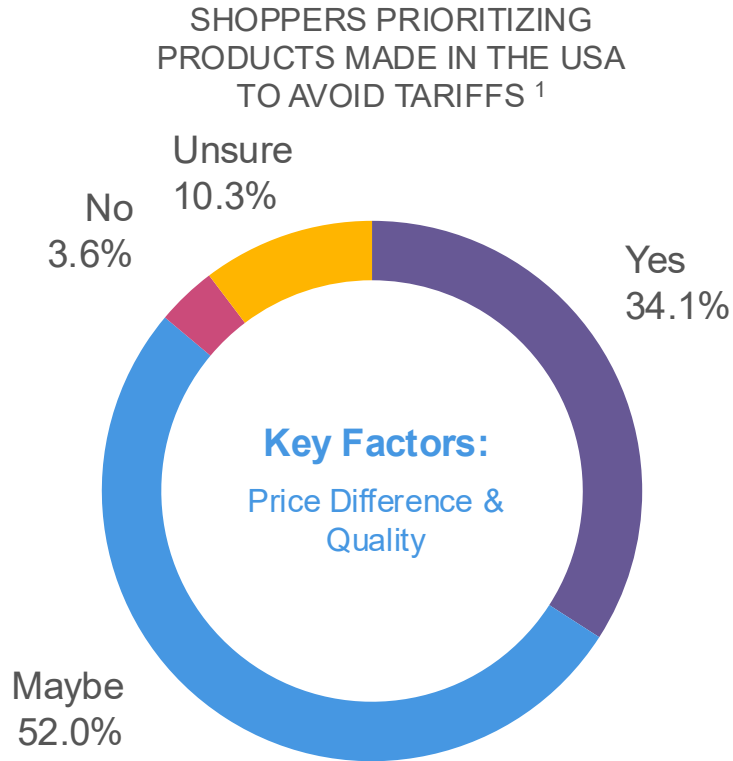
How is your household's current financial situation compared to a year ago?



Source: NIQ, BASES Quick Question Omnibus Survey, November 2025, n=1,021



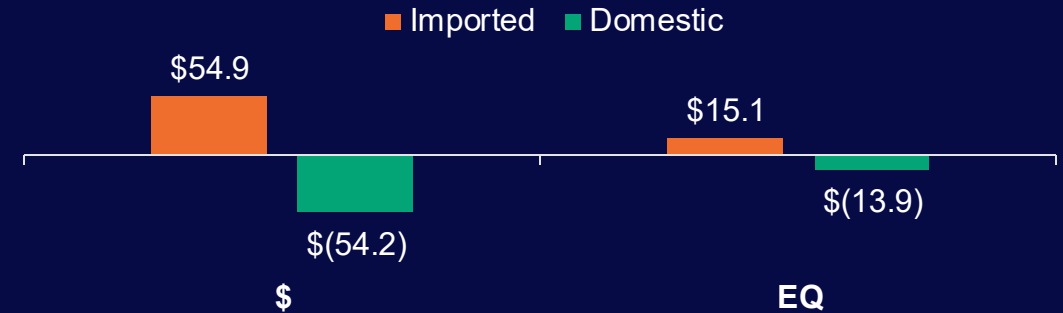
While 34% of shoppers will prioritize US-made products to avoid tariff-driven price increases, more than half will base their decisions on price differences and quality...



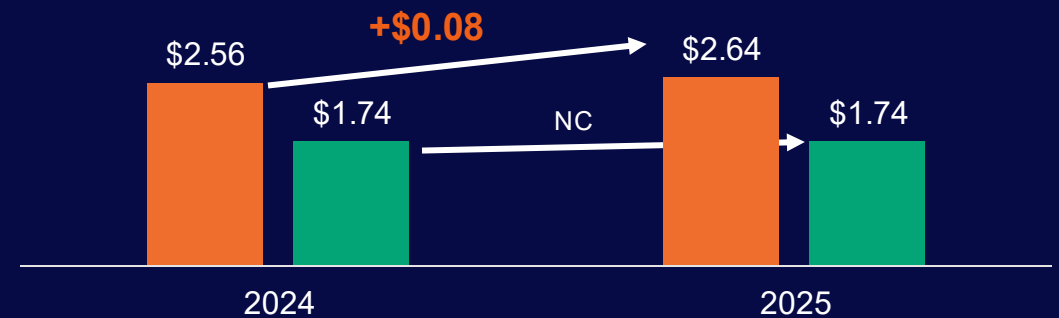
Source: 1NIQ Omnibus Survey, Fielded January 2025, n=1,001, 2NIQ Full View Measurement, Powered By Product Insights, Total US Full View, 52 Weeks Ending 01-25-2025

...imported pasta drove dry pasta growth despite price increase

Dry Pasta Volume CYA (M) - xAOC | CY2025 v. CY 2024



Dry Pasta Base EQ Price

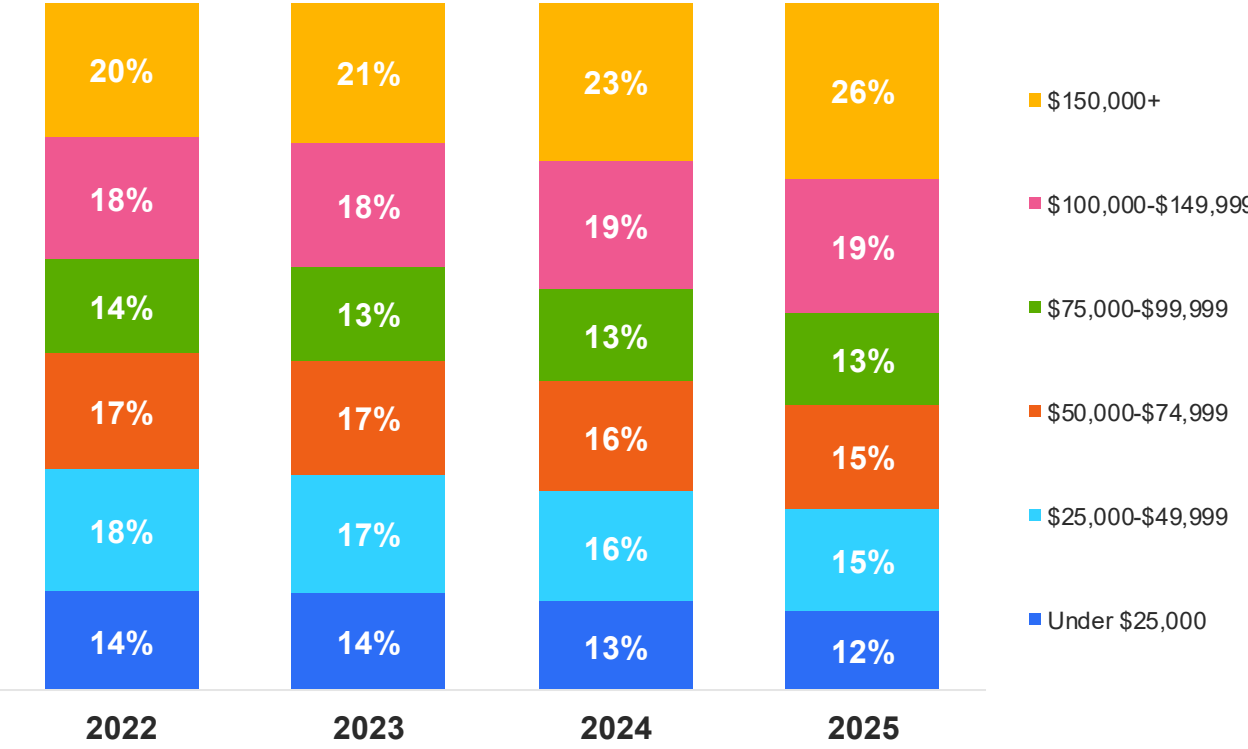


*18.2% (+1.2 pts.) of Pasta is imported, 95% of imported pasta is dry

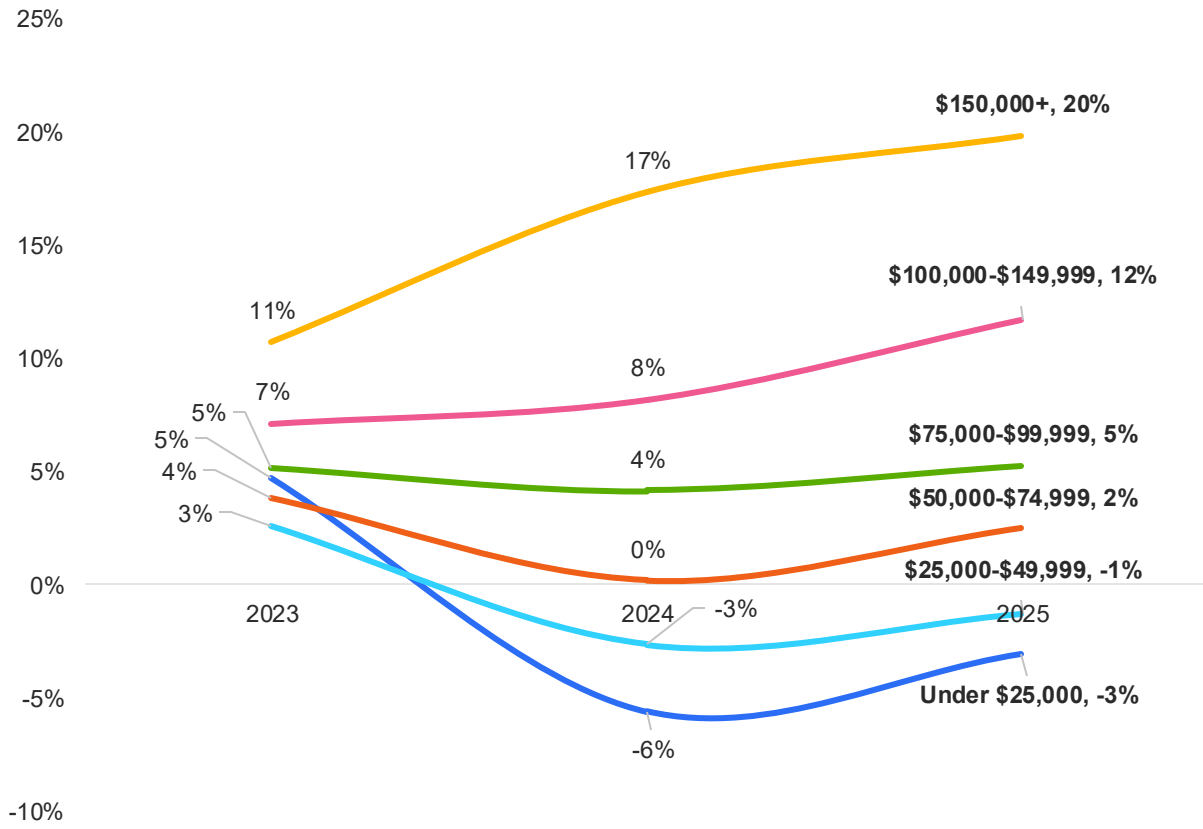
NIQ RMS Total U.S. xAOC, CY25 52 w/e 12/27/2025 vs YA. Dry Pasta, NIQ Syndicated Imported

Higher income households driving a growing portion of sales and pulling away in terms of spending growth

Total Store, % of Dollar Spend by Household Income

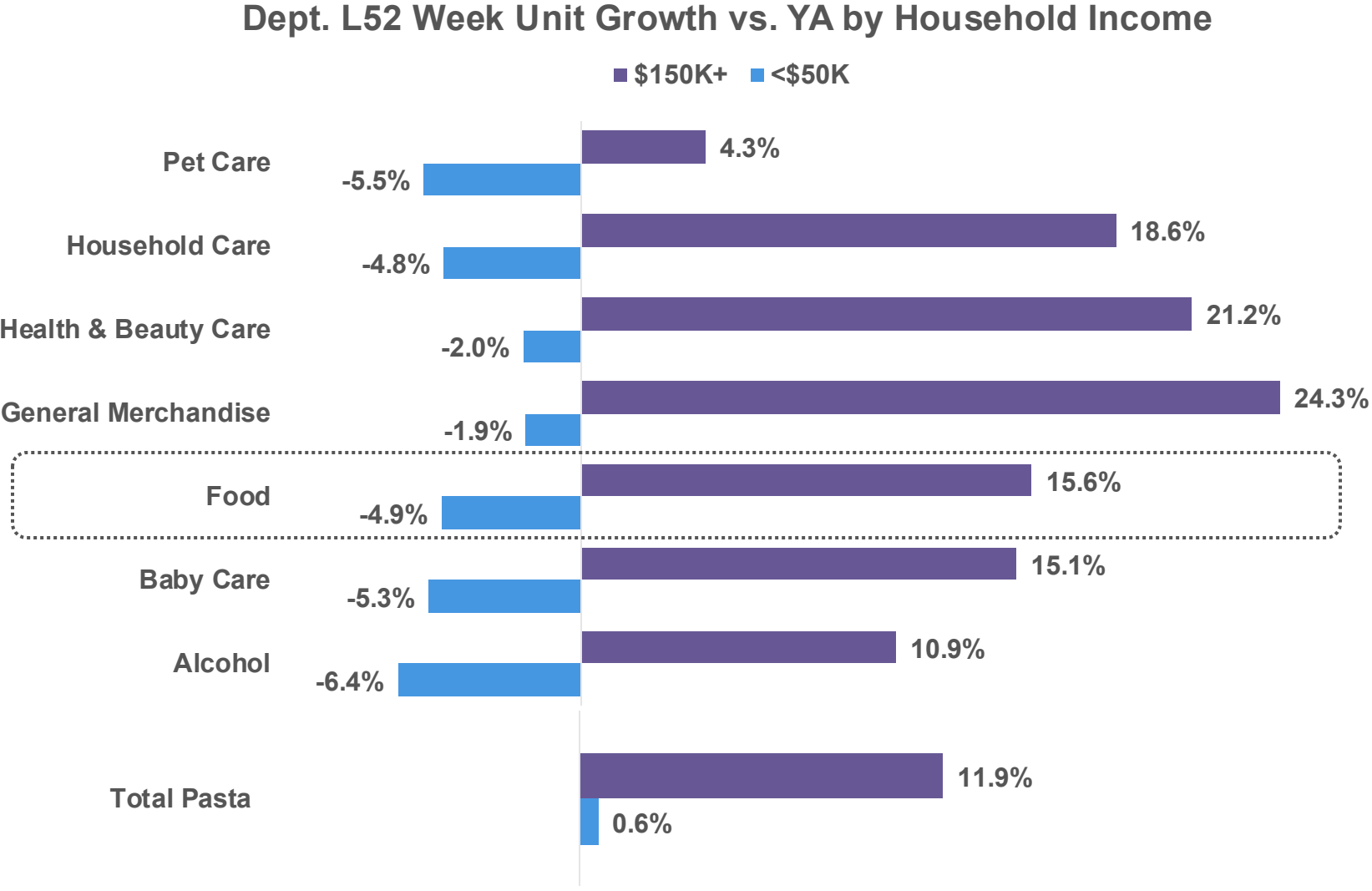


Total Store, Dollar Spend Growth vs. YA by Household Income



Source: NielsenIQ Panel On Demand Omnishopper | US Exp Osh - NDH Synd Full View - 444 5 yr | Entire Dataset

Some consumer goods sectors seeing broader divergence by income than others



Source: NielsenIQ Panel On Demand Omnishopper | US Exp Osh - NDH Synd Full View - 444 5 yr | Entire Dataset

Being price-conscious is key, *but intentional strategies are gaining traction*

Intention is shown by seeking value (getting the best price per EQ and prioritizing what matters in a product)

Top 10 consumer saving strategies for CPG



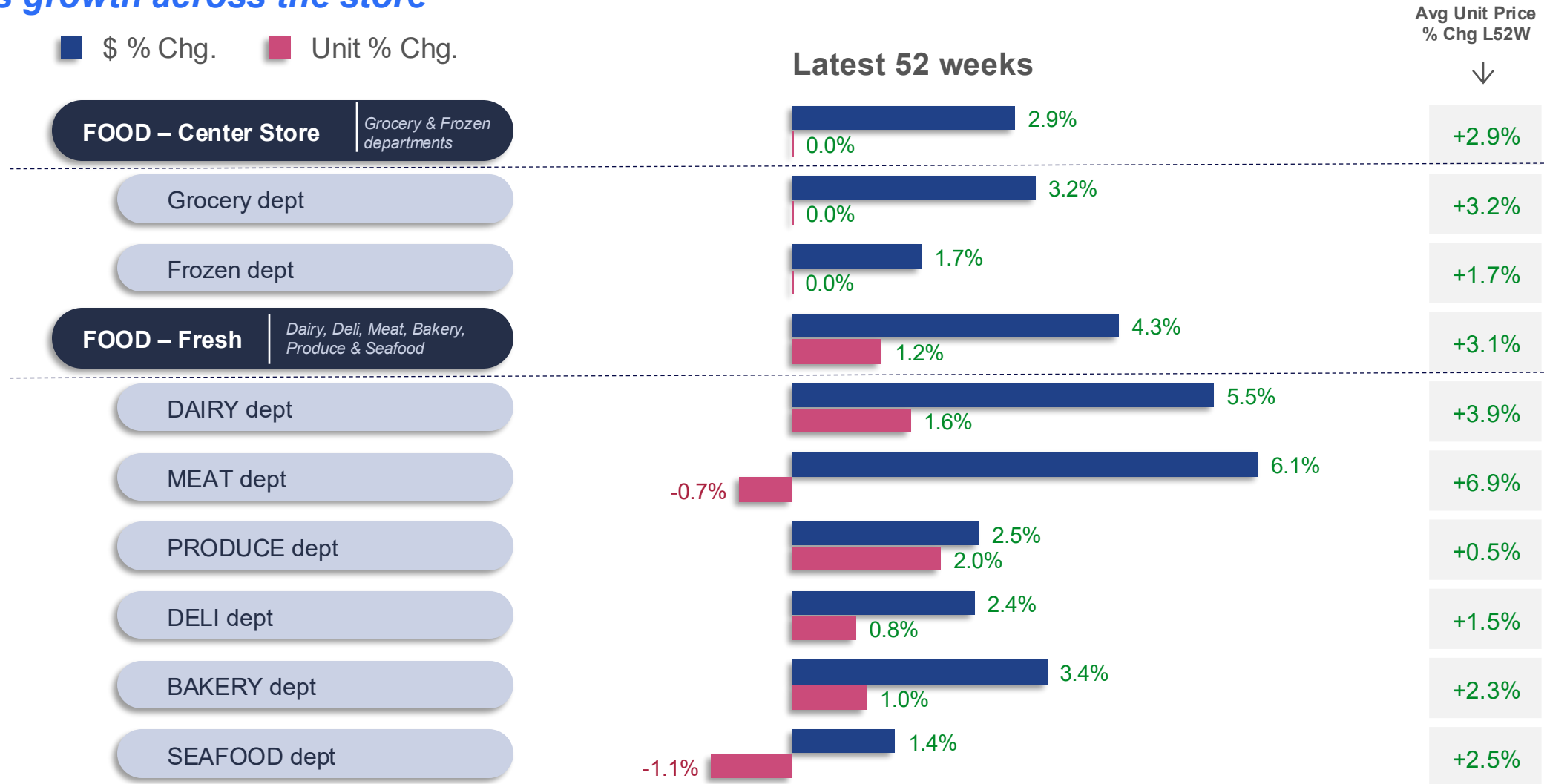
Source: NIQ 2025 Mid Year Consumer Outlook

Pasta Performance

Perimeter growth is outpacing the center store, with units challenged in meat and seafood

Sales growth across the store

■ \$ % Chg. ■ Unit % Chg.

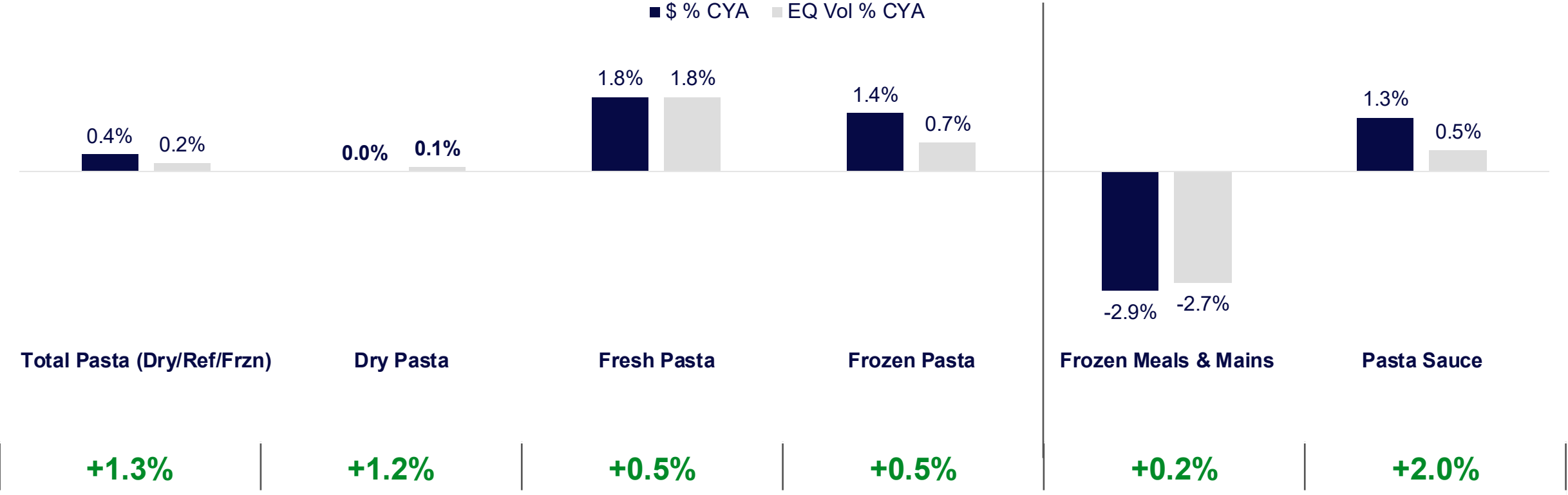


Source: NIQ, Retail Measurement Services, Full View Measurement, Total Full View + Costco, Periods Ending 12/27/2025, Food & Beverage departments, Dollar, Unit, and Avg Unit Price % change vs year ago

Fresh pasta driving growth while dry pasta stagnant

Frozen Pasta also driving growth as competitive frozen meals decline

Dollar & Volume Performance Comparison: L52W vs YA

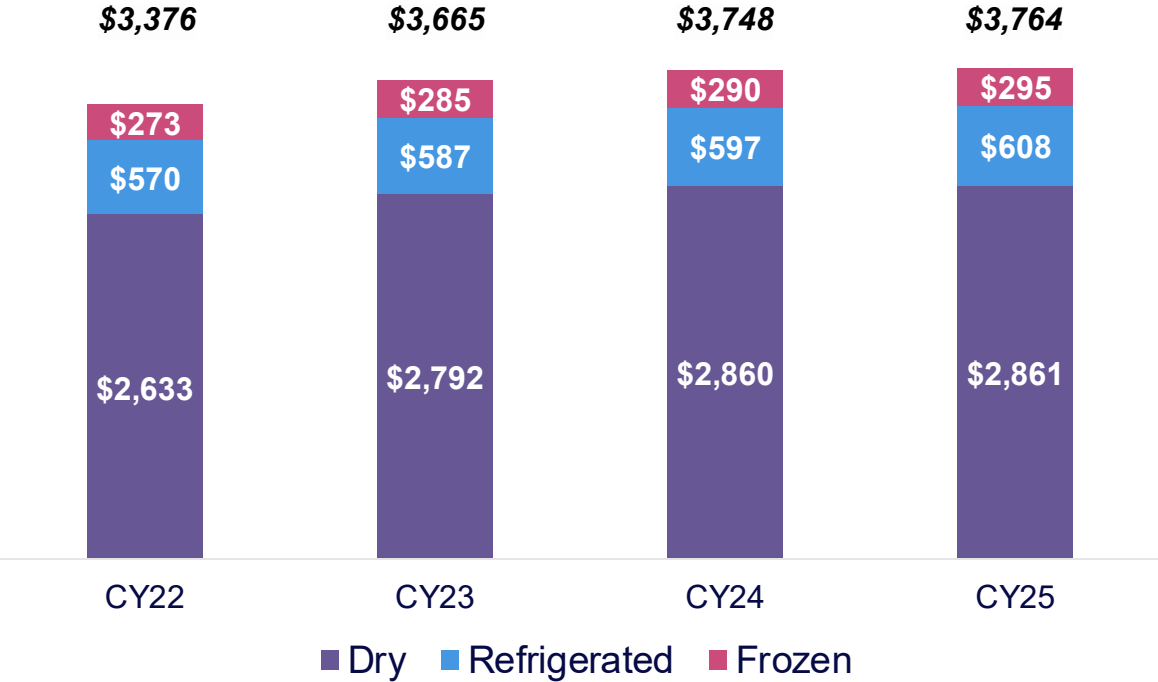


'Everyday' Price Chg vs YA

Source: NIQ RMS Total U.S. xAOC, CY25 52 w/e 12/27/2025 vs YA. Total Store = All Depts ex Bulk Bin, Floral, Gen Merch. Total Pasta = Dry + Refrigerated + Frozen.

Dry Pasta accounts for 76.0% (-0.3 pts. v. YA) of Total Pasta

Total Pasta Sales (\$ M)



■ Dry ■ Refrigerated ■ Frozen

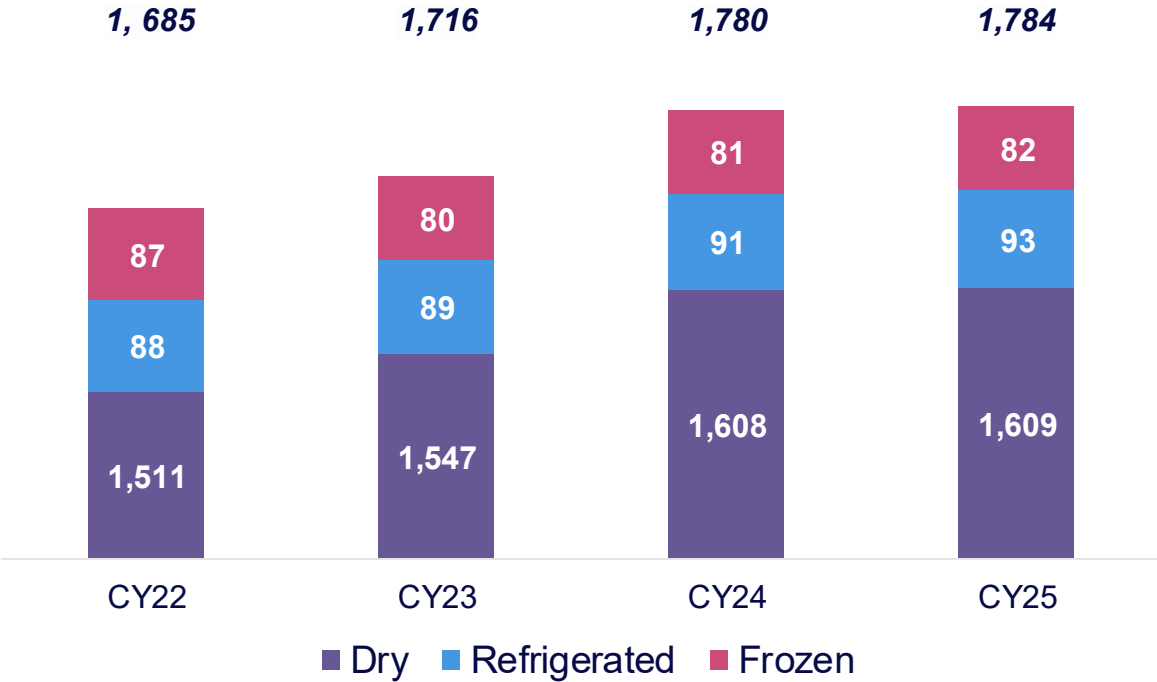
+5.4

+2.3

+0.4

\$ GROWTH YoY

Total Pasta Volume (EQ Units, M)



■ Dry ■ Refrigerated ■ Frozen

+1.8%

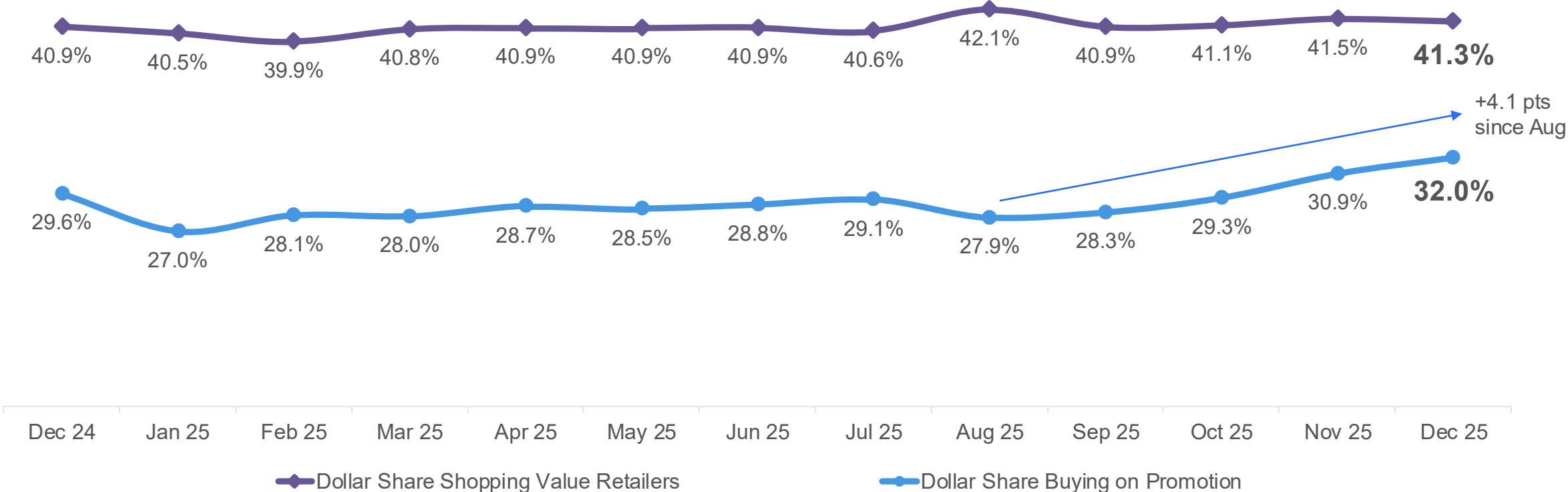
+3.8%

+0.2%

VOLUME GROWTH YoY

Share of CPG Dollar Sales on Promotion powered value buying in the back half of 2025

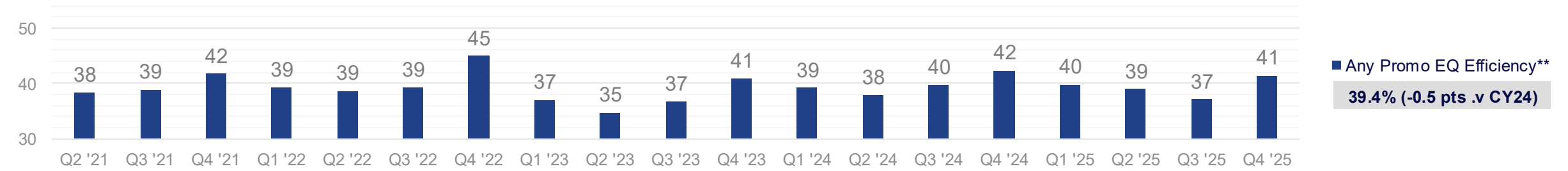
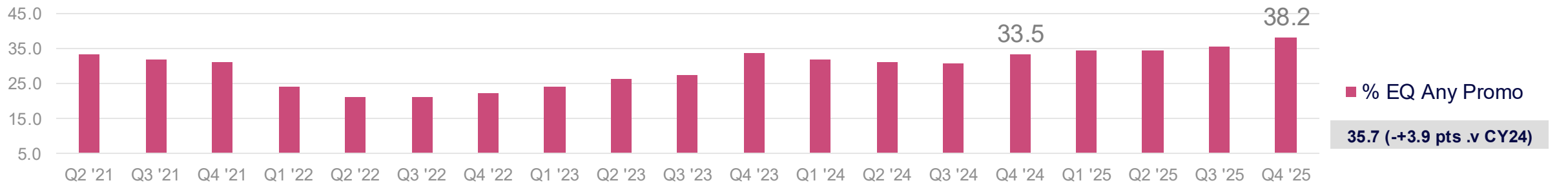
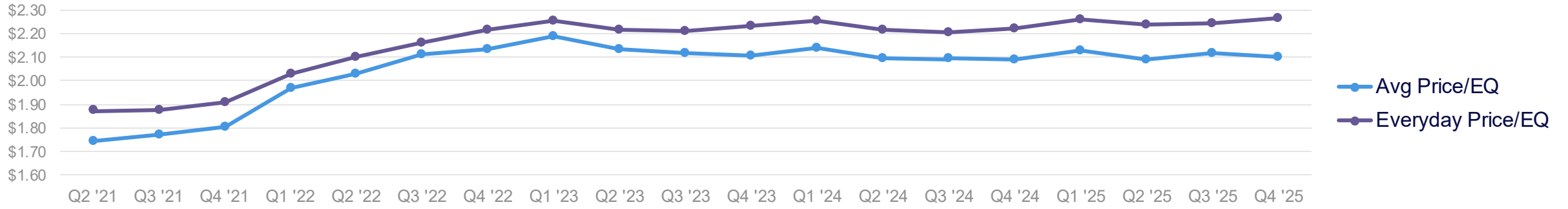
Dollar Share of Buyers Shopping Value Retailers and Buying on Promotion



Source: NielsenIQ, Total US Full View, Value Retailers = (Mass Merch + Club + Dollar), Promotional Dollar Sales and Private Label Dollar Sales, 5 weeks ending Dec 27, 2025

'Everyday' Pasta prices appear stable from Q1 2023 to date

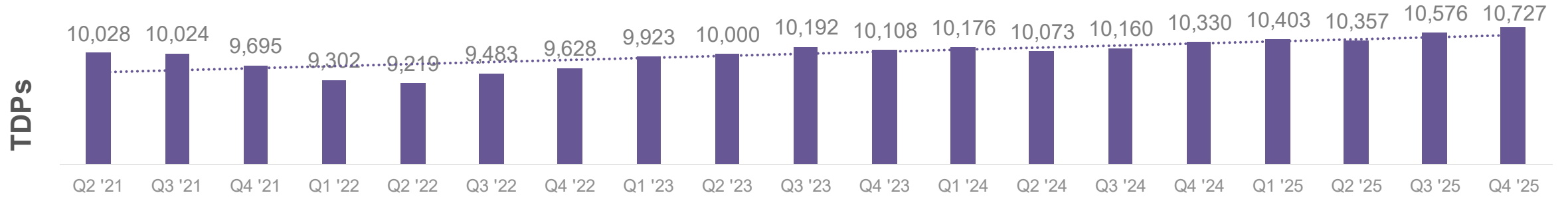
Overall promotions ramped up while lifts declined, while Quality Merchandising lifts maintained 2024 levels



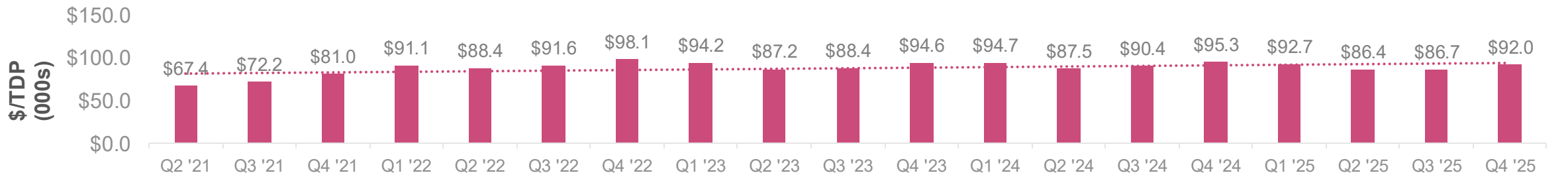
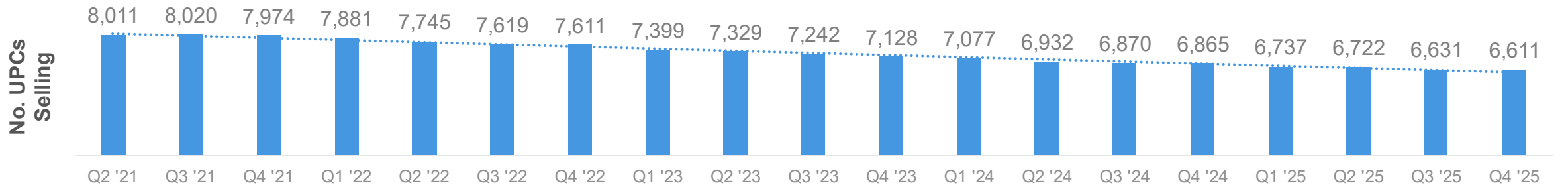
Source: NIQ RMS Total US xAOC, data through w/e 12/27/2025. Total Pasta = Dry + Refrigerated + Frozen.
 **Promotional Efficiency = the percentage of promoted volume considered incremental due to that promotion

SKU rationalization in the Pasta set underscores need to prove incrementality at the shelf

Retailers appear to be standardizing their planograms, cutting low performers in favor of more 'productive' items



TDPs appear stable over time (▲) but Unique UPCs are declining (▼), suggesting SS planograms are becoming more standardized

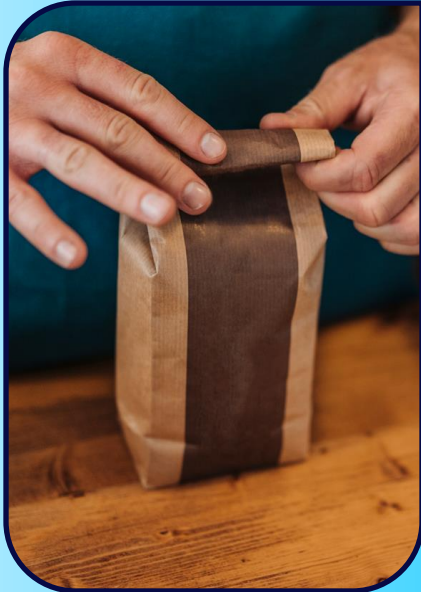
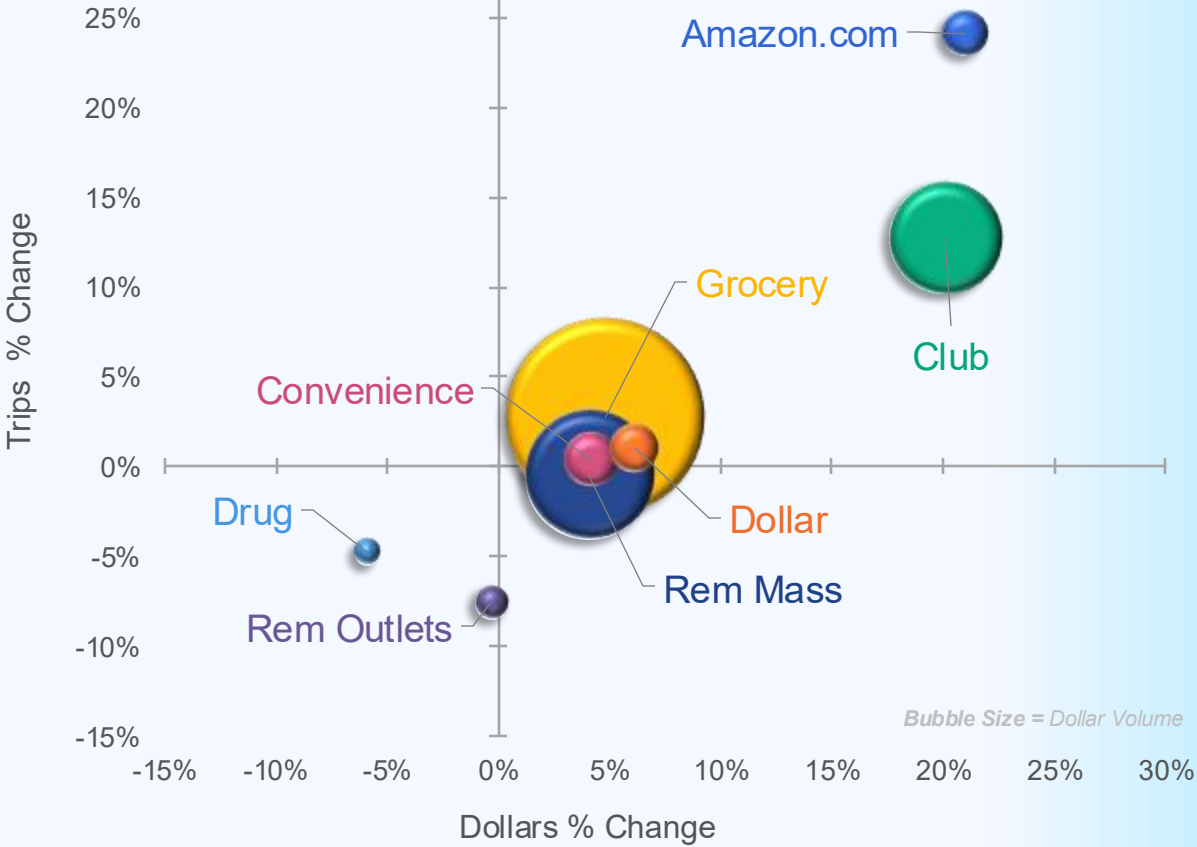


Shifting Commerce

Club and Amazon leading in food and beverage growth

Food & Beverage Channel Shifting

Dollar Sales Chg. vs Trip Chg. & Size of Retailer

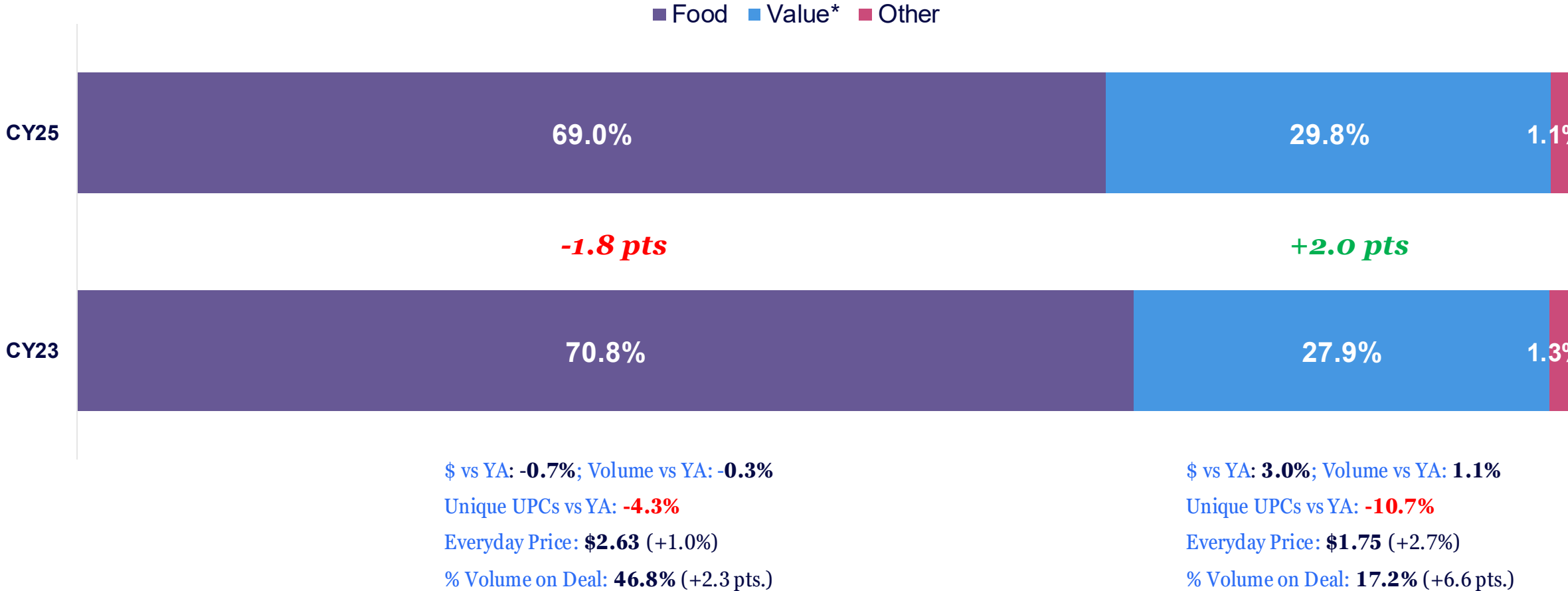


Source: Source: NIQ Expanded Omnishopper; Total US All Outlets by Channel; Total Food & Beverage; Dollar vs Occasions (Trips) % change vs year ago; 52 weeks ending December 27, 2025; Drug — does not include Rite Aid

Grocery channel ceded nearly 2 share pts to Value Retail* since 2023

Food retailers ramped up promotions by 10% and cut their assortment significantly, yet dollars were nearly flat to YA

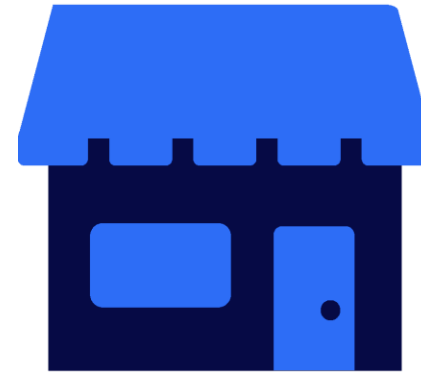
Total Pasta: \$ Share by Channel, L52W vs 2YA



Source: NIQ RMS Total US xAOC, CY2025 52 w.e 12/27/25. Total Pasta = Dry + Refrigerated + Frozen. *Value Retail = Mass/Club/Dollar. Everyday Price = Base EQ Price

Ecommerce Spotlight

Online Pasta sales
growing 20x faster,
with room to
increase digital
buying occasions



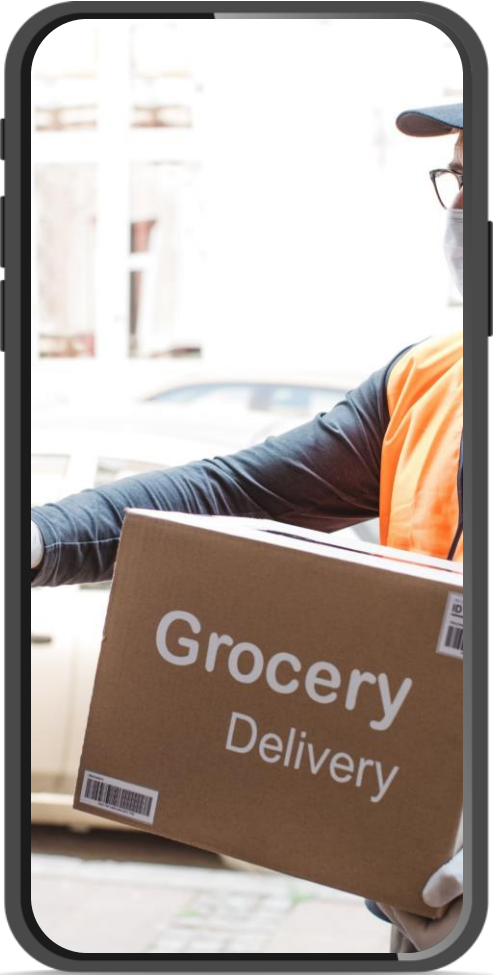
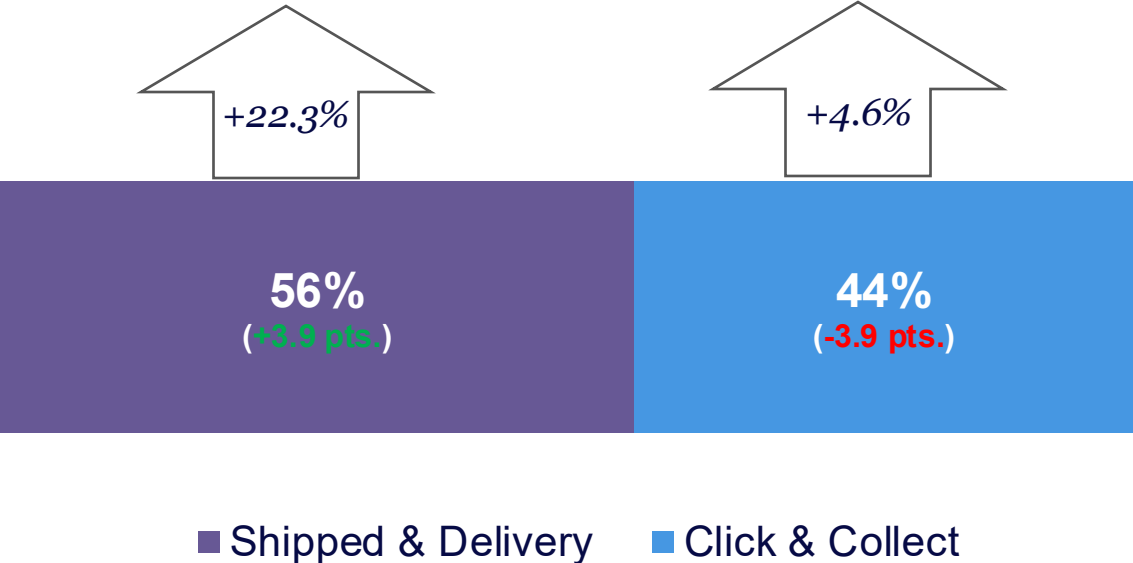
	In Store	Online
Share of Omni \$	85.4% (-2.0 pts.)	14.6% (+2.0 pts.)
% of Pasta Buyers Purchasing...	95.4% (-0.7 pts.)	33.6% (+6.8 pts.)
Average Basket	\$3.85	\$4.40
Occasions per Year*	8.8 (+0.1%)	3.9 (-2.8%)

Source: NIQ Omnishopper Panel, Total U.S. CY25 vs YA. Total Pasta (All Depts)

Roughly half of all online Pasta dollars are from orders picked up in store

But Shipped & Delivery dollars are growing faster

% of Total Pasta Online Dollars

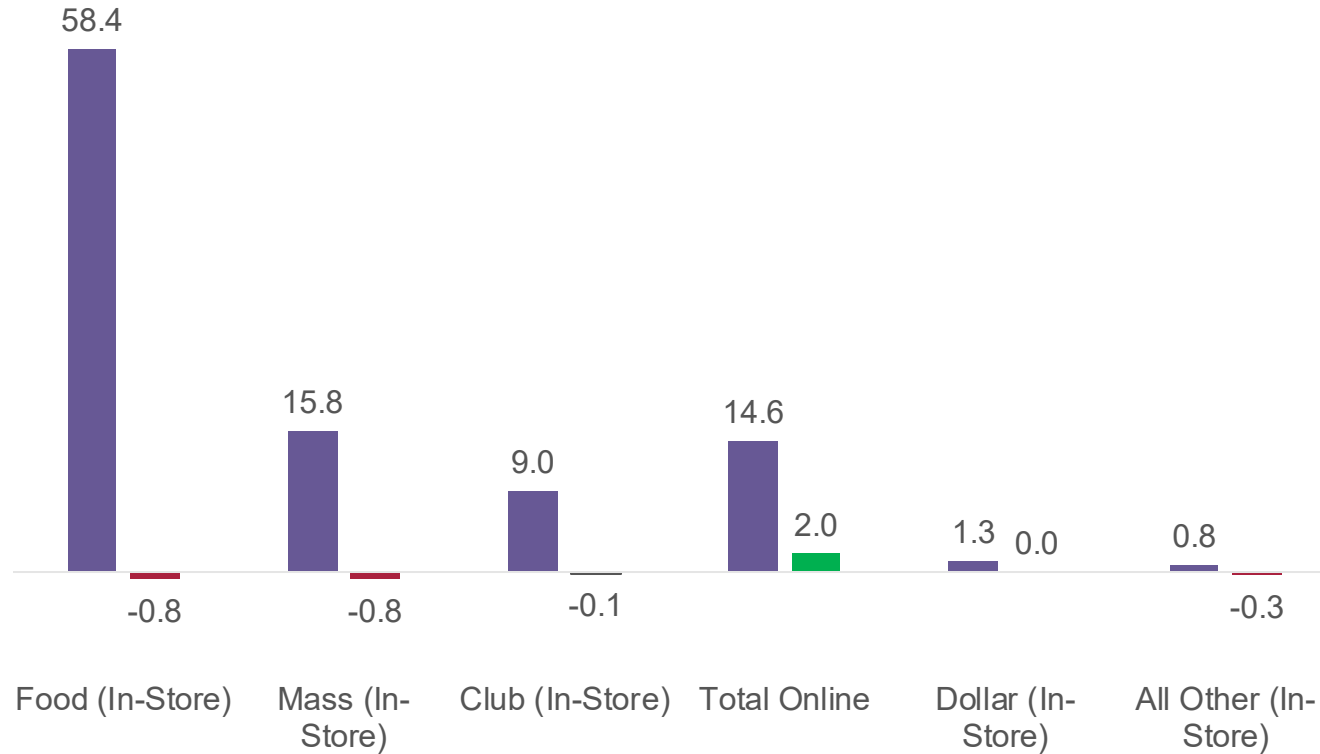


Source: NIQ Omnisaless, Total U.S., CY25 52 w/e 12/27/2025 vs YA.

Online and club growing share of Pasta category

Ensure Club and Online assortment strategies are meeting the specific needs and preferences of shoppers in these channels

Pasta Channel \$ Share and Share Chg.



Online Retailers	Share of Total Pasta	Share CYA
Walmart.com	4.2	+0.6pp
instacart	2.9	+0.4pp
amazon.com	2.3	+0.2pp
WHOLE FOODS MARKET	0.8	+0.2pp
TARGET	0.5	+0.0pp
All Other	3.9	+0.6pp

NielsenIQ Panel On Demand Omnishopper - US Exp Osh - NDH Synd Full View - 444 3yr | Latest 52 Wks w/e 12/27/25 vs YA | Grocery Store - Instore, Mass Merch - Instore, Warehouse Club - Instore, Dollar Store - Instore, In Store, Online | Department: Grocery, Super Category: Pasta, Rice, Dry & Grains, Category: Pasta

A winning omnichannel strategy is key to maintaining buyer and volume growth

Maximize online conversion without neglecting the core shopper base in brick & mortar



	Total Omni	In-store	Online
Penetration	92.7% (+1.3)	88.5% (+0.6)	29.8% (+6.2)
Buyers	121.7M (+2.5%)	116.2M (+1.8%)	39.1M (+27.6%)
\$ per Buyer	\$37.64 (+0.9%)	\$33.69 (-0.7%)	\$17.11 (-6.2%)
Trips per Buyer	9.6 (+1.7%)	8.8 (+0.1%)	3.9 (-2.8%)
\$ per Trip	\$3.92 (-0.8%)	\$3.85 (-0.7%)	\$4.40 (-3.5%)

Omnichannel Takeaways

- **Penetration and buy rate growth** show opportunity for sustained Pasta category growth.
- As consumers are increasingly shopping both instore and online, imperative to **establish a cohesive omnichannel strategy** to build consumer loyalty across channels

Source: NIQ Omnishopper Panel CY25 52 w/e 12/27/2025 vs YA. Total Pasta = All Depts.

Amazon is disrupting Online: adding perishables to same-day Amazon.com selection

Amazon's biggest move in grocery since its 2017 acquisition of Whole Foods

What's happening?

- Shoppers in 1,000 cities (2,300 by year end) can now add perishable items to their same-day Amazon.com orders
- Previously perishables were handled exclusively by Whole Foods or Fresh
- This is creating a **seamless, all-category, shopping experience**
- During Q2 earnings, Amazon indicated that **75%** of customers who've used the service this year are **first time shoppers for perishables on Amazon**, with **20%** of customers who use the service returning multiple times within their first month



	Amazon Prime	AMZ Fresh / WFM	Walmart+	Instacart+
Min. spend for Free Same-Day Delivery	\$25	\$35	\$35	\$10
Annual Membership Fee	\$139	\$99.99*	\$98	\$99
Monthly Membership Fee	\$14.99	\$9.99*	\$12.95	\$9.99
Subscribers	~250mn (est.)	n/a	~18mn (est.)	~7mn (est.)

*in addition to Prime membership, expect this to be phased out soon

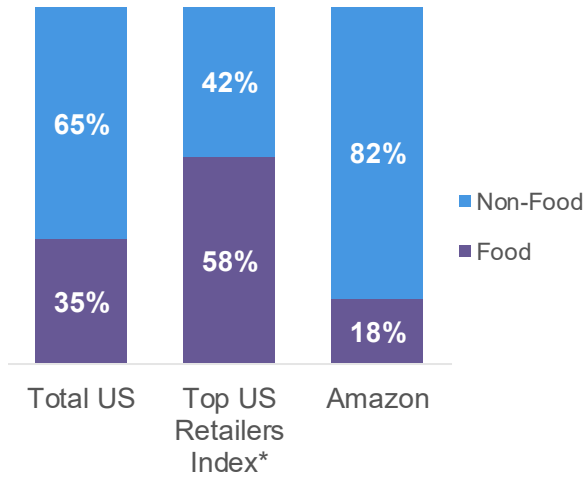
Source: NielsenIQ Research, Amazon

Why is Amazon investing in this initiative?

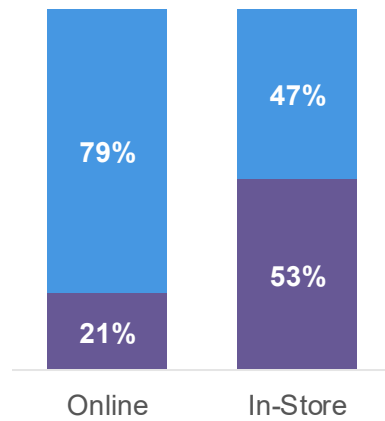
Amazon has trailed legacy store-based retailers to date in online grocery, a lucrative growth area in the U.S. retail landscape

Food is a major opportunity area for Amazon

Food Share of Online \$ Sales (L52 Weeks)¹

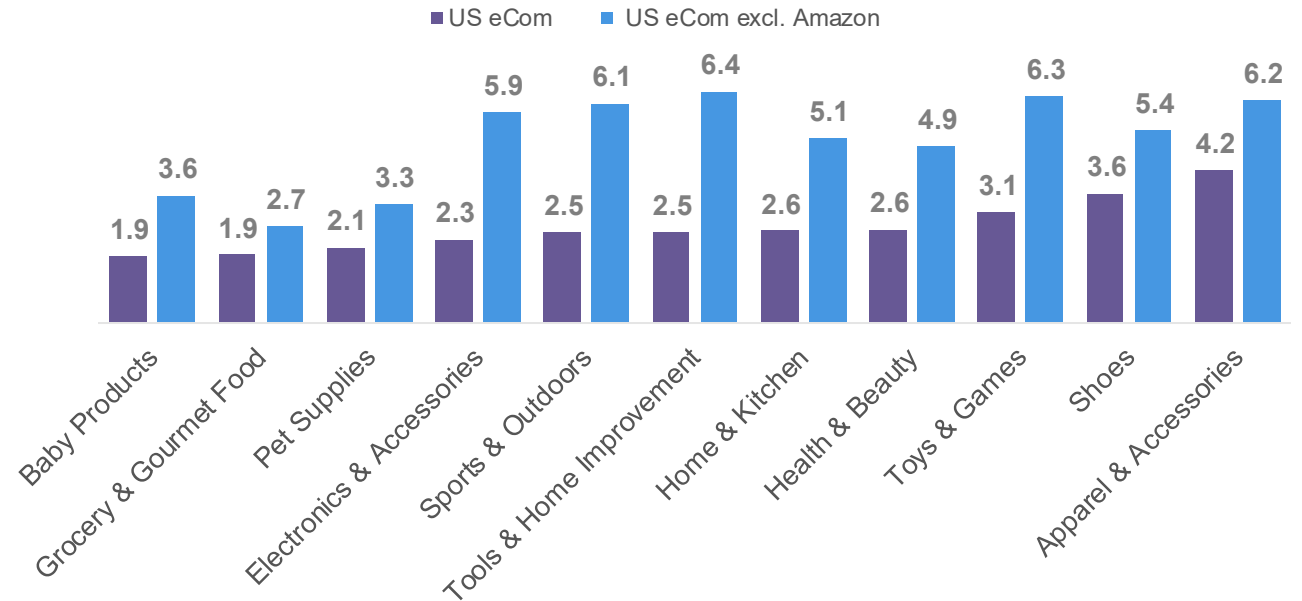


Share of \$ Value Per Buyer (L52 Weeks)²



Offering is enabled by Amazon's investments in fulfillment

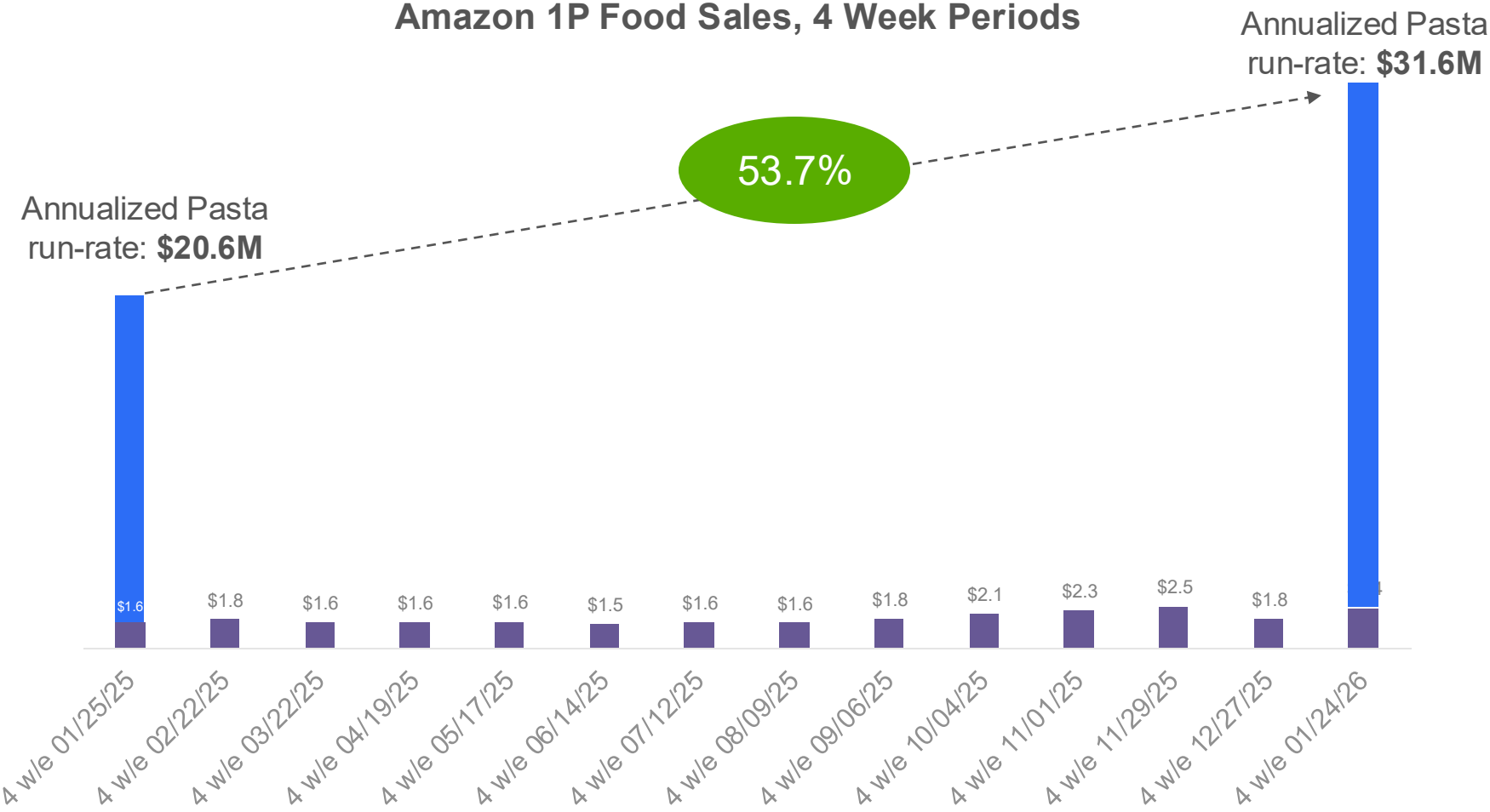
Fulfillment Speed - Days from Click to Door, US eCommerce (Mar-Apr 2025)³



Sources: ¹NIQ Omnisales+, ²NIQ Omnishopper, ³NIQ eCommerce Atlas Shipping

*Top US Retailers Index is an aggregate of 7 of the largest, non-Amazon, US retailers by 2024 sales

Amazon 1P will soon be a \$15 billion a year food business



Source: NielsenIQ Retail Measurement | 52 w.e 01.24.2026, Total Pasta (Ref., Frozen, Dry)

Amazon has become more price competitive in key categories

Super Category	Amazon Today	Total US xAOC Today	Amazon vs. xAOC Today	Amazon vs. xAOC YA
Dry Pasta	\$3.15 (-6%)	\$1.91 (+1%)	64.7%	77.6%
Pasta Sauce	\$2.44 (+6%)	\$2.29 (+1%)	6.5%	2.1%
Refrigerated Pasta	\$7.12 (-20%)	\$7.03 (+1%)	1.4%	28.4%
Frozen Pasta	\$6.78 (+6%)	\$3.81 (+1%)	78.2%	69.7%

Amazon Avg. EQ Price Gap Closing

...and key categories are maintaining position and rising in Amazon Core rankings

2026 Rank	YoY Rank Δ	Category
80	NC	Dry Pasta
128	+9	Pasta Sauce
626	+50	Refrigerated Pasta
672	+179	Frozen Pasta

Source: NielsenIQ Retail Measurement | US NIQ Total Store Inc Fresh - 444 - Weekly (Synd), L8 Weeks w/e 01/24/25
 Source: NielsenIQ Retail Measurement | Syndicated US Estimates_Amazon KAD | Certified Categories - 444 13B

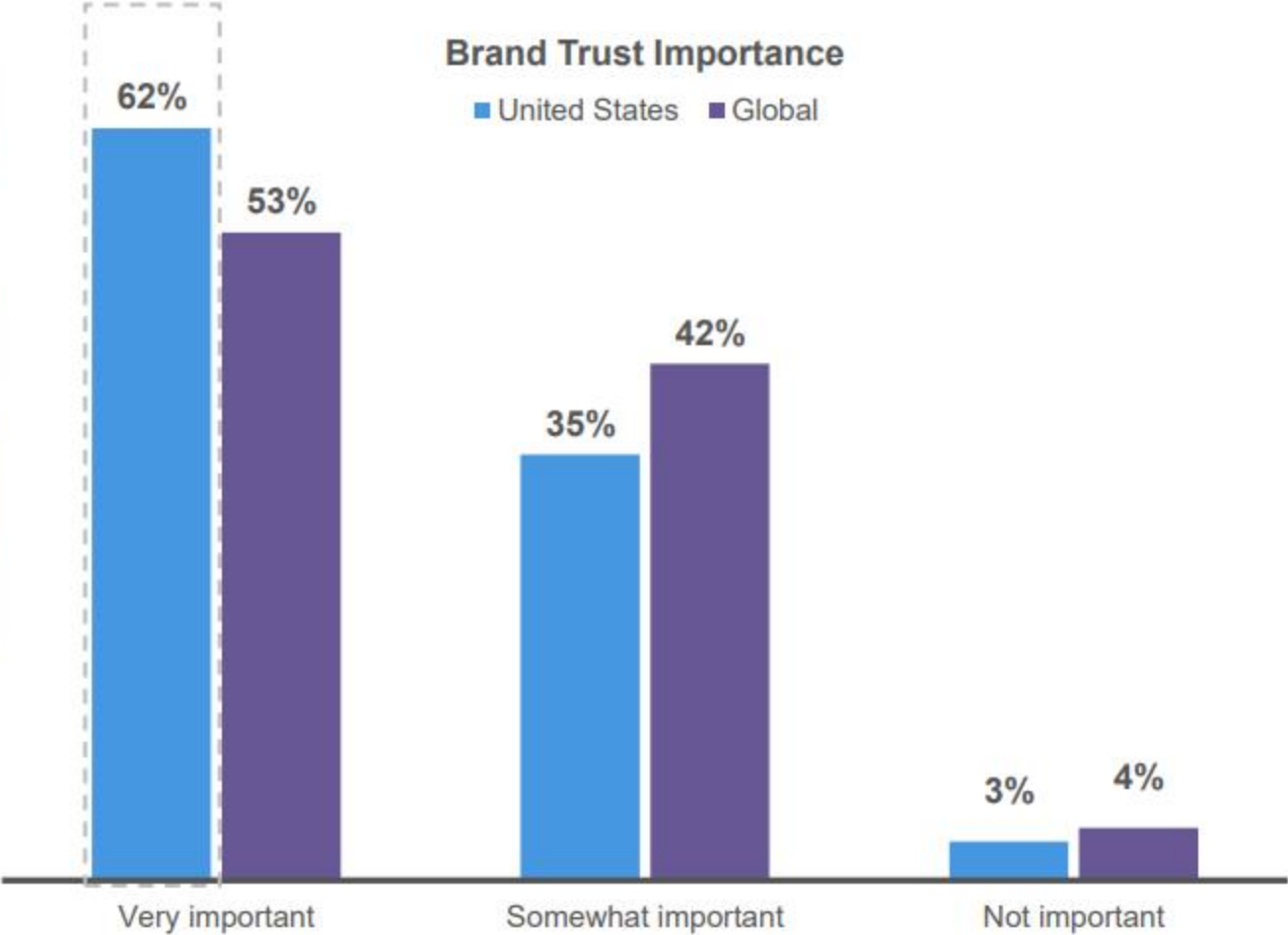
Brand Trust

Pivotal Moment as the CPG Ecosystem Absorbs Multiple Transformational and Foundational Shocks

Cultural, Technological, Institutional, Financial, Political



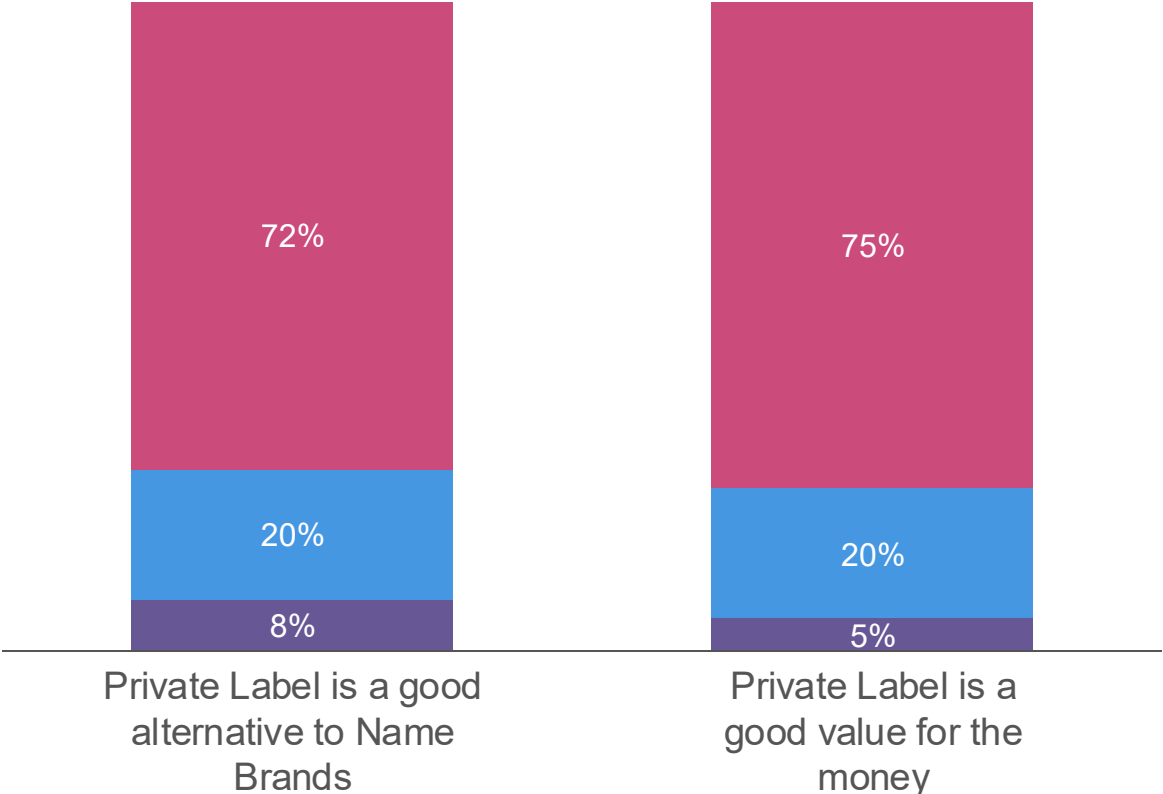
As consumers become more intentional with their saving strategies, brands have a greater emphasis on earning trust



Private Label stands up to expectations...

Perception Of Private Label Across The Store

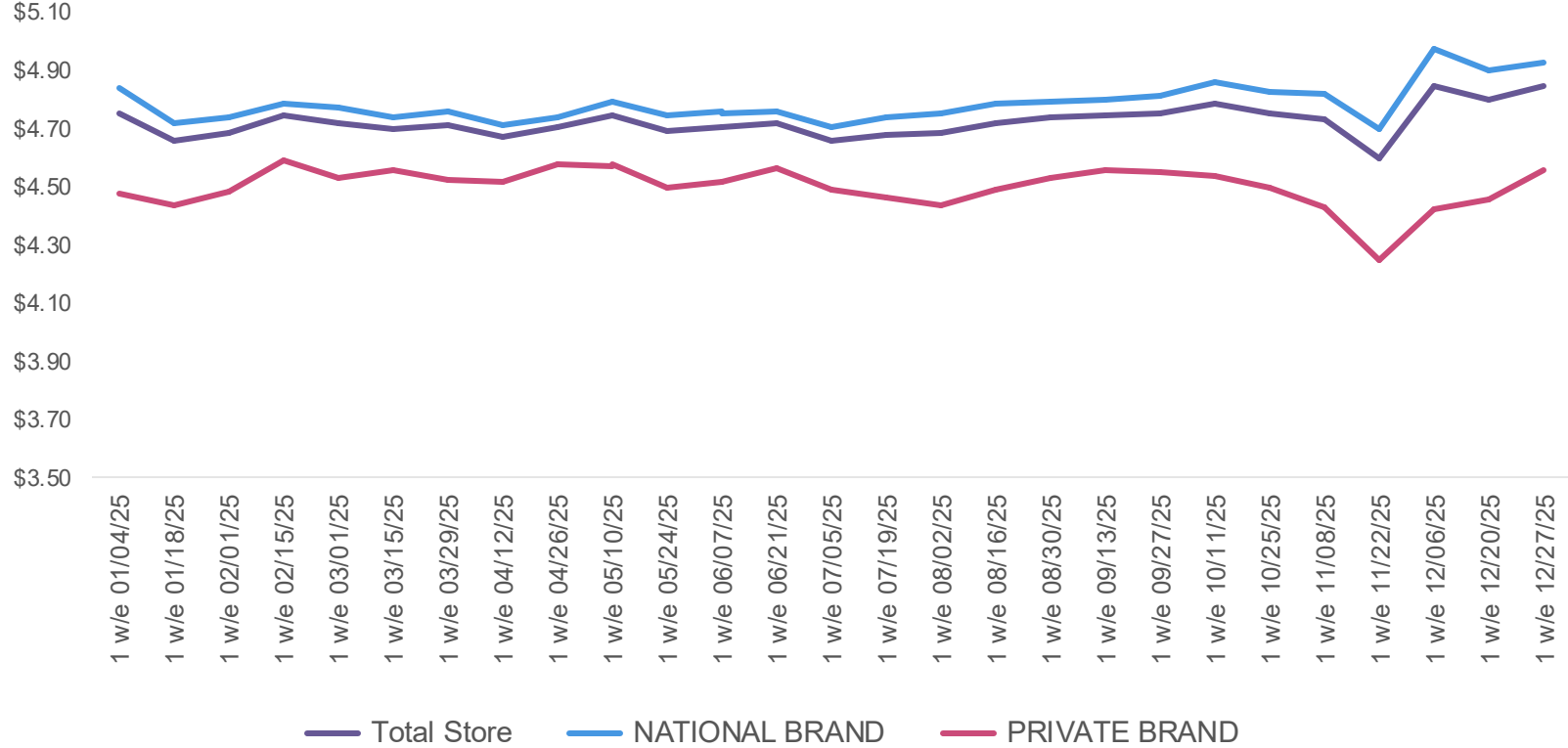
Agree Neutral Disagree



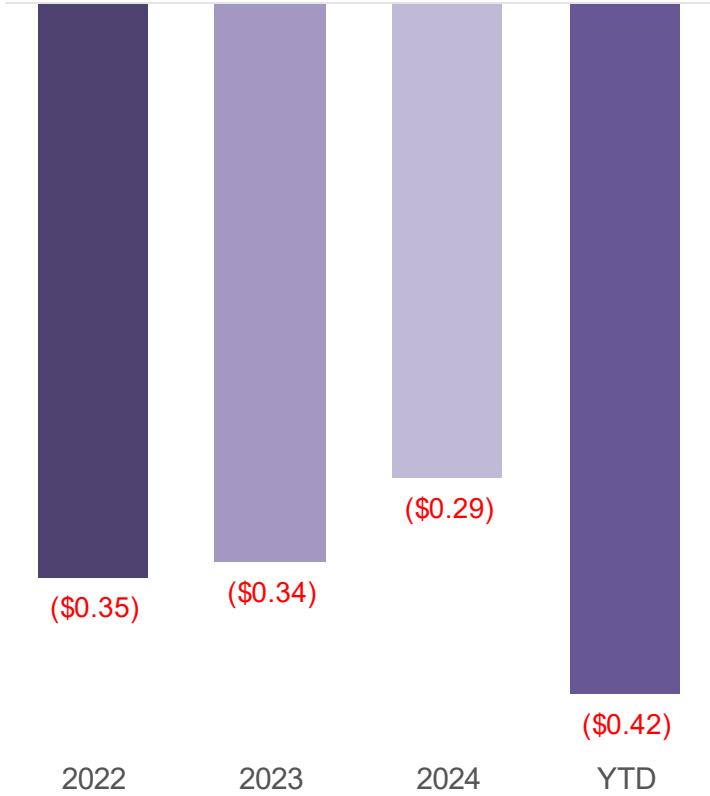
Source: NIQ, *Finding Harmony On The Shelf*, US Data, March 2025, n=1,000; Source: NIQ, BASES Snackonomics 3.0 Survey, April 2025, n=3,123

Once converging, private label price gap widens beyond 2022 levels

Total Store - Average Unit Price



Private Brand Average Gap to National Brands

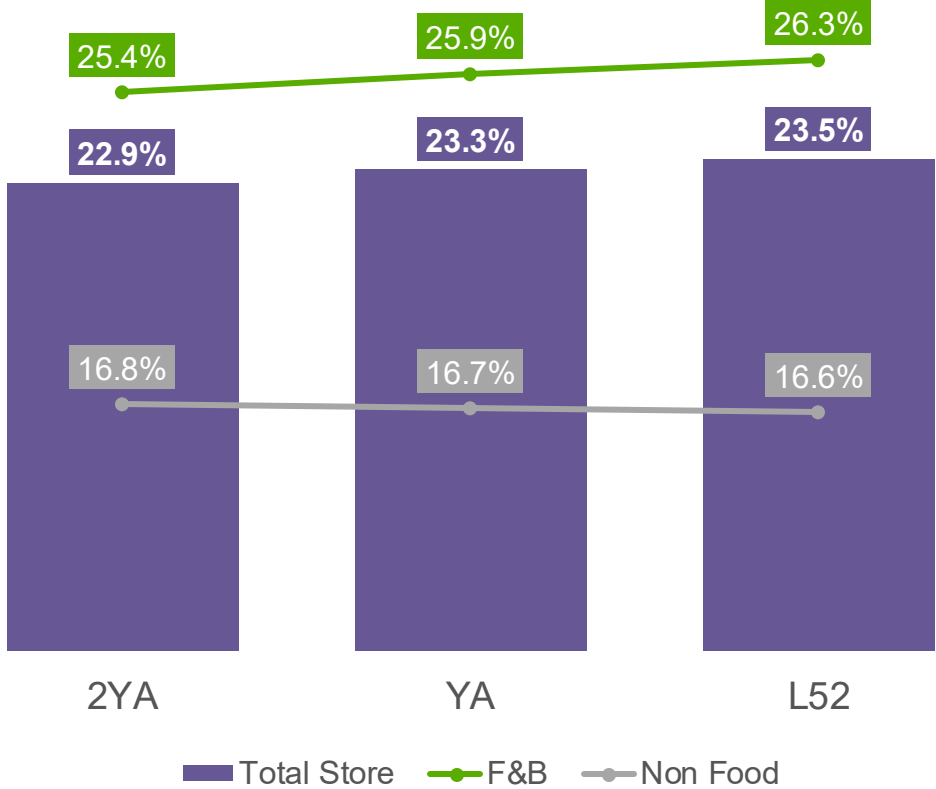


Source: Total US Full View™ (Total US xAOC + Convenience + Amazon1P + Costco), Calendar Year 2025 - W/E 12/27/25

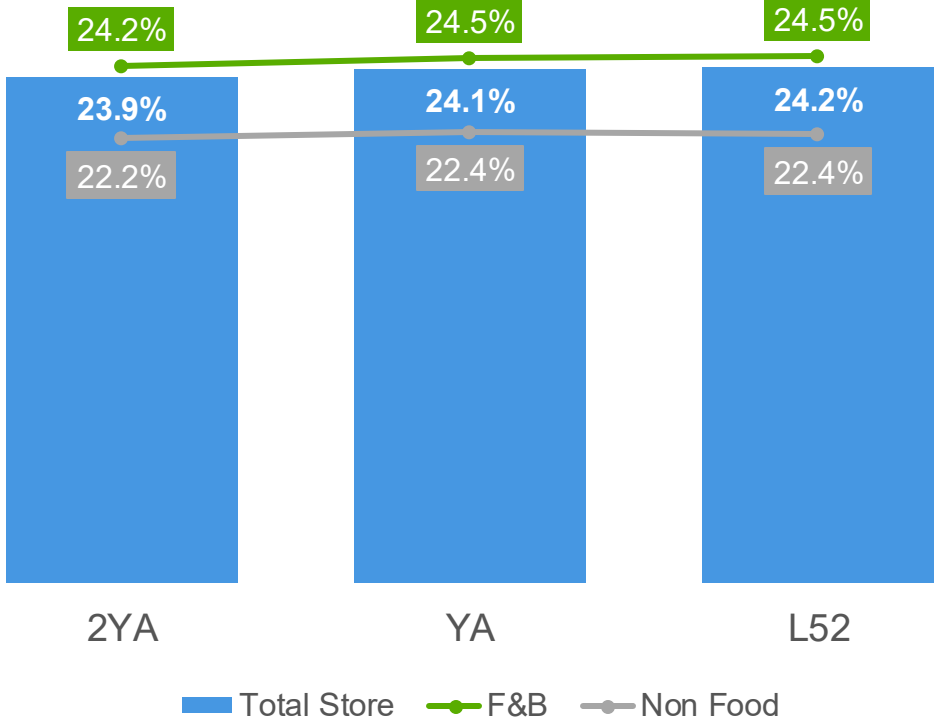
Private Label strengthens share, fueling value gains across Food & Beverage

Smaller unit share gaps observed

Private Label \$ Share



Private Label Unit Share

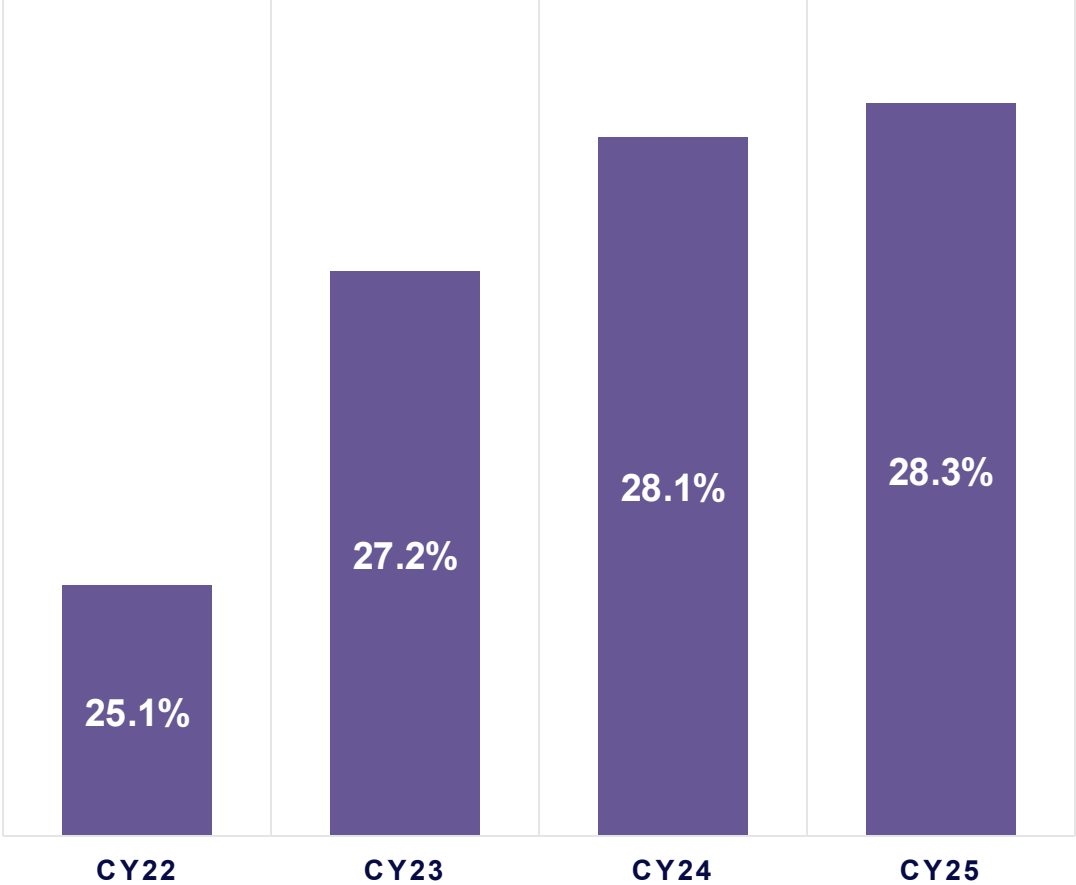


Source: NIQ, Retail Measurement Services, Full View Measurement, Total US Full View + Costco (modeled), Periods Ending 12/27/2025

Private Label gained 3.2 pts. share since 2022

While PL grew faster, direct impact to brands is minimal**

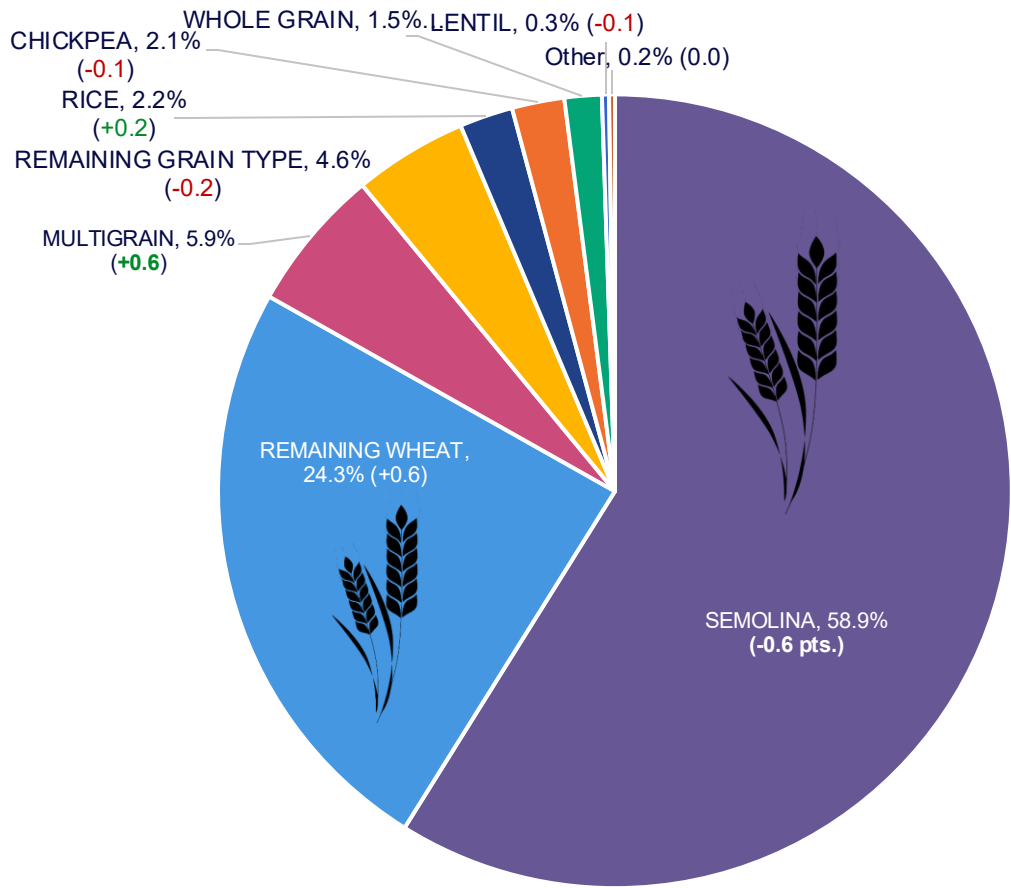
*Private Label \$ Share: Total Pasta**



Trends to Watch

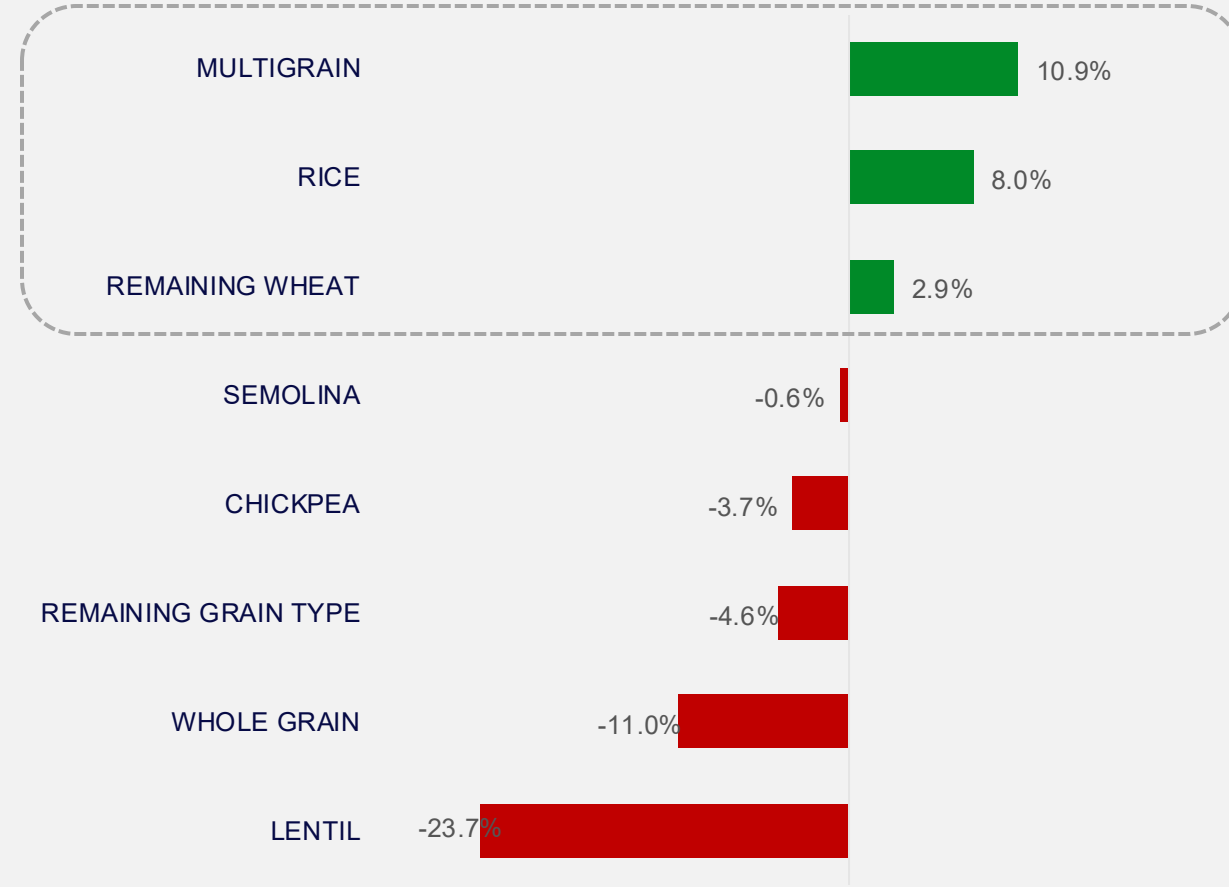
Wheat flour drives 83% of Pasta sales...

\$ Share by Grain Type



...but Multigrain, Rice and others grew faster

\$ Growth vs YA by Grain Type



Expect continued growth of 'healthful' alternatives to accommodate different diets and lifestyles

Protein, Fiber, Vitamins & Minerals stated claims are driving Total Pasta growth

*Total Pasta includes Dry, Refrigerated, and Frozen

Mainstream >\$750M

Total \$ % Chg. YA: **-0.9%**

Contracting

Kosher
(\$2.5B, -1.1% vs YA)

Non-GMO
(\$2.0B, -0.7% vs YA)

Made in USA
(\$1.0B, -0.6% vs YA)

Established >\$200M

Total \$ % Chg. YA: **+3.1%**

Growing

Artificial Flavor Free
(\$402M, +1.3% vs YA)

Protein Presence
(\$307M, +6.1% vs YA)

Lactose Free
(\$215M, +2.2% vs YA)

Contracting

Vegan
(\$381M, -0.8% vs YA)

Sodium Free
(\$360M, -6.6% vs YA)

Gluten Free
(\$291M, -5.5% vs YA)

Emerging <\$200M

Total \$ % Chg. YA: **+11.3%**

Growing

Organic
(\$193M, +4.6% vs YA)

Good Source of Fiber
(\$187M, +16.8% vs YA)

Mineral Presence
(\$129M, +16.1% vs YA)

Plant Based
(\$127M, +12.0% vs YA)

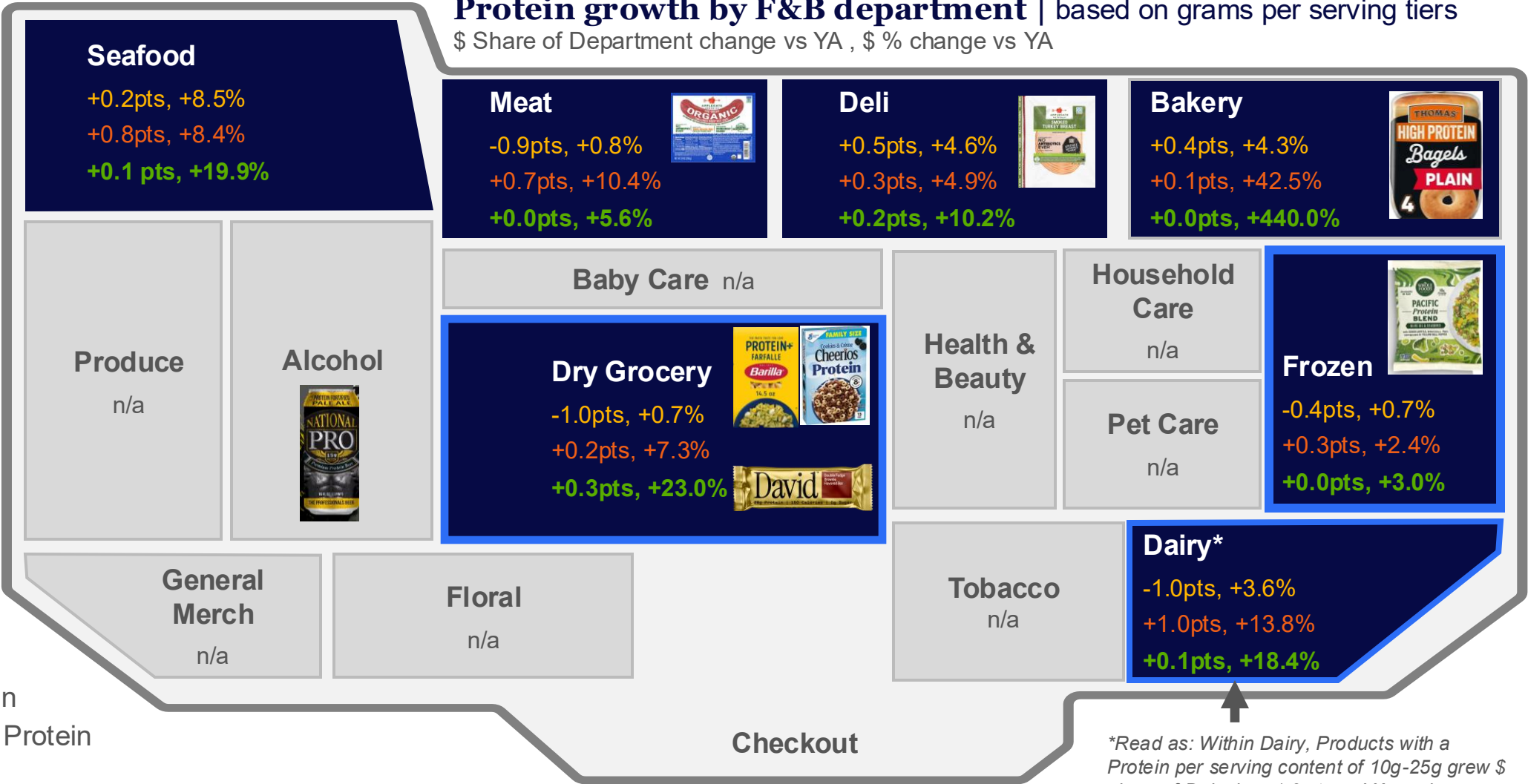
Plant Protein Source
(\$117M, +9.4% vs YA)

Good Source of Vitamins
(\$106M, +11.2% vs YA)

Source: NIQ RMS Total U.S. xAOC, CY25 52 w/e 12/27/2025. Total Pasta includes Dry, Fresh and Frozen

Protein's growth is ubiquitous across Food & Beverage

Protein growth by F&B department | based on grams per serving tiers
 \$ Share of Department change vs YA , \$ % change vs YA



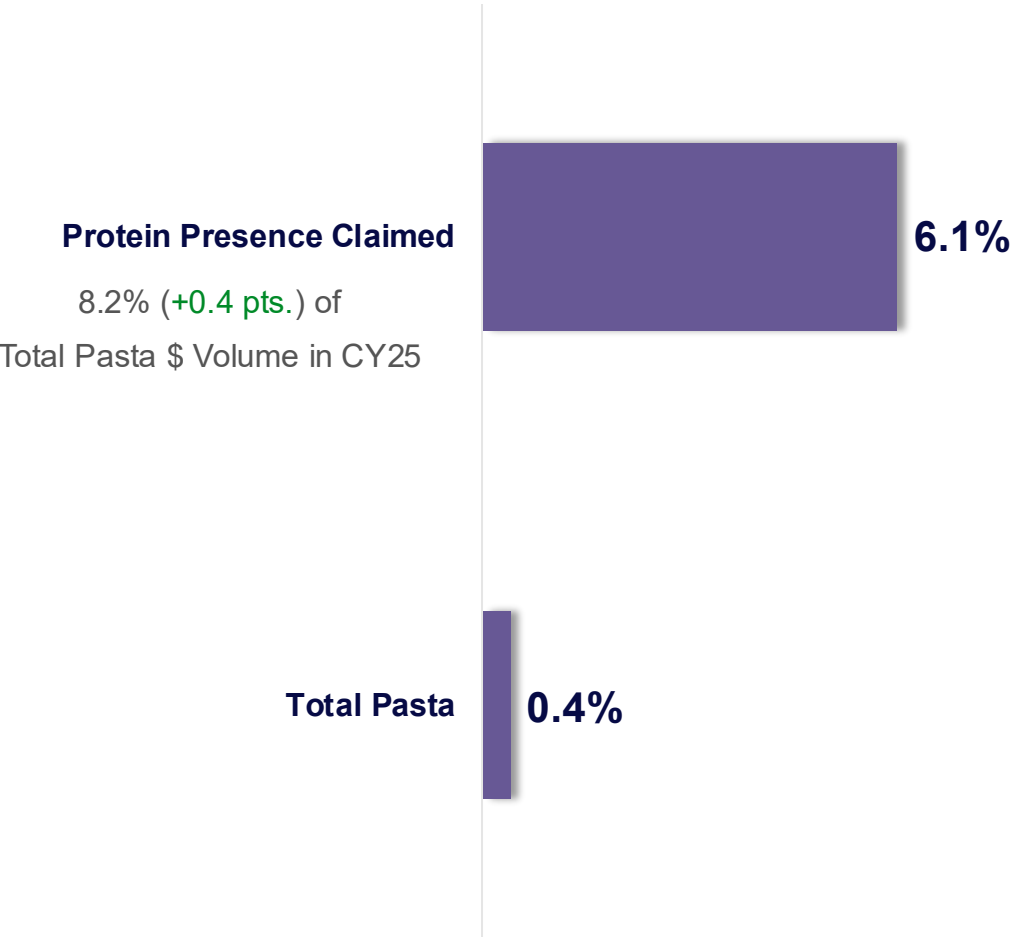
1g-10g – Light in Protein
 10g-25g – Moderate in Protein
 >25g – High in Protein

*Read as: Within Dairy, Products with a Protein per serving content of 10g-25g grew \$ share of Dairy by +1.0 pts vs YA, and grew +13.8% in \$ vs YA

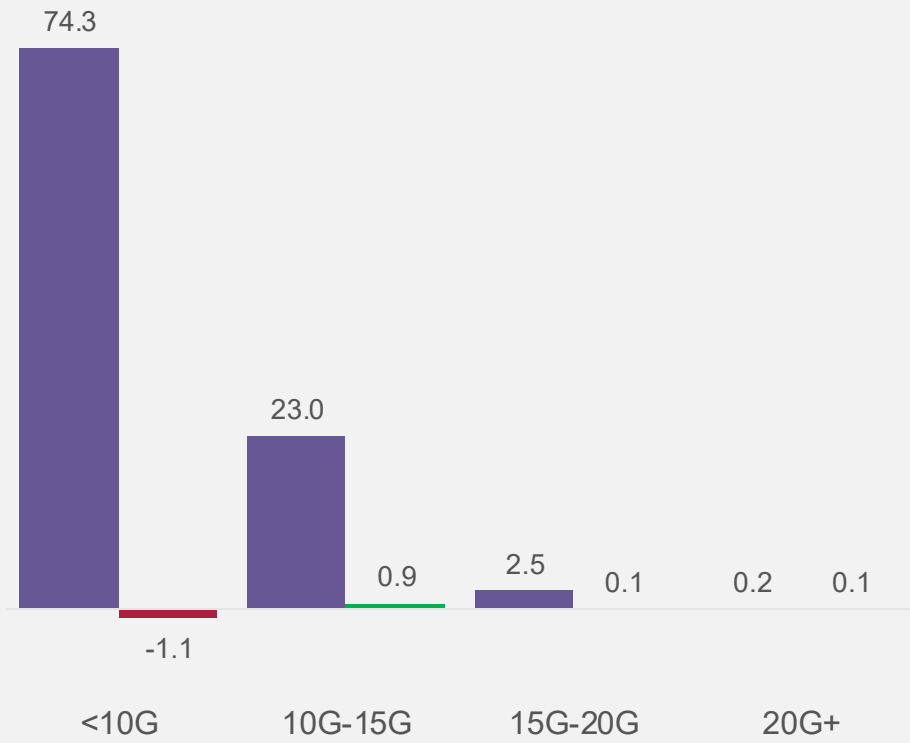
Source: Retail Measurement Services, NIQ Product Insight, powered by Label Insight, Full View Measure Total Store Syndicated Data, Full View incl xAOC, Amazon 1P, Costco, Convenience | Latest 52 weeks w/e 12/27/25

Protein Pasta outpaces the category

Dollar Growth % vs YA

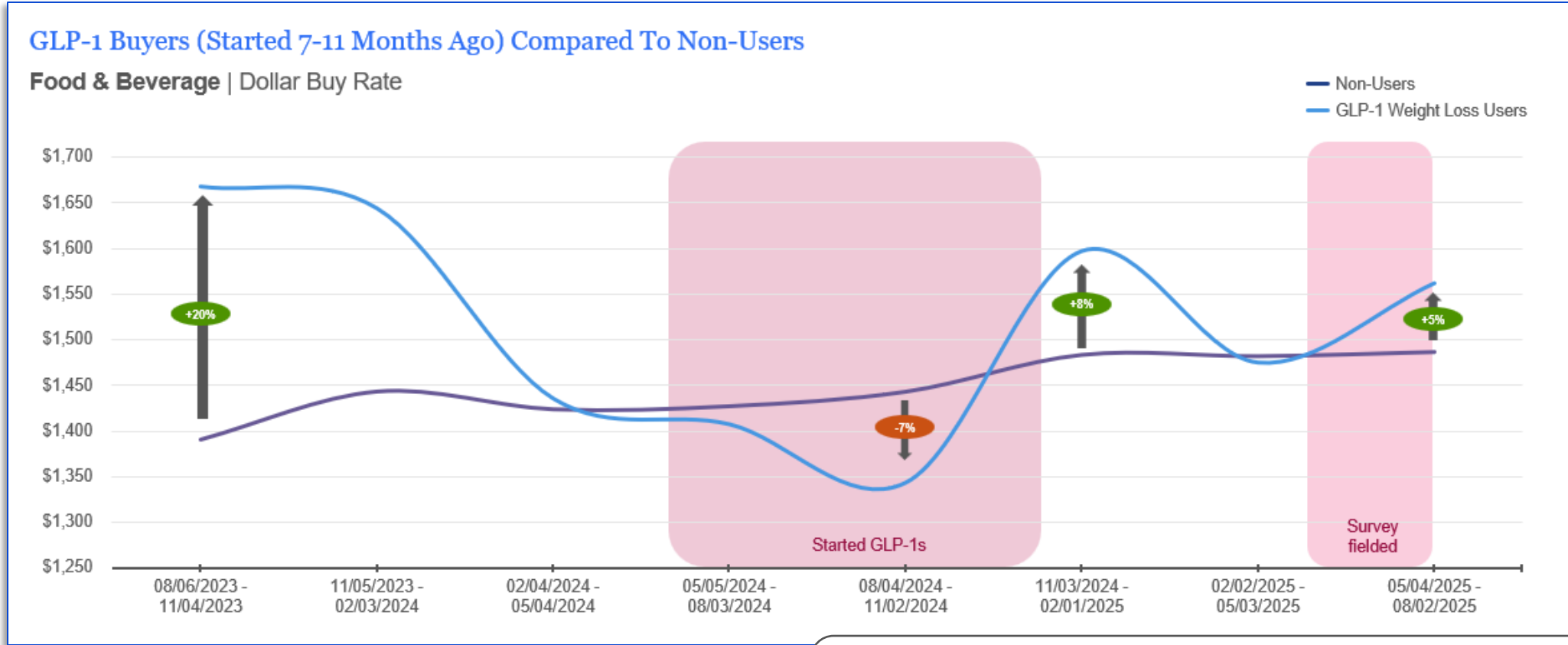


Pasta Dollar Sales Share & Change by Protein Serving Band



GLP-1s are not a weight-loss fad:
 their growth will *change the way consumers eat, prioritize health and self care*

- Protein
- Hydration
- Fiber/Gut health
- Macro & Micronutrients



GLP-1 weight loss shoppers seem to be increasingly intentional

e.g., organic, carbohydrate free, protein, sugar conscious, carb conscious, clean label, microbiome, muscle health

Source: NIQ, Homescan GLP-1 Panel Survey (Aug/Sep 2024); Total US; Total Outlets; Food & Beverages; \$ per buyer; Quarterly periods through 13 weeks ending September 28, 2024
 Source: NIQ, Homescan GLP-1 Panel Survey (Sep 2025); Total US; Total Outlets; Food & Beverages; \$ per buyer; Quarterly periods through 13 weeks ending August 2, 2025

The anti-obesity medication effect is going global

- Over one-third of Global consumers say they're likely to use a medication or drug to support weight loss. AOMs are helping millions of consumers reduce their appetites and, in turn, are **fundamentally shifting the way those who take them view food**, and their bodies.
- **>50%** of consumers are willing to pay more for:
 - Fresh products without preservatives, healthier options, and GMO-free/Organic/Natural products
- Research shows that consumers taking AOMs are consuming **up to 40% fewer calories**.
 - In the US, this is leading to a 6% reduction in grocery spend, and 9% of high-income households



Closing Remarks

- Consumer confidence is weak. As uncertainty rises, wallets tighten. It's critical that brands *communicate to consumers* through the noise.
- Fresh and Frozen Pasta are key growth drivers, but Dry Pasta remains king of the category.
- An *Omnichannel strategy* isn't an optional pillar. It is a critical requirement.
- Brand trust matters. Private Label competes on quality and will continue to rise in share as the price gap to national brands widens.
- *Protein, Protein, Protein!* But watch out: Fiber is knocking on the door.

Thank you

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