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in Safety of Food from Asia (57%) and Africa (56%)*

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Two Thirds (66%) ‘Concerned’ With the Safety of their Food

While most are ‘Confident’ in Safety of Imported Food from United States (80%) and Europe (77%), a Majority ‘not confident’ in Safety of Food from Asia (57%) and Africa (56%)

Toronto, ON – When it comes to their food, two thirds (66%) of Canadians say that they are either ‘very’ (30%) or ‘somewhat concerned’ (36%) with the safety of the food that they eat, while one third (34%) of Canadians indicate that they are ‘not really’ (22%) or ‘not at all concerned’ (12%) with the safety of their food.

With Canadians importing much of the food that they consume, the results of a new Ipsos Reid poll conducted exclusively for CanWest News and Global Television finds that Canadians are not nearly as confident in the safety of the food imported from some areas of the world as others. For example, while most (80%) Canadians claim to be either ‘very’ (29%) or ‘somewhat confident’ (51%) in the safety of the food that is imported from the United States or European Countries (25% very, 52% somewhat), Canadians do not have similar degrees of confidence in the safety of the food imported from other regions of the world. In fact, six in ten (58%) are ‘very’ (8%) or ‘somewhat confident’ (50%) in the safety of the food that comes from South America.

Turning to food that is imported from Africa, just four in ten (41%) are ‘very’ (5%) or ‘somewhat confident’ (36%) in its safety, meaning that nearly six in ten (56%) are either ‘not very confident’ (34%) or ‘not at all confident’ (22%) with the safety of the food that comes to

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Canada from this part of the world. Similar proportions are 'very' (6%) or 'somewhat confident' (35%) in the safety of the food that is imported from Asian countries, with six in ten (57%) indicating that they are either 'not very confident' (34%) or 'not at all confident' (24%) in the safety food that is imported from Asia.

Suggesting that, for many, safety concerns are placed ahead of financial concerns, three quarters (75%) of Canadians indicate that they would be willing to pay more for their food if they knew that it came from a source that underwent more rigorous safety-inspection protocols in that country and at our borders. In that regard, eight (78%) in ten Canadians say that federal food inspectors are doing a 'very good' (13%) or 'good' (65%) job, while a similar proportion (80%) say that their provincial inspectors are doing a 'very good' (13%) or 'good' (67%) job. Canadians are not quite as praising towards industry or food sector importers or processors, however, with slightly fewer (68%) Canadians indicating that these individuals and organizations do a 'very good' (7%) or 'good job' (61%).

Interestingly, two in ten (21%) Canadians report having been hit with some form of food poisoning in the past two years, while eight in ten (79%) do not believe that they have fallen ill as a result of food poisoning in the past two years. From among those that have, a majority (52%) blame 'bad or unhygienic cooking of the food that was served' by someone else who prepared it as the cause of their illness. Nearly four in ten (35%), however, believe that they became ill as a result of 'tainted food that was contaminated or unsafe before it was cooked or prepared'.

These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of CanWest News Service and Global Television from July 31 to Aug 2, 2007. For the survey, a representative randomly selected sample of 1002 adult Canadians was interviewed by telephone. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been

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had the entire adult population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were weighted to ensure that the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to Census data.

Two Thirds (66%) 'Concerned' With the Safety of their Food...

It appears that food safety is important to many Canadians, with two thirds (66%) of Canadians saying that they are either 'very' (30%) or 'somewhat concerned' (36%) with the safety of the food that they eat, while one quarter (22%) of Canadians maintain that they are 'not really' (22%) concerned. Just 12% are 'not at all concerned'.

- Residents of Saskatchewan and Manitoba are the most likely of all Canadian regions to be concerned (73%), while Quebecers are not far behind (72%). Ontarians are the least likely (62%) – in fact 16% of Ontarians are 'not at all concerned'.
- Interestingly, less than two thirds (63%) of Albertans are concerned, despite serious safety concerns in the cattle industry in the past few years.
- Women (70%) are more likely than men (61%) to be concerned about the safety of their food.
- Younger Canadians, aged 18 to 34, are among the likely (58%) to be concerned about the safety of their food, while middle-aged Canadians (70%) are among the most likely to be concerned, along with older Canadians, aged 55 and older (68%).

Canadians see Food from US and Europe as Safer than Food from South America, Africa and China...

It appears that Canadians have more confidence in the safety of food that is imported from the United States (80%) and Europe (77%) than that which is imported from South America (58%), Africa (41%) and Asia (41%). However, Quebecers appear to have less confidence in imported food than the rest of Canadians, regardless of its origin.

- While eight in ten (80%) Canadians have confidence in the safety of imported food from the United States, significantly less Quebecers (56%) have confidence in food imported from the United States. In fact, more Quebecers have confidence in the safety of the food that originated in Europe (59%). However, few Quebecers have confidence in the safety of the food that is imported from South America (37%), Asia (26%) or Africa (25%).
- Ontarians have more confidence than Canadians in other regions in food which is imported from Europe (85%), South America (66%), Africa (50%), and Asia (47%).
- Almost all residents of Saskatchewan and Manitoba (93%) have confidence in the food that comes from the United States.
- In general, younger Canadians appear to be more confident in imported food than middle-aged and older Canadians. This is particularly evident in foods that are imported from Asia (55% of younger Canadians are confident, compared to 30% of older Canadians who are confident) and Africa (53% of younger Canadians are confident, compared to 31% of older Canadians who are confident.)

Canadians (75%) Willing to Pay More for Food which undergoes more Stringent Safety Inspections...

Suggesting that, for many, safety concerns are placed ahead of financial concerns, three quarters (75%) of Canadians indicate that they would be willing to pay more for their food if they knew that it came from a source that underwent more rigorous safety-inspection protocols in that country and at our borders.

- Atlantic Canadians (82%) are the most likely of all regions in Canada to agree with this idea, while residents of Saskatchewan and Manitoba are least likely (67%) to agree with this notion.
- Middle-aged Canadians are more likely (79%) to agree than younger Canadians (69%).
- Individuals whose families earn more than \$60,000 are more likely (78%) to agree with this sentiment than individuals whose families earn less than \$30,000 a year (72%). However, it appears that even among those in a lower income bracket, safety appears to be more important than cost for most.

Canadians Believe Food Inspectors are doing a 'Good Job'...

When asked to rate the effectiveness of federal, provincial, and private safety inspectors, most Canadians say that these individuals are doing a good job. More specifically, eight in ten (78%) Canadians say that federal food inspectors are doing a 'very good' (13%) or 'good' (65%) job, while a similar proportion (80%) say that their provincial inspectors are doing a 'very good' (13%) or 'good' (67%) job.

- Atlantic Canadians are the most likely (86%) to say that federal food inspectors are doing a good job, while residents of British Columbia are the least likely (74%). That said, an overwhelming majority still agree that they are doing a good job.
- Atlantic Canadians are the most likely (88%) to say that their provincial food inspectors are doing a good job, while residents of Alberta are the least likely (75%).
- Residents of Quebec (76%) are the most likely to say that industry or food sector importers and processors are doing a good job. However, not all residents of other provinces are as favourable in their assessment. In fact, just 53% of British Columbians maintain that these individuals and organizations are doing a good job.

Two in Ten (21%) Canadians Have Suffered from Food Poisoning within the Last Two Years...

Two in ten (21%) Canadians say that they have suffered from food poisoning within the last two years. Conversely, eight in ten (79%) don't believe that they have.

- Despite being least concerned about the safety of the food that they eat, younger Canadians are the most likely (30%) of all age groups to have been struck with food poisoning in the last two years. Comparatively, two in ten (20%) middle-aged Canadians and just 13% of older Canadians have had food poisoning recently.
- Three in ten (31%) residents of British Columbia have reportedly had food poisoning within the last two years. Just 14% of Quebecers report the same.

- Interestingly, one quarter (25%) of university graduates have had food poisoning, while just 16% of those with only a high school degree, and just 15% of those without a high school diploma have reportedly had food poisoning in the past two years.

Majority (52%) of Food Poisoning Sufferers Blame Bad Cooking Practices, Although Many (35%) Cite Tainted Food before Preparation...

While a majority of Canadians who have had food poisoning blame ‘bad or unhygienic cooking of the food that was served’ by someone else who prepared it, nearly four in ten (35%), however, believe that they became ill as a result of ‘tainted food that was contaminated or unsafe before it was cooked or prepared’.

- British Columbians are the most likely (71%) to cite cooking practices as the reason for their spell of food poisoning, as opposed to a tainted product prior to cooking (19%).
- Quebecers are the least likely (21%) to blame poor cooking practices as the reason for their encounter with food poisoning, and most likely (56%) to cite a tainted product as the reason for their illness.
- In this regard, Atlantic Canadians are similar to Quebecers, but not to the same degree. Four in ten (37%) blame poor cooking practices as the reason for their illness, while slightly more (44%) blame a tainted product as the reason.
- Younger Canadians are more likely (63%) to attribute unsafe cooking practices as the reason they became ill. Older Canadians are the less likely (33%) to do so.



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For more information on this news release, please contact:

*John Wright
Senior Vice President
Ipsos Reid
Public Affairs
(416) 324-2002*

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