MAINE.
ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Consumer attitudes and preferences about made-in-Maine products across the Northeast United States

July 2024

Prepared by Atlantic Corporation in partnership with Camoin Associates for the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development. This project is commissioned by the Office of Business Development and is funded by the Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan.

ATLANTIC CORPORATION

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Executive Summary

The survey results revealed two main consumer segments. The Specialty Retail Consumers segment, the larger of the two segments, primarily includes out-of-state residents who are visitors to Maine. They trend older (35-65+) and have more discretionary income. They are motivated to purchase made-in-Maine products because of the perceived quality and uniqueness. In contrast, the smaller Commodity Retail Consumers segment is younger (18-44) and is primarily comprised of Maine residents. They purchase made-in-Maine products due to a preference for local products and a desire to support businesses in their communities. These consumers are also more price conscious than Specialty Retail Consumers and look for the best value for their money.

A majority of respondents associated Maine with “Food” (71%) followed by “Clothing and Apparel” (59%) and “Home Goods” (37%). Maple syrup was the most popular made-in-Maine product. Shellfish, blueberries, jams, jellies, and preserves were also extremely popular food items amongst respondents. Respondents indicated that they had purchased all of these products both for themselves and as gifts in the past.

Made-in-Maine products are strongly associated with quality, uniqueness, and nostalgia.[1] The connotations of high quality are especially strong with most consumers who trust Maine craftsmanship and are willing to pay a premium for products made-in-Maine. This is evident by the high degree of agreement with statements like “I love the quality of products made-in-Maine” (78%) and “I trust products made-in-Maine” (77%).

Many products have a nostalgic appeal and remind consumers of a special place, time, or group of people. Since consumers already have an emotional connection with so many products from Maine, the Department of Economic & Community Development (DECD) and Maine-based businesses may utilize this nostalgia to encourage consumers to buy more made-in-Maine products.

Strategies to leverage attitudes, boost sales, and increase customer bases include:

1. **Capitalize on nostalgia.** Since made-in-Maine products already evoke a sense of nostalgia, it may be beneficial to run a nostalgia-based top-of-funnel marketing campaign. This may persuade target consumers to consider and learn more about these products.

2. **Target specific age ranges and specific locations in campaigns.** Since the target customer segments are comprised of different age groups, it is likely that they visited specific areas in Maine and are nostalgic about different attributes or products. To succeed at nostalgia marketing, it may be important to identify what resonates with each age group.

3. **Utilize influencer marketing.** This will be useful for both consumer segments. With so many consumers buying made-in-Maine products online, including key influencers in marketing strategy may help Maine businesses and Maine products reach wider audiences. Using influencers to emphasize Maine-grown, -made, or -created products will encourage the local community to shop at local stores to keep the money they spend in the community. Similarly, influencer marketing may also prove useful in attracting consumers from out of state by showcasing the some of the key attributes that define the Maine brand—its people, products, and place.

[1] Nostalgia is defined as a sentimental longing for the past. In this case, consumers are nostalgic for a particular place (Maine) due to positive associations. Nostalgia marketing taps into these memories and familiar concepts to build trust and brand loyalty. Nostalgia Marketing: Making the Past Pay Off. LinkedIn, Accessed July 23, 2024.

1. Introduction & Methodology

This report summarizes the survey findings of consumers' attitudes and preferences about products made-in-Maine across the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states. This research is intended to inform the State of Maine's domestic trade strategy to support businesses to increase sales within the United States. This project is by the Domestic Trade Pilot Program and is funded by the Maine Jobs and Recovery Plan and the American Rescue Plan Act.

Atlantic Corporation (Atlantic) designed a consumer survey with input from Camoin Associates and the DECD. Dynata, a leading data and survey hosting platform, was engaged to program, host, and collect a nationally representative sample of 2,422 responses (n = 2,422). The data was collected from a random sample of respondents from the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states in the U.S. (Maine, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, New York, Connecticut, Maryland, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, and Delaware). This sample size allows us to apply descriptive statistics and gain insight about consumers' attitudes and preferences about products made-in-Maine across the Northeast United States. Survey data was collected June 21, 2024, through July 1, 2024.

This report includes an overview of survey methods and key findings derived from the survey data. We provide summary statistics of the consumer survey questions. From the summary statistics, we gained an understanding of 1) consumers' attitudes and preferences about products made-in-Maine and 2) consumer purchase patterns, factors motivating the purchase decision, and willingness to pay.

Understanding consumer attitudes and preferences about products made-in-Maine will have significant implications for Maine businesses, influencing how they are perceived, how they market themselves, and how they integrate the state's identity into their operations.

2. Geographic Distribution

The following table shows the distribution of the 2,422 responses to the survey by U.S. state.

Region	Frequency	Percentage of Respondents
New Jersey	351	14%
Pennsylvania	339	14%
Massachusetts	345	14%
New York	336	14%
Connecticut	276	11%
Maryland	269	11%
New Hampshire	207	9%
Vermont	104	4%
Rhode Island	86	4%
Maine	58	2%
Delaware	51	2%
Total	**2,422**	**100%**

3. Awareness & Association

A majority of respondents associated Maine with “Food” (71%) followed by “Clothing and Apparel” (59%) and home goods (37%). Research reports on Maine have shown that Maine’s food sector plays an extremely important role in the economy. Fish and seafood is one of the state’s strongest commodities for trade, representing 15% of all foreign exports out of Maine in 2022; over 70% of sales in agriculture and food manufacturing and 94% of sales from fishing are exported out of the state.[2]

Q2. Which product categories do you associate with Maine? (Select all that apply).in agriculture and food manufacturing and 94% of sales from fishing are exported out of the state.

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Food	1,726	71%
Clothing and apparel (e.g., clothing, shoes, jewelry, bags)	1,425	59%
Home goods (e.g., décor, linens, candles)	905	37%
Arts and crafts	808	33%
Furniture	735	30%
Health and beauty	607	25%
Other	101	4%

Food

The association of Maine with food (and purchase) is strongest in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic States. The Northeast (especially MA) and mid-Atlantic (NJ, NY, PA, and MD) stand out as strong market opportunities for Maine’s food sector. These areas represent markets that already import high volumes of Maine’s products.

New York and Massachusetts were the largest buyers of food and beverage products produced in Maine in 2021, together accounting for over $1 billion of exports. Seafood products alone accounted for 9% of Maine’s food and beverage exports. New York, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey all bought over $20 million of each of Maine’s manufactured seafood products.[3]

Global demand for seafood is forecasted to increase in the next several years as rising per capita disposable income has made seafood more affordable to the average consumer. With Maine’s capacity for warehousing and storage providing a core strength, Maine companies have the ability to capitalize on this trend and ship nationwide by selling products from their website. Retailers could also look at expanding into new areas like sea vegetables, sustainable seafood products, plant-based foods, etc.

[2] *Maine Department of Economic and Community Development. (July 2023.) Maine’s food sector: industry profile. inforME website. Accessed July 15, 2024.*

[3] *Maine Department of Economic and Community Development. (July 2023.) Maine’s food sector: industry profile. inforME website. Accessed July 15, 2024.*

Q5: Which category do the purchased products belong to?

Q6: In which state did you last purchase a made-in-Maine product?

The table below shows how much of each of the three main categories (i.e. Food, Clothing and Home Goods) was purchased in each state. Bolded figures indicate higher percentages in each category.

	Category		
	Clothing and apparel	Home goods	Food
Total	**54% (1,307)**	**26% (635)**	**56% (1,365)**
Maine	**12%**	**14%**	**15%**
New Jersey	10%	9%	**13%**
Pennsylvania	**12%**	**12%**	**10%**
Massachusetts	**12%**	**12%**	**11%**
New York	**12%**	**15%**	**12%**
Connecticut	11%	7%	9%
Maryland	10%	**13%**	**11%**
New Hampshire	10%	7%	9%
Vermont	6%	7%	5%
Rhode Island	4%	3%	3%
Delaware	1%	2%	2%

Clothing and apparel (e.g., clothing, shoes, jewelry, bags)

More than half the respondents (59%) also associated "Clothing and apparel" with Maine.

Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania are places where respondents purchased made-in-Maine clothing and apparel. This is in line with earlier reports in which New York and Massachusetts were seen as some of the largest buyers of textile products from Maine.[4]

4. Product Availability

More than three-fourths of the respondents (76%) were aware of products made in Maine that were either readily available in their area or by mail delivery.

Q3. Do you know of any products made in Maine that are readily available in your geographic area or by mail delivery (e.g., USPS, UPS, FedEx)?

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	1,833	76%
Unsure	441	18%
No	148	6%
Total	**2,422**	**100%**

[4] *Maine Department of Economic and Community Development. (July 2023.) Maine's food sector: industry profile. inforME website. Accessed July 15, 2024.*

Q3b: Which category do the products belong to?

	Frequency	Percentage
Clothing and apparel (e.g., clothing, shoes, jewelry, bags)	1,220	67%
Food	1,055	58%
Home goods (e.g., décor, linens, candles)	688	38%
Health and beauty	514	28%
Arts and crafts	492	27%
Furniture	427	23%
Other (please specify)	37	2%

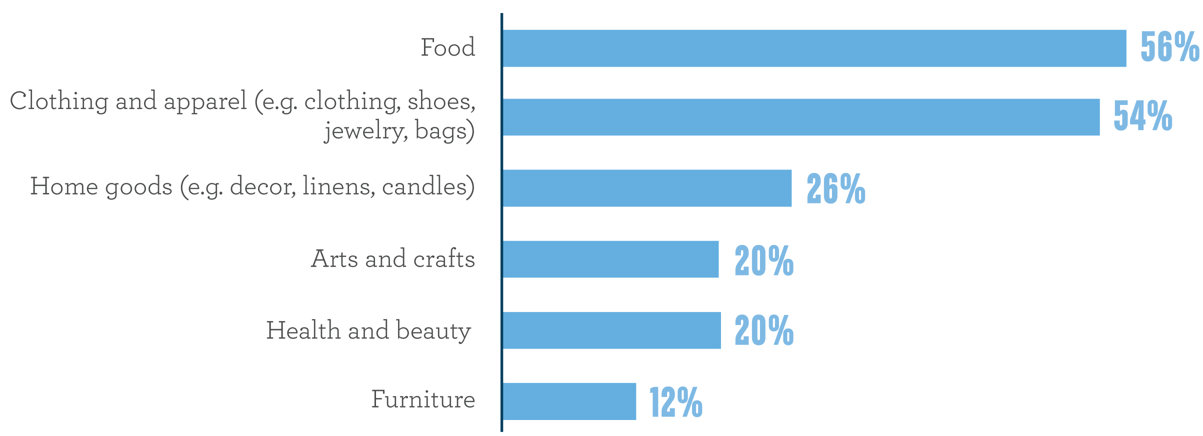
5. Shopping Habits

While a majority of respondents (57%) had purchased a product made in Maine while outside of Maine, there were also a substantial number who said they had purchased these products while in Maine.

Q4: Have you ever purchased a product that was made in Maine?

Food was the most popularly purchased product followed by clothing and apparel. **Maple syrup was the most popular made-in-Maine product purchased by respondents both for themselves and as a gift.** Shellfish, blueberries, jams, jellies, and preserves were also extremely popular food items that were purchased both for self and as gifts.

Q5: Which category do the purchased products belong to?



Q6: In which state did you last purchase a made-in-Maine product?

	Frequency	Percentage
Maine	311	13%
New Jersey	304	13%
Massachusetts	301	12%
Pennsylvania	300	12%
New York	300	12%
Maryland	252	10%
Connecticut	232	10%
New Hampshire	196	8%
Vermont	105	4%
Rhode Island	72	3%
Delaware	49	2%
Total	**2,422**	**100%**

Most purchases were made in 2023 and respondents occasionally shopped for products made-in- Maine.

Q7: In which year did you last purchase a made-in-Maine product?

	Frequency	Percentage
2023	1,439	59%
2022	351	14%
2021	152	6%
2020	60	2%
Before 2020	420	17%
Total	**2,422**	**100%**

Q8: How often do you purchase products made-in-Maine?

	Frequency	Percentage
Occasionally	1,456	60%
Rarely	645	27%
Frequently	321	13%
Total	**2,422**	**100%**

6. Purchasing Behavior

Eight out of ten respondents appeared to purchase made-in-Maine products for themselves. Considering that a majority of respondents have only visited Maine, these purchase decisions appear to have been driven by nostalgic memories of their visits. Made-in-Maine products/ gifts appear to have a special ability to remind consumers of a place, time, or group of friends that meant a lot to them. Retailers will need to capitalize on this emotional attachment and leverage this nostalgia to encourage consumers to buy more products made-in-Maine.

Q9: Do you usually purchase made-in-Maine products for yourself or for giving as a gift? Please note that we are not asking about every single purchase occasion and only trying to get a general idea.

	Frequency	Percentage
I purchase products made in Maine for myself	2,003	83%
I purchase products made in Maine to give as gifts	419	17%
Total	**2,422**	**100%**

Q24: Have you ever lived in the state of Maine?

	Frequency	Percentage
No	1,974	82%
Yes, I previously lived in Maine	276	11%
Yes, I am a current resident	172	7%
Total	**2,422**	**100%**

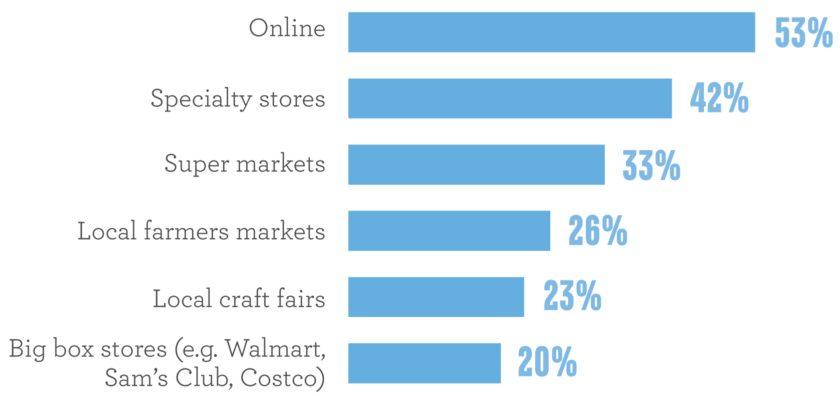
Q24b: How often do you visit Maine?

	Frequency	Percentage
I have visited Maine a handful of times	985	44%
I have visited Maine once	404	18%
I visit Maine annually	327	15%
I have never visited Maine	323	14%
I visit Maine frequently (weekly, monthly, bi-annually, etc.)	211	9%
Total	**2,250**	**100%**

7. Point of Purchase

More than half the respondents mentioned that they purchased made-in-Maine products online. The widespread presence of ecommerce and online channels is projected to see even more growth in the future. Online platforms, social media, and influencers will play an increasingly important role in retail success. **With so many consumers buying made-in-Maine products online, including key influencers in their marketing strategy will help Maine businesses and Maine products reach wider audiences.** Younger consumers especially trust product recommendations from influencers and investing in influencer marketing will go a long way in appealing to this segment.

Q10: Where do you usually purchase made-in-Maine products?



Influencer marketing capitalizes on the established trust and credibility influencers have fostered with their audiences. Nearly three-quarters of millennials and Gen Zers follow influencers on social media.

Notably, 50% of millennials trust influencers' product recommendations, compared to 38% who trust product recommendations from celebrities.

Thirty-three percent of Gen Zers have purchased a product following an influencer's suggestion in the past three months. This underscores the significant sway that digital personalities hold over younger consumers seeking guidance in product selections and lifestyle choices.

Source: Kuzminov, M. The Power of Influencer Marketing: Your Strategic Investment for Success. January 5, 2024. Forbes.

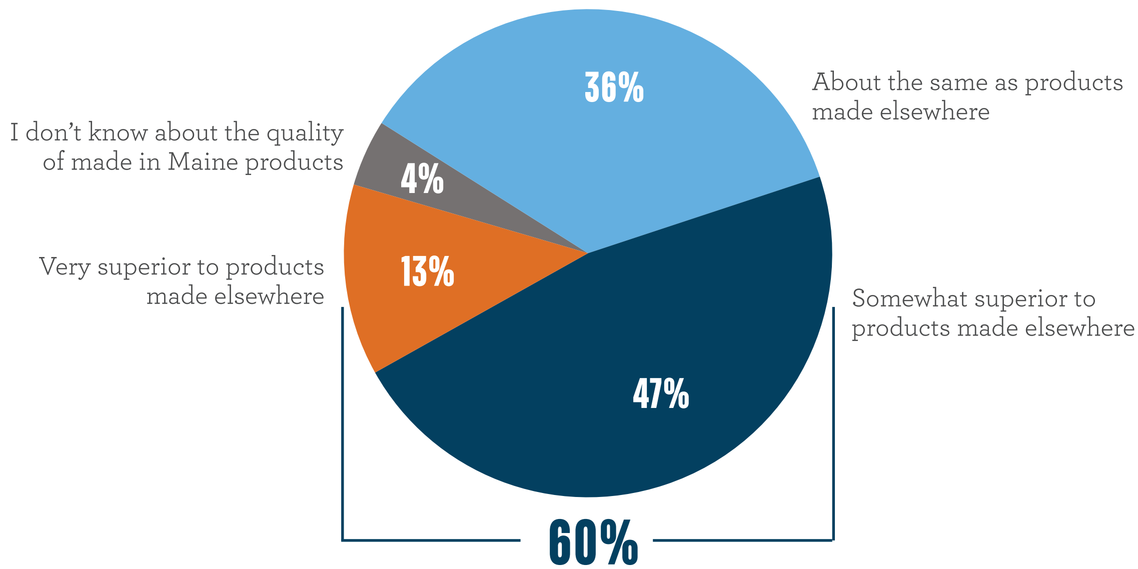
8. Perceptions About Made-in-Maine Products

Made-in-Maine products are strongly associated with quality, uniqueness, and nostalgia.

Quality

The perceived quality of made-in-Maine products was high with 60% of respondents stating that the quality was "very superior" or "somewhat superior" to products made elsewhere. **This perception of high quality was also observed in respondents who had never lived in the state of Maine and were primarily visitors.** The combination of pure materials and attention to detail has always characterized Maine craftsmanship and the label "Maine Made" signifies both quality and integrity.

Q12: Do you think the quality of made-in-Maine products is superior to products made elsewhere?



Q24.Have you ever lived in the state of Maine?

	Total respondents	About the same as products made elsewhere	Somewhat superior to products made elsewhere	Very superior to products made elsewhere
	2,422	871	1137	307
No	**1,974**	**773**	**947**	**160**
Yes, I am a current resident	172	39	53	73
Yes, I previously lived in Maine	276	59	137	74

The connotations of high quality are very strong with most consumers willing to pay a premium for products made-in-Maine. 84% of consumers were positively disposed towards paying a premium, with 43% stating "Yes" they would be willing to pay a premium for products made-in-Maine.

Q13: Would you be willing to pay a premium for products made-in-Maine?

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	**1,053**	**43%**
Maybe	**986**	**41%**
No	383	16%
Total	**2,422**	**100%**

How much more are consumers willing to pay for products and services made-in-Maine?

22%

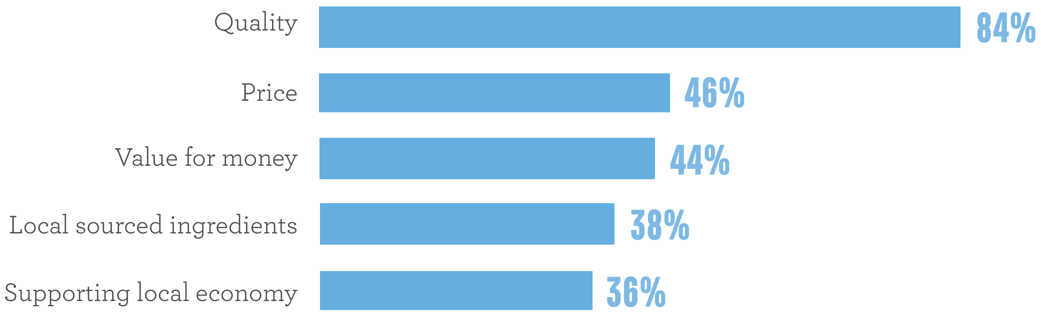
"Outside of the state, the Maine brand is associated with quality craftsmanship and outdoor recreation. We are seen as leaders in the outdoor industry, which helps as a stamp of approval for potential customers who are learning about us for the first time."

Source: Maine Brand Study. What is the Maine Brand? University of Maine.

The state's appeal goes well beyond lobsters and lighthouses. The Maine brand is often centered on a perception of authenticity, durability and a sense of place.[5]

In addition, for people who are willing to pay a premium, high quality is the primary influencing factor.

Q11: Which of the following factors influence your decision to buy products made-in-Maine?



Among people who stated definitely that they would be willing to pay a premium for Maine-in-Maine products, 90% chose "Quality" as the primary influencing factor.

	Total	Would you be willing to pay a premium for products made in Maine?	
		Yes	Maybe
Total	**2,422**	**1,053**	**986**
Quality	**84%**	**90%**	**82%**
Price	46%	46%	45%
Value for money	44%	48%	44%
Locally sourced ingredients	38%	45%	35%
Supporting local economy	36%	42%	33%

9. Attitudes Towards Made-in-Maine Products

Made-in-Maine products are trusted by consumers who believe that these Maine made products and services are of superior quality and craftsmanship. This is evident by the high degree of agreement with statements like "I love the quality of products made-in-Maine" (78%) and "I trust products made-in-Maine" (77%).

Q16: We would like to better understand why you purchase products made-in-Maine. Please look at the statements given below and indicate the extent to which you agree with them using the scale provided. (Strongly disagree 1 - Strongly agree 5).

	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
I like buying unique gifts	38%	43%	81%
I love the quality of products made-in-Maine	42%	36%	78%
I trust products made-in-Maine	43%	34%	77%
I like supporting Maine small businesses	38%	37%	75%
I think that products made-in-Maine are steeped in New England history and tradition	39%	31%	70%
I like buying local products made-in-Maine	38%	31%	69%
It is important that the money I spend is going to stay in my own community	27%	18%	45%
I like to stay connected to Maine while living “away”	25%	19%	44%

Uniqueness and Nostalgia

Products and gifts from Maine can be unique because they can remind people of the state’s natural beauty, historic sites, and local products. Made-in-Maine products and gifts have a special ability to remind consumers of a place, time, or group of people that meant a lot to them. Beach stones, sea glass, pine scent, charts and maps, driftwood, and buoys are examples of products that are reminiscent of Maine and can elicit past memories of the state.

Popular items include:

- Food products like maple syrup, blueberries, lobsters, jams, jellies, sauces, etc.
- Coastal or ocean-inspired clothing and home décor

Since consumers already have an emotional connection with so many products from Maine, the DECD, Maine-based businesses, and other stakeholders can leverage this nostalgia to encourage consumers to buy more made-in-Maine products. In fact, the connection to Maine is so strong that a number of consumers bought food items, clothing, and home décor both for themselves and as unique gifts for friends and family.

Q14: Which of the following made-in-Maine products have you purchased before for yourself?

Q15: Which of the following made-in-Maine products have you purchased before as gifts?

The table below shows the key products that consumers purchased for themselves and as gifts.

Product	For Self	As a Gift
Maple syrup	57%	39%
Clothing and apparel (e.g., clothing, shoes, jewelry, bags)	52%	37%
Shellfish (e.g., lobster, mussels, clams, oysters)	43%	15%
Blueberries	34%	12%
Jams, jellies, and preserves	28%	21%
Home goods (e.g., décor, linens, candles)	28%	22%

Most respondents were either “always” or “usually’ aware (85%) of the origin of a product before they purchased it. These are also educated and informed consumers who look for information about the product before a purchase. Including labels, tags, and/or store signage that indicates the Maine origin of a particular product may be an important strategy as the majority of consumers rely on this messaging when shopping (85%). With 40% of consumers claiming to look online for information, investing in a strong digital marketing strategy and leveraging influencer marketing may go a long way towards supporting Maine businesses and increasing their target audience.

Q17: Are you aware of a product’s origin prior to purchase?

	Frequency	Percentage
I am usually aware	1,712	71%
I am not aware	372	15%
I am always aware of and particular about where my products come from	338	14%
Total	**2,422**	**100%**

Q18: How do you get information about the geographic origin of a product prior to purchase?

	Frequency	Percentage
I look for a label, tag, or store signage	1,859	77%
I look for the brand name	1,110	46%
I look online for information about the geographic origin before purchasing	963	40%
I ask the store personnel	485	20%
I do not care about the geographic origin of a product	108	4%

10. Segmentation Demographics and Psychographics

Regression and proportion analysis of the survey data was run to identify correlations between attitudes about made-in-Maine products, purchase patterns, and the demographics of respondents. This was followed by a cross tabulation of each segment with their purchasing behavior and issues that were important to them. Through this analysis, two consumer segments were identified based on attitudes and purchasing behaviors.

Segment 1: Specialty Retail Consumers (Larger Segment)

The Specialty Retail Consumer segment is comprised of White consumers who are primarily visitors that have visited or continue to visit Maine. They are between 35 to 65+ years old, trending toward older adults, with more discretionary income. They are willing to pay a premium to buy products made-in-Maine and quality is the motivating factor. They buy mainly food items or clothing and apparel (e.g., clothing, shoes, jewelry, bags) both for themselves and as gifts. Maple syrup, shellfish, and blueberries are popular food items purchased.

These consumers have purchased made-in-Maine products primarily in New York, New Jersey, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. They purchase online or from specialty stores and are convinced the quality of made-in-Maine products is superior to products made elsewhere. This customer segment likes to buy unique gifts and trusts products made-in-Maine. They are educated and informed about the origin of a product prior to purchase and make it a point to look at the brand name, labels, tag and/or store signage to determine product origin.

These consumers care about history and tradition and highly agree with statements like "I think that made-in-Maine products are steeped in coastal and New England history and tradition." They want to buy and gift products that reflect these same values.

Specialty Retail Consumers get their news from internet news sites, blogs, and social media. They are active on Facebook and Instagram. Some of the specialty retail stores they frequent include Best Buy, Home Depot, and Dick's Sporting Goods.

Specialty Retail Consumers are occasional purchasers, and there is likely an emotional attachment motivating the purchase. Retailers looking to increase their footprint may benefit from tapping into the inherent nostalgia experienced by these consumers and similarly align goods and marketing strategies to promote sales.

Segment 2: Commodity Retail Consumers (Smaller Segment)

The Commodity Retail Consumers segment primarily consists of local residents who are majority White. They are also younger consumers (18 to 44 years of age).

The Commodity Retail Consumer segment purchases made-in-Maine products from local farmers markets and craft fairs. Although they believe in the higher quality of made-in-Maine products, their purchase decisions are also heavily influenced by their preference toward buying products with locally sourced ingredients and supporting the local economy. They purchase local products to support local, small businesses. There is a high degree of agreement with statements like "It is important that the money I spend is going to stay in my own community," "I like supporting Maine small businesses" and "I like buying local products made in Maine."

This consumer segment is more price conscious and looking for value for money. Of all product groups, they are most likely to buy food, clothing, and/or furniture. They get their news from internet news sites, blogs and social media. They are active on Facebook and Instagram with younger consumers more active on Instagram.

11. Demographics

Q19: Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18–24	190	8%
25-34	310	13%
35-44	488	20%
45-54	375	15%
55-64	425	18%
65+	634	26%
Total	**2,422**	**100%**

Q20: Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	1242	51%
Male	1166	48%
Other/Prefer not to answer	14	1%
Total	**2422**	**100%**

Q21: Which race or ethnicity best describes you?

Race	Frequency	Percentage
White/Caucasian	1,900	78%
Black/African American	272	11%
Hispanic/Latino/Latinx	101	4%
Asian	63	3%
Multiple races and ethnicities – please specify	26	1%
Prefer not to answer	21	1%
Other - Please specify	19	1%
Native American or Alaska Native	18	1%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	2	0%
Total	**2,422**	**100%**

Q22: Marital Status

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Married or in a domestic partnership	1,366	56%
Single, never married	686	28%
Divorced/Separated	265	11%
Widowed	105	4%
Total	**2,422**	**100%**

Q25: Which option best describes where you live?

	Frequency	Percentage
Suburban	1314	54%
Urban	689	28%
Rural	419	17%
Total	**2422**	**100%**

Q26: Which best describes your current living situation?

	Frequency	Percentage
Homeowner	1,514	63%
Renter with partner or spouse	329	14%
Single occupant renter	304	13%
Living with a relative in a home they own	135	6%
Renter with non-familial roommate(s)	119	5%
No permanent residence	20	1%
Seasonal renter	1	0%
Total	**2,422**	**100%**

Q27: How many people are currently living in your household full-time?

	Frequency	Percentage
1	481	20%
2	869	36%
3	394	16%
4	417	17%
5	159	7%
6	60	2%
7	22	1%
8	8	0%
9	6	0%
10+	6	0%
Total	**2,422**	**100%**

Q28: Do you currently have any children under the age of 18 living with you?

	Frequency	Percentage
No	1,637	68%
Yes	785	32%
Total	**2422**	**100%**

Q29: Where do you currently get the majority of your news?

	Frequency	Percentage
Television	1,728	71%
Internet news site	1,283	53%
Social media	1,066	44%
Newspaper – online	831	34%
Radio	728	30%
Newspaper – hard copy	444	18%
Internet blog	355	15%
Magazines – online	318	13%
Magazines – hard copy	219	9%
Other (please specify)	33	1%

Q30: Which social media channels are you most active on?

	Frequency	Percentage
Facebook	912	38%
Instagram	450	19%
YouTube	372	15%
TikTok	173	7%
X (formally Twitter)	166	7%
I do not use social media	143	6%
LinkedIn	85	4%
WhatsApp	49	2%
Pinterest	44	2%
Snapchat	26	1%
BeReal	2	0%

Q31: Which of the following retail stores have you visited?

	Frequency	Percentage
Home Depot	2093	86%
Best Buy	1941	80%
Barnes & Noble	1592	66%
Ulta Beauty	1058	44%
Williams-Sonoma	750	31%
Bass Pro Shops	789	33%
REI	585	24%
Dick's Sporting Goods	1650	68%
Pottery Barn	830	34%
None of the above	41	2%

Q32: What is your current level of education?

	Frequency	Percentage
Less than high school	14	1%
High school (including GED)	355	15%
Some college (no degree)	373	15%
Technical certification	73	3%
Associate degree (2-year)	232	10%
Bachelor's degree (4-year)	707	29%
Master's degree	487	20%
Doctoral degree	102	4%
Professional degree (JD, MD)	79	3%
Total	**2,422**	**100%**

Q33: Which of the following best describes your annual household income?

	Frequency	Percentage
Under $25,000	233	10%
$25,001 - $50,000	457	19%
$50,001 - $100,000	782	32%
$100,001 - $250,000	792	33%
$250,001 - $300,000	78	3%
Over $300,000	80	3%
Total	**2,422**	**100%**

12. Conclusion

A majority of respondents associated Maine with "Food" (71%) followed by "Clothing and Apparel" (59%) and home goods (37%). Made-in-Maine products are strongly associated with quality, uniqueness, and nostalgia. The connotations of high quality are, especially, very strong with most consumers willing to pay a premium for products made-in-Maine.

Made-in-Maine products are trusted by consumers who believe that products and services made- -in-Maine are of superior quality and craftsmanship. This is evident by the high degree of agreement with statements like "I love the quality of products made in Maine" (78%) and "I trust products made in Maine" (77%).

Food was the most popularly purchased product followed by clothing and apparel. Maple syrup was the most popular made-in-Maine product purchased by respondents both for themselves and as a gift. Shellfish, blueberries, jams, jellies, and preserves were also extremely popular food items that were purchased both for self and as gifts.

Made-in-Maine products/gifts have a special ability to remind consumers of a place, time, or group of friends that meant a lot to them. Beach stones, sea glass, pine scent, charts and maps, driftwood, and buoys are all reminiscent of Maine and can elicit past memories of Maine. Since consumers already have an emotional connection with so many products from Maine, stakeholders across industries and product groups can leverage this nostalgia to encourage consumers to buy more products made-in-Maine.

Given these findings, the DECD, Maine-based businesses, and other stakeholders could take the following steps to leverage attitudes, boost sales, and increase their customer base::

1. **Capitalize on nostalgia.** Since made-in-Maine products already evoke a sense of nostalgia, it may be beneficial to run a nostalgia-based top-of-funnel marketing campaign. This may persuade target consumers to consider and learn more about these products.

2. **Target specific age ranges and specific locations in campaigns.** Since the target customer segments are comprised of different age groups, it is likely that they visited specific areas in Maine and are nostalgic about different attributes or products. To succeed at nostalgia marketing, it may be important to identify what resonates with each age group.

3. **Utilize influencer marketing.** This will be useful for both consumer segments. With so many consumers buying made-in-Maine products online, including key influencers in marketing strategy may help Maine businesses and Maine products reach wider audiences. Using influencers to emphasize Maine-grown, -made, or -created products will encourage the local community to shop at local stores to keep the money they spend in the community. Similarly, influencer marketing may also prove useful in attracting consumers from out of state by showcasing the some of the key attributes that define the Maine brand—its people, products, and place.

Using influencers to emphasize Maine-grown, -made, or -created products will encourage the local community to shop at local stores because the money they spend stays in the community, supporting small growers, processors, and artists. Similarly, influencer marketing will also prove useful in attracting consumers from out of state by showcasing the key features that define the Maine brand—its natural outdoor beauty, people, products, and place.