



Perceptions of Dairy & Make America Healthy Again

Polling by **Morning Consult** on behalf of the **International Dairy Foods Association**

 **AUGUST 2026**

Key Takeaways

- 1 MAHA awareness has risen since last September, and positive views of the movement have held steady.** Familiarity with the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) movement increased +4 points and about half continue to view the movement favorably (55%).
- 2 MAHA remains most associated with improving nutritious food access, reducing harmful additives, and vaccine skepticism.** Both Democrats and Republicans recognize MAHA's focus on food access, though Democrats continue to associate the movement with vaccine skepticism, while Republicans more often link it to reducing harmful additives in food.
- 3 Milk and yogurt carry dairy's health image; cheese and butter trail.** Consumers rate milk and yogurt as nutritious and healthy, while cheese and butter register as more accessible than healthy. Milk and dairy products overall rank among the top food groups for health, trailing only fruits, vegetables, fish and seafood, and whole grains.
- 4 Adults want affordability prioritized.** Three-quarters of adults (74%) want America's food system should prioritize making food more affordable instead of restricting the foods they can eat. Making food more affordable is also the top health priority for lawmakers to pursue among adults across party.
- 5 Adults think the government should factor nutritional value into ultra-processing definitions.** Half (48%) of adults want both processing and nutritional value considered so nutritionally-dense foods are not lumped in with packaged snack foods. Compared with 18% who favor a single definition.
- 6 Support for flavored dairy products in schools and federal nutrition programs holds regardless of ultra-processed label.** 58% of adults and 62% of parents support offering flavored dairy products in school meals and federal nutrition programs no matter how they are classified. Support for a processing and ingredients-only UPF falls -7 points after adults learn that nutrient dense foods could get classified in the same categories as packaged snacks and candy.

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AGENDA

Make America Healthy Again

Information & Policy Action

Health Perceptions of Dairy

Ultra-Processed Foods

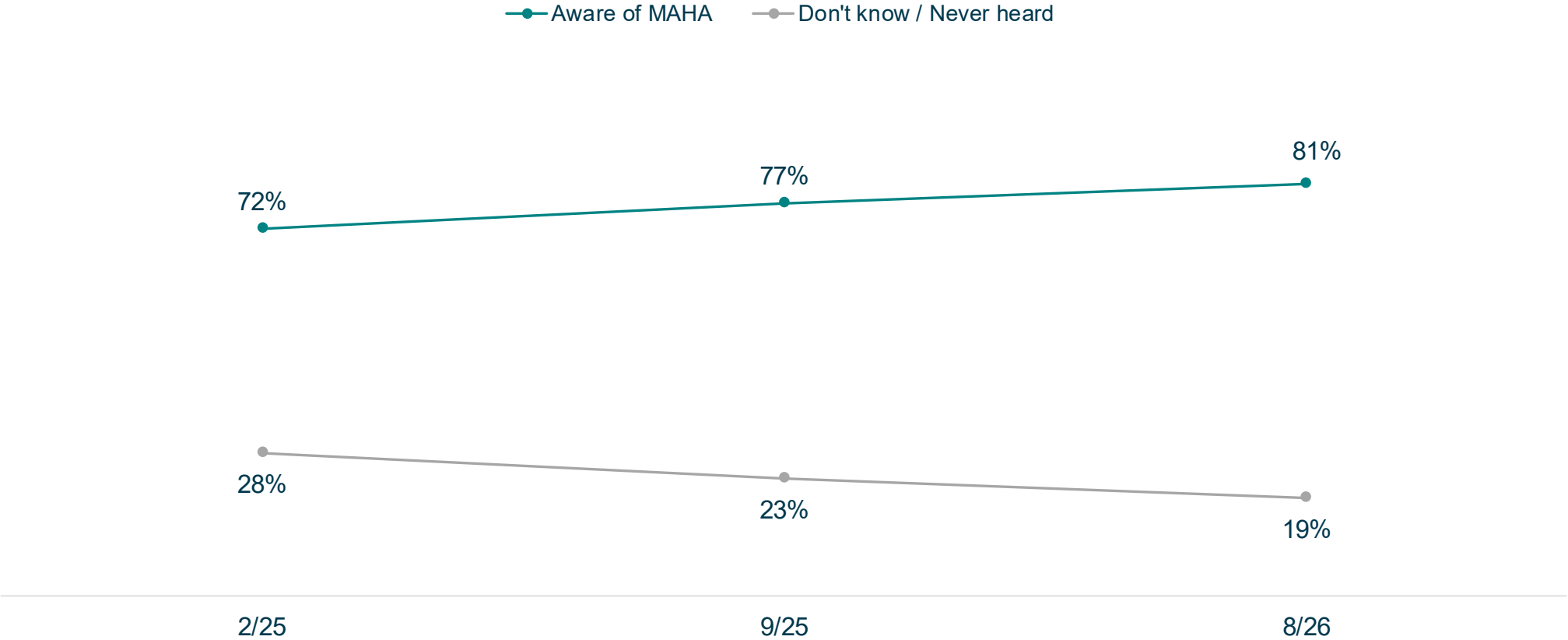
Appendix



MAKE AMERICA HEALTHY AGAIN

Awareness of the Make America Healthy Again movement continues to rise, with four-in-five adults saying they have heard of the movement– up 9 points since February 2025.

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) movement?



MAKE AMERICA HEALTHY AGAIN

Roughly two-thirds of Americans continue to associate the MAHA movement with the Republican Party.

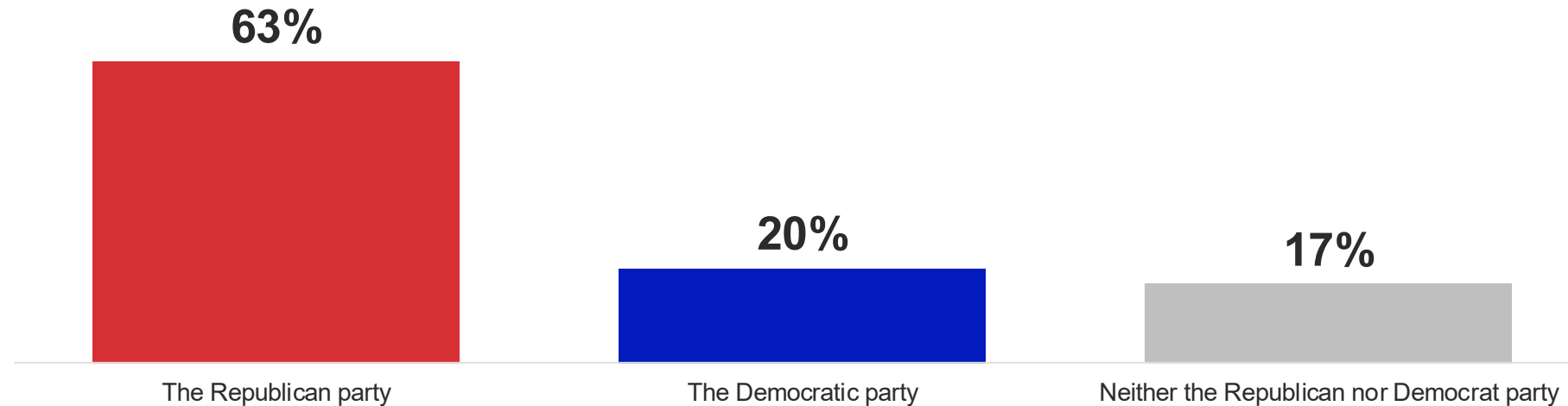
Which political party do you most associate the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) movement with? Asked among those who are aware of MAHA (n=1,778)

September 2025

Republican Party: **61%**

Democratic Party: **20%**

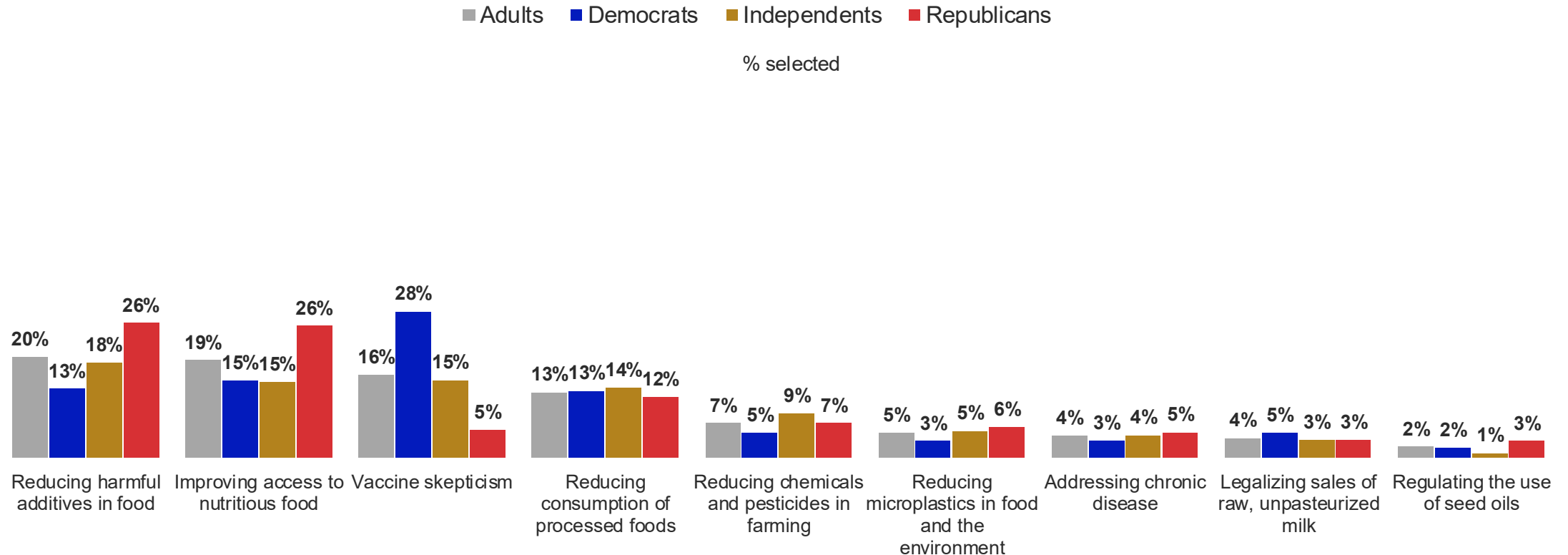
Neither: **19%**



MAKE AMERICA HEALTHY AGAIN

Democrats most often link MAHA to skepticism toward vaccines, while Republicans see it mainly as a food and nutrition movement. One-in-four Republicans associate the movement with reducing harmful additives in food or improving access to nutritious food.

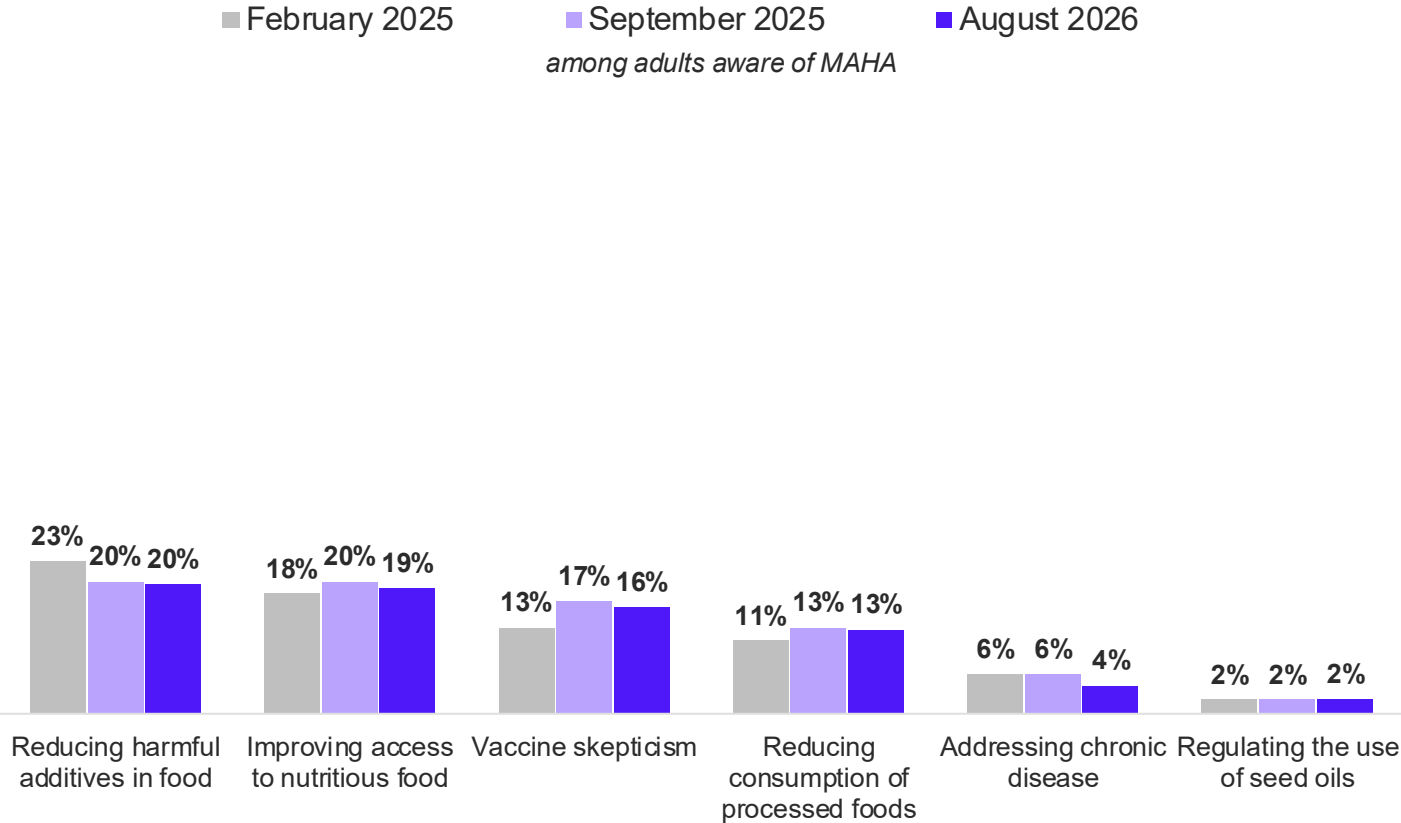
What do you most associate with the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) movement? Asked among those who are aware of MAHA (n=1,778)



MAKE AMERICA HEALTHY AGAIN

Associations with the MAHA movement remain steady since September of last year, though fewer Democrats associate the movement with addressing chronic disease.

What do you most associate with the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) movement? Asked among those who are aware of MAHA (n=1,778)

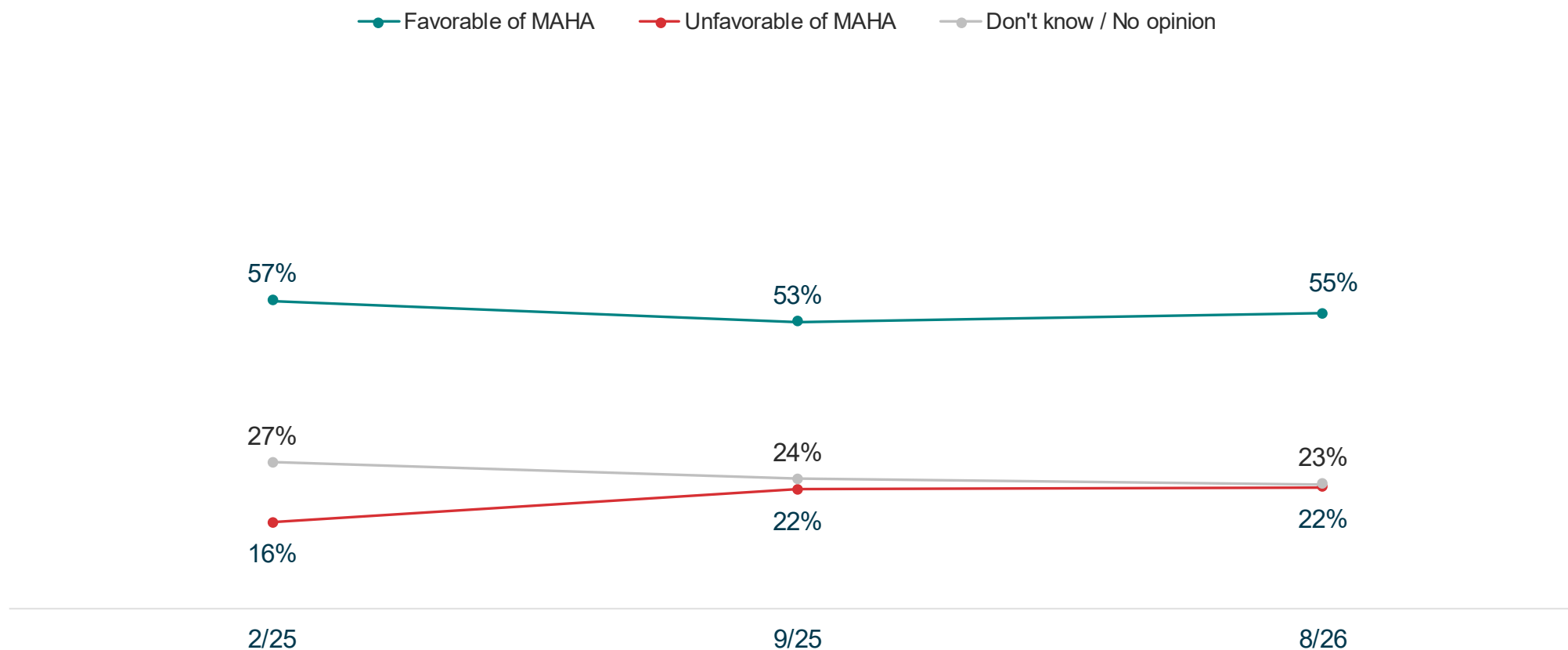


% selected August 2026-September 2025	Dem	Ind	Rep
Vaccine skepticism	+1	-3	-2
Reducing consumption of processed foods	+1	+2	-1
Improving access to nutritious food	-1	-4	+3
Addressing chronic disease	-4	+/-0	-1
Regulating the use of seed oils	+1	-1	+/-0
Reducing harmful additives in food	+/-0	+/-0	-1

MAKE AMERICA HEALTHY AGAIN

About half of adults continue to view the MAHA movement favorably since last year, and one-in-four view the movement unfavorably.

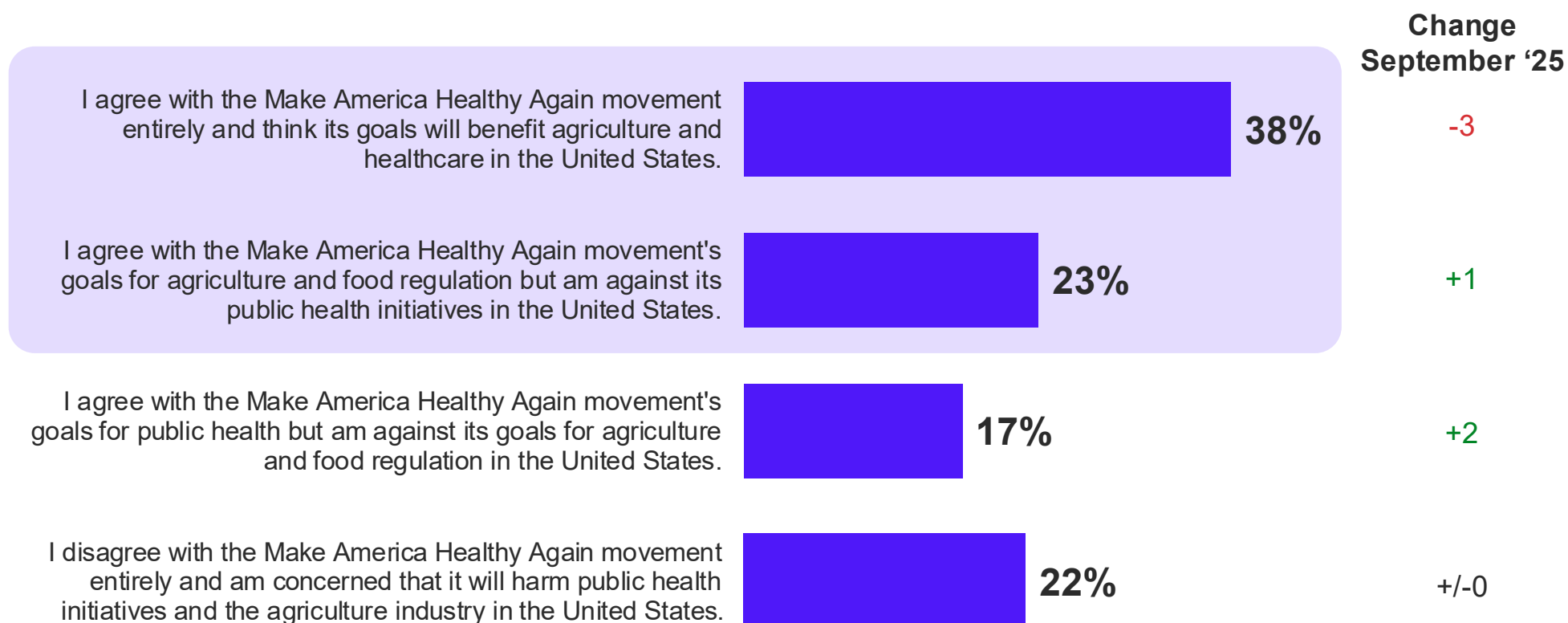
As you may know, Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) is a movement to improve public health in the United States through healthcare reform, food regulation, and wellness initiatives. Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) movement?



MAKE AMERICA HEALTHY AGAIN

Three-in-five adults agree with the MAHA movement's goals for agriculture and food regulations, while just one-in-four disagree with the movement entirely.

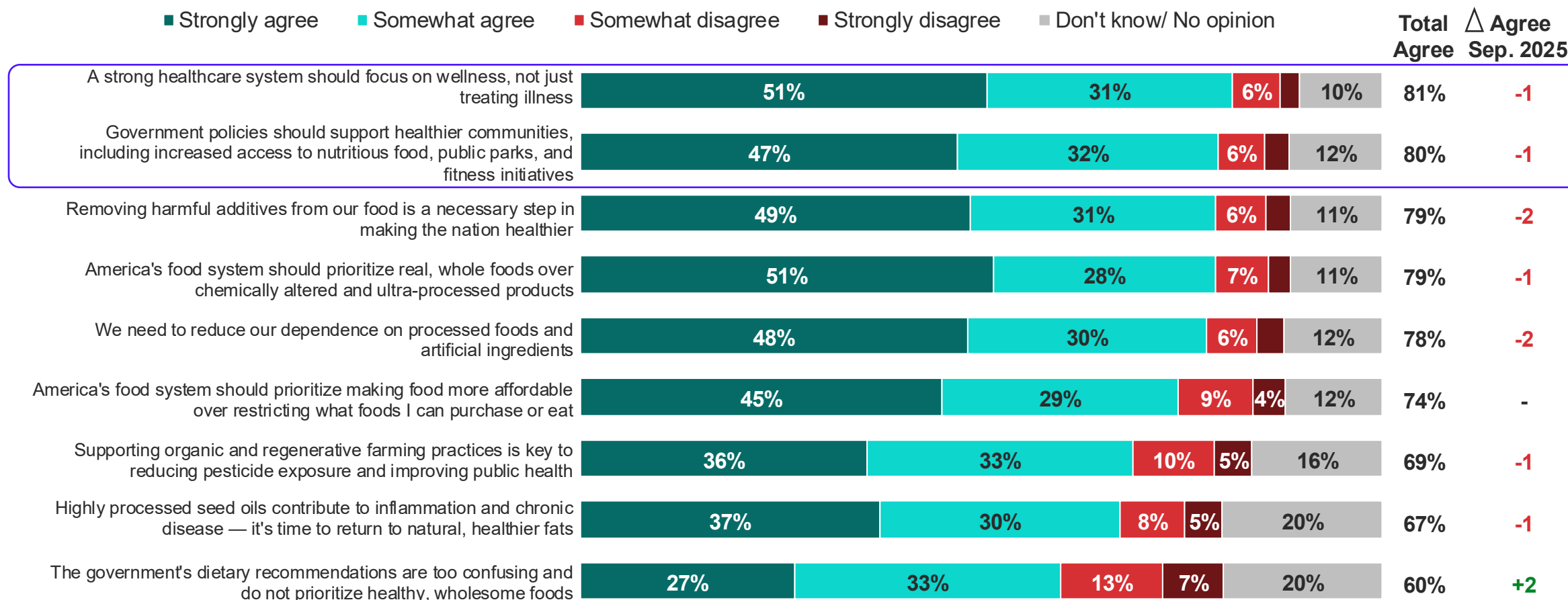
Which of the following best describes your feelings towards the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) movement, even if neither is exactly right? (n=2,200)



MAKE AMERICA HEALTHY AGAIN

Support for healthier, less processed food systems remains steady since last year. Four-in-five adults continue supporting wellness, access to nutritious foods, and removing harmful additives from food.

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? (n=2,200)



MAKE AMERICA HEALTHY AGAIN

Regardless of their view towards MAHA, about half of adults *strongly agree* food affordability should be prioritized over restricting what people eat.

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? (n=2,200)

% Strongly agree	Adults	Favorable of MAHA	Unfavorable of MAHA	Federal Nutrition Programs Participant
America's food system should prioritize real, whole foods over chemically altered and ultra-processed products	51%	60%	47%	52%
A strong healthcare system should focus on wellness, not just treating illness	51%	58%	46%	50%
Removing harmful additives from our food is a necessary step in making the nation healthier	49%	58%	40%	51%
We need to reduce our dependence on processed foods and artificial ingredients	48%	56%	42%	47%
Government policies should support healthier communities, including increased access to nutritious food, public parks, and fitness initiatives	47%	53%	49%	48%
America's food system should prioritize making food more affordable over restricting what foods I can purchase or eat	45%	46%	54%	52%
Highly processed seed oils contribute to inflammation and chronic disease — it's time to return to natural, healthier fats	37%	46%	28%	39%
Supporting organic and regenerative farming practices is key to reducing pesticide exposure and improving public health	36%	42%	33%	37%
The government's dietary recommendations are too confusing and do not prioritize healthy, wholesome foods	27%	28%	35%	31%

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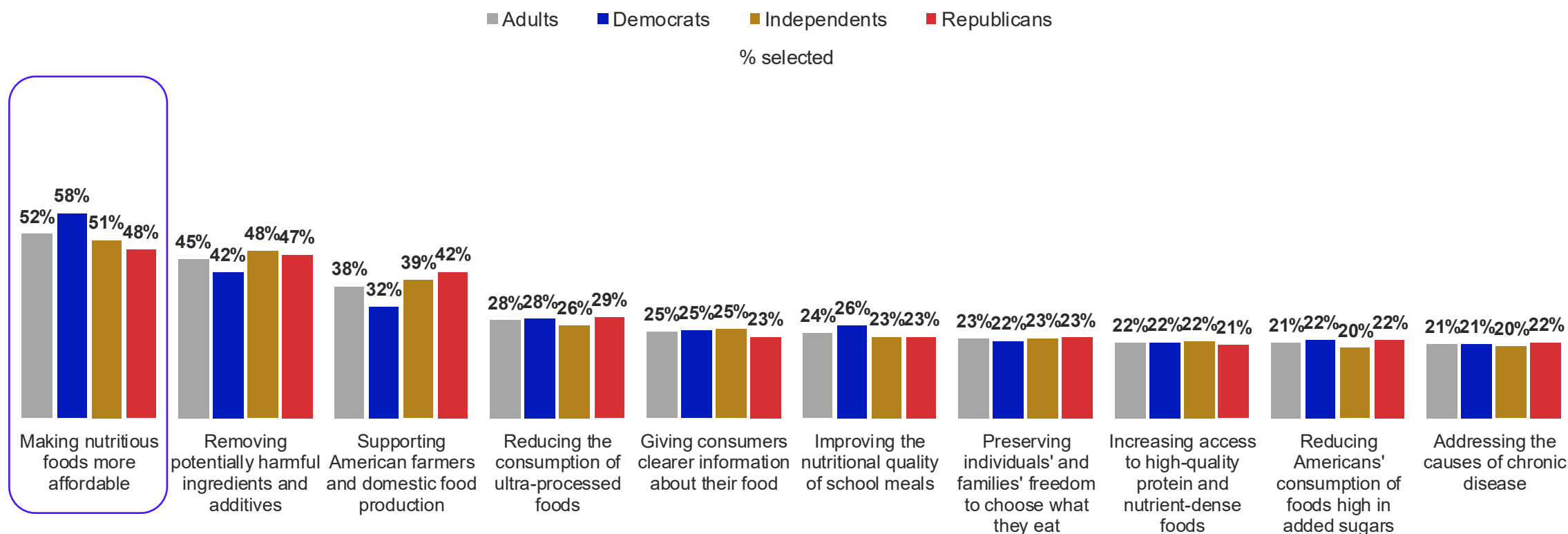
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INFORMATION & POLICY ACTION

Making nutritious food more affordable is the top health priority Americans across party want lawmakers to pursue. Removing harmful ingredients is also a top priority for Republicans and independents.

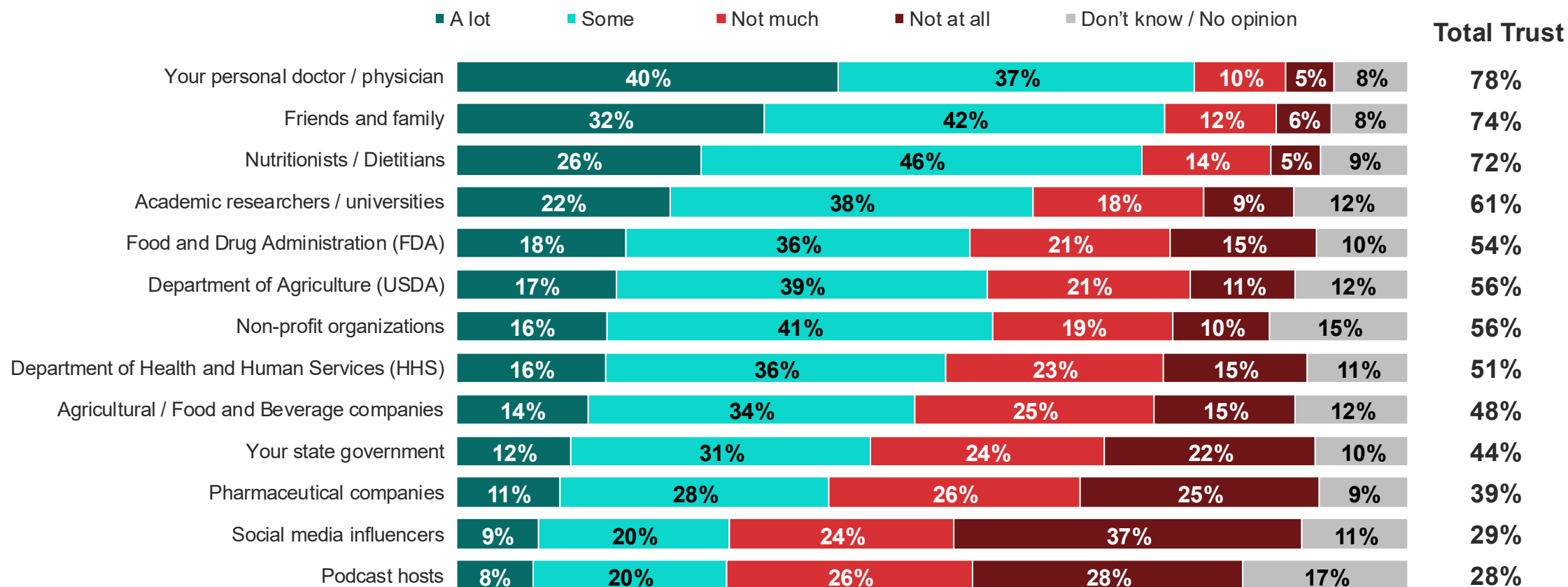
Which THREE of the following should be the highest priorities of lawmakers to improve Americans' health?



INFORMATION & POLICY ACTION

More adults trust their personal doctors, friends and family, and nutritionists than academic researchers, regulatory agencies, and pharmaceutical companies.

How much do you trust, if at all, each of the following organizations and individuals for information about diet and nutrition?

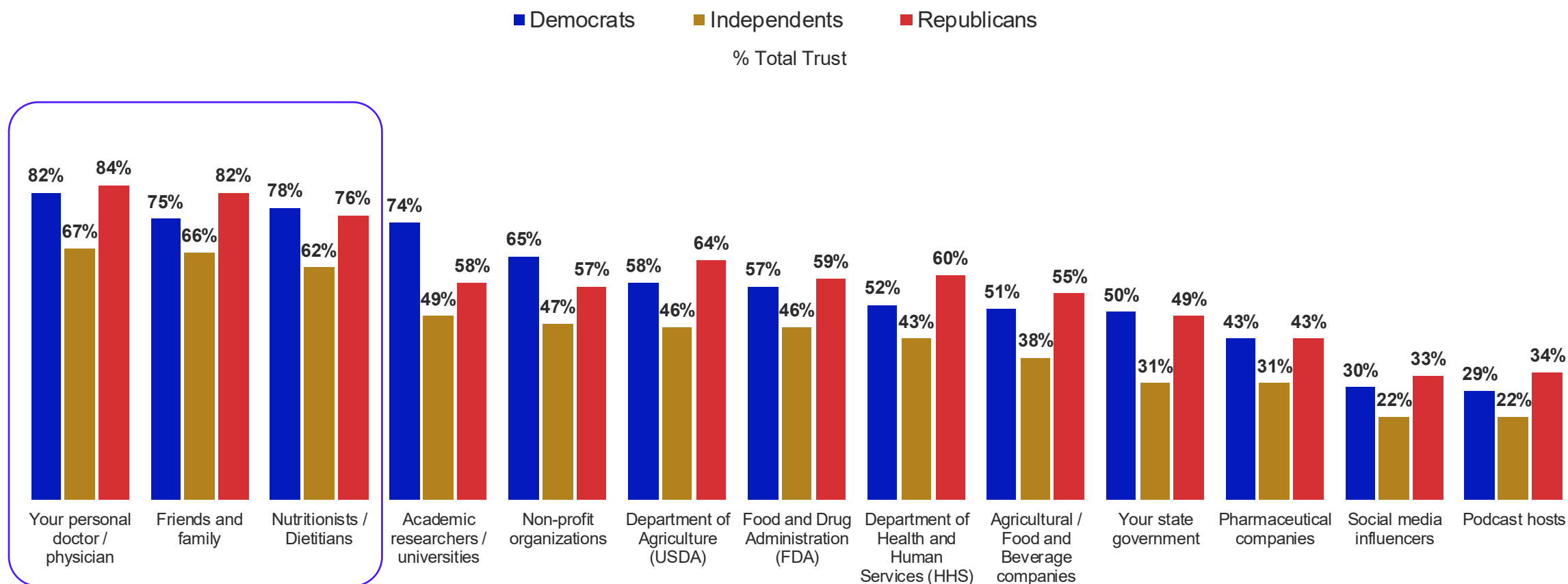


Total Trust = % A lot + % Some

INFORMATION & POLICY ACTION

Both Democrats and Republicans trust their personal doctors, friends and family, and nutritionists over other sources, though Democrats are more likely than Republicans to trust academic researchers and non-profits.

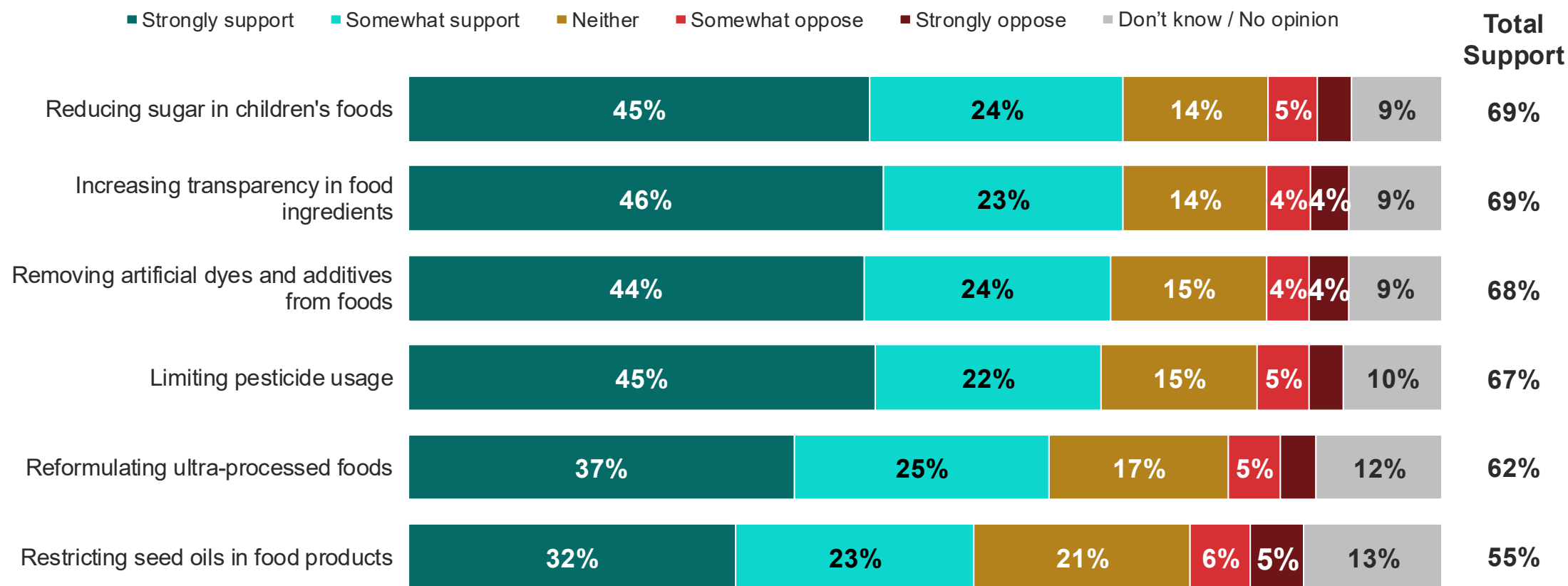
How much do you trust, if at all, each of the following organizations and individuals for information about diet and nutrition?



HEALTH PERCEPTIONS OF DAIRY

The majority of adults want food and beverage executives to support the Trump Administration in reducing sugar in children's foods, increasing transparency in ingredients, removing additives, limiting pesticide use, and reformulating ultra-processed foods.

Should food and beverage industry CEOs publicly support or oppose the Trump Administration on each of the following?



Total support = % Strongly support + % Somewhat support

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HEALTH PERCEPTIONS OF DAIRY

Milk and yogurt are seen as more nutritious than cheese and butter. More adults think yogurt and cheese are high in protein than milk or butter.

Do you believe _____ is any of the following? Please select all that apply. (n=2,200)

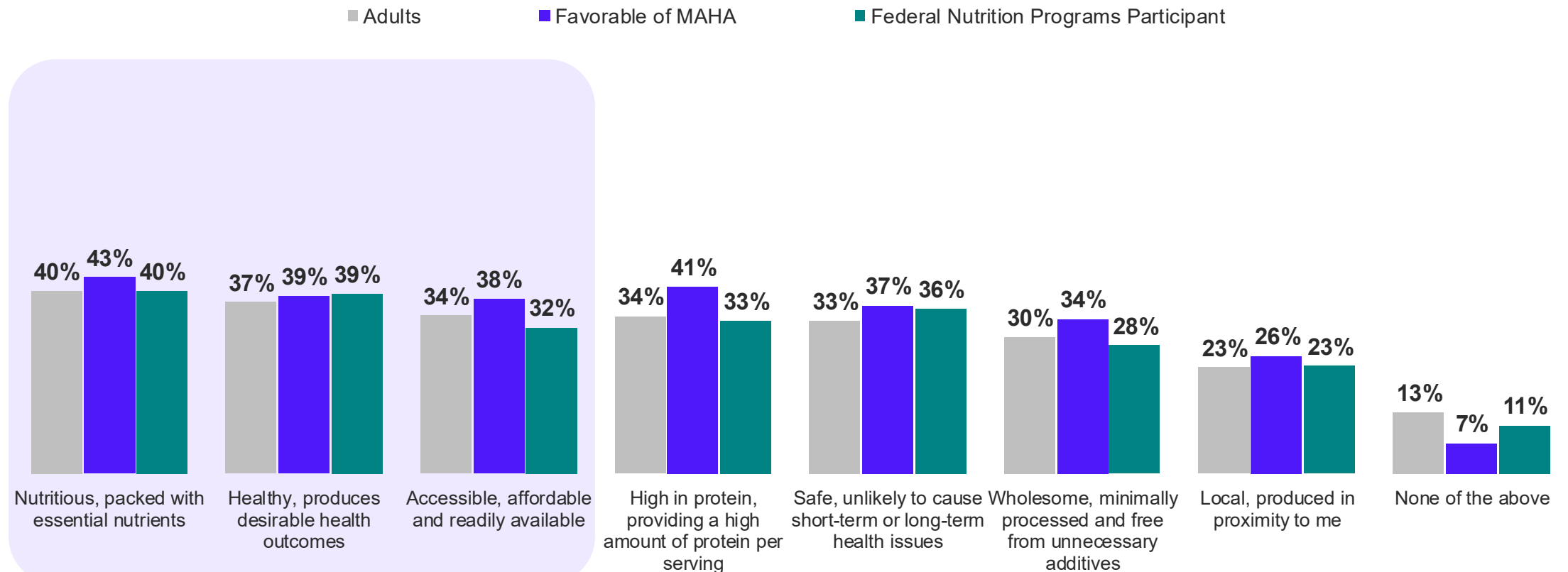
% selected	Milk	Yogurt	Cheese	Butter
Nutritious , packed with essential nutrients	40%	39%	32%	21%
Healthy , produces desirable health outcomes	37%	38%	25%	21%
Accessible , affordable and readily available	34%	35%	35%	35%
High in protein , providing a high amount of protein per serving	34%	40%	39%	19%
Safe , unlikely to cause short-term or long-term health issues	33%	32%	30%	29%
Wholesome , minimally processed and free from unnecessary additives	30%	30%	26%	25%
Local , produced in proximity to me	23%	15%	19%	19%
None of the above	13%	14%	16%	24%

HEALTH PERCEPTIONS OF DAIRY

Adults favorable toward MAHA rate milk more positively than the general public on protein content, accessibility, safety, and wholesomeness. Near equal shares of federal nutrition program participants, adults favorable to MAHA, and all adults view milk as nutritious.

Do you believe **milk** is any of the following? *Please select all that apply.* (n=2,200)

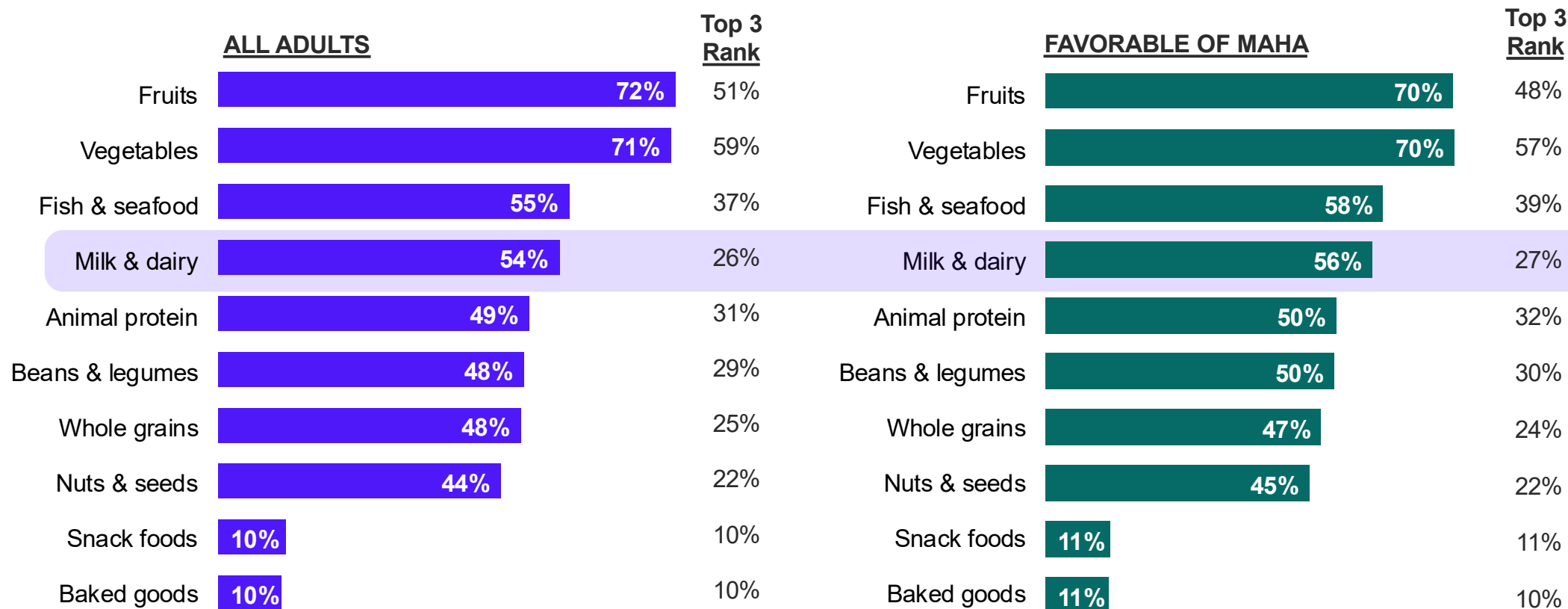
Among All Respondents



HEALTH PERCEPTIONS OF DAIRY

Vegetables and fruits top the list of foods Americans consider healthiest, far ahead of snack foods and baked goods.

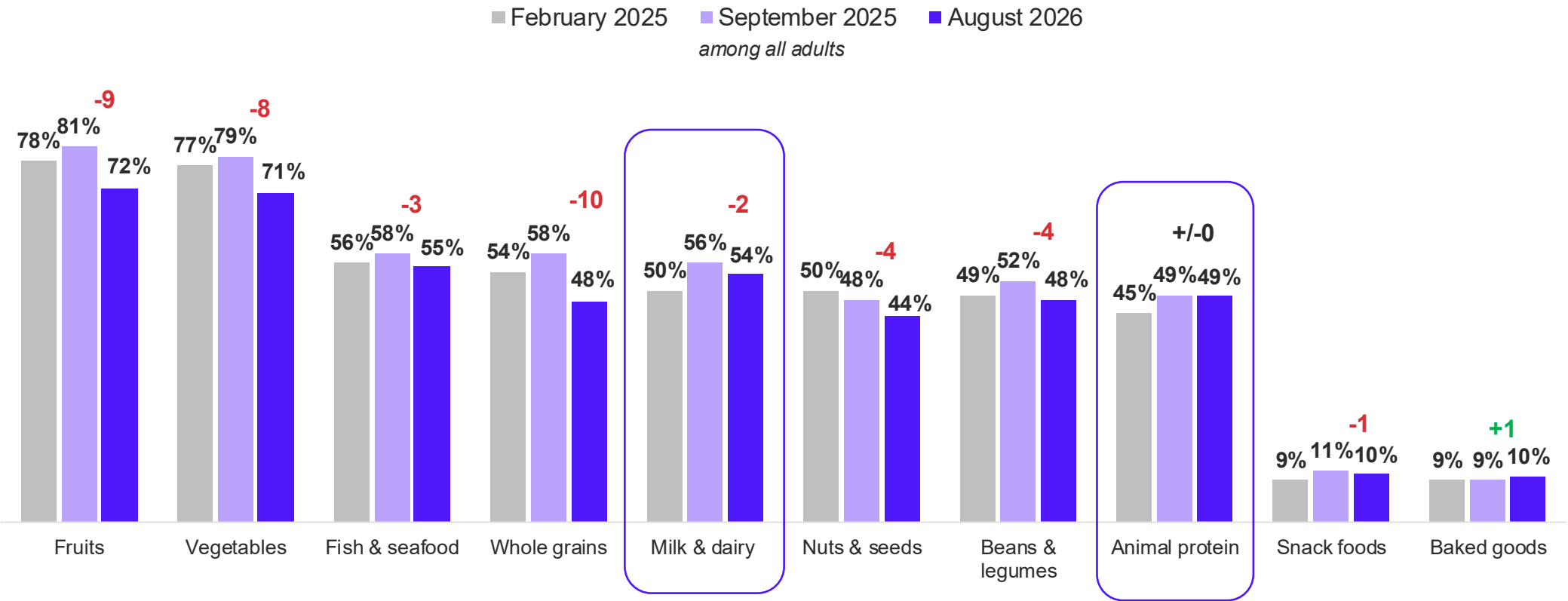
Which of these kinds of foods do you feel are healthy and nutritious for you and your family? Please select up to six. | From the same list of foods, on a scale of 1 to 10, please rank how healthy and nutritious you consider each of the following foods for you and your family where 1 is the most healthy and nutritious and 10 is the least healthy and nutritious.



HEALTH PERCEPTIONS OF DAIRY

Perceptions of fruits, vegetables and whole grains as healthy have declined since September, while dairy and animal protein are the only groups viewed as healthier than in February 2025.

Which of these kinds of foods do you feel are healthy and nutritious for you and your family? Please select up to six.



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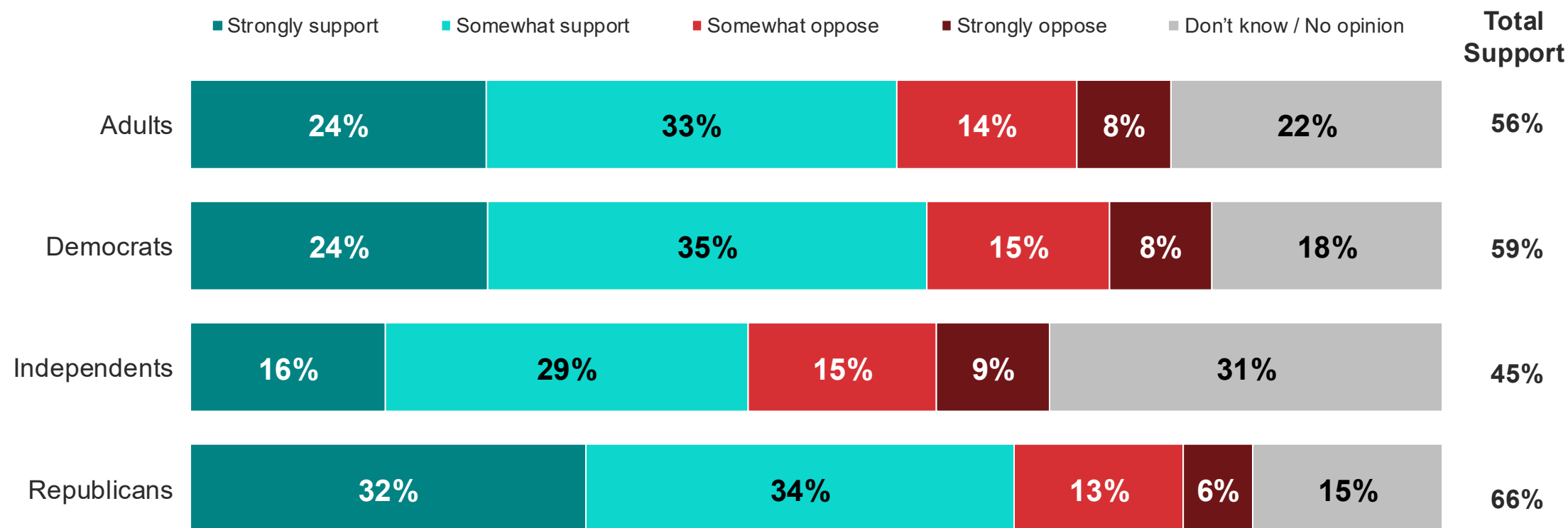
Appendix



ULTRA-PROCESSED FOODS

Over half of adults support defining ultra-processed foods based on processing methods and ingredients alone, without considering the food's overall nutritional value.

Federal officials are considering how ultra-processed food should be defined. Some definitions focus primarily on processing methods and ingredients. Others consider processing, ingredients and the food's overall nutritional value. How much do you support or oppose defining ultra-processed food based on processing methods and ingredients alone?

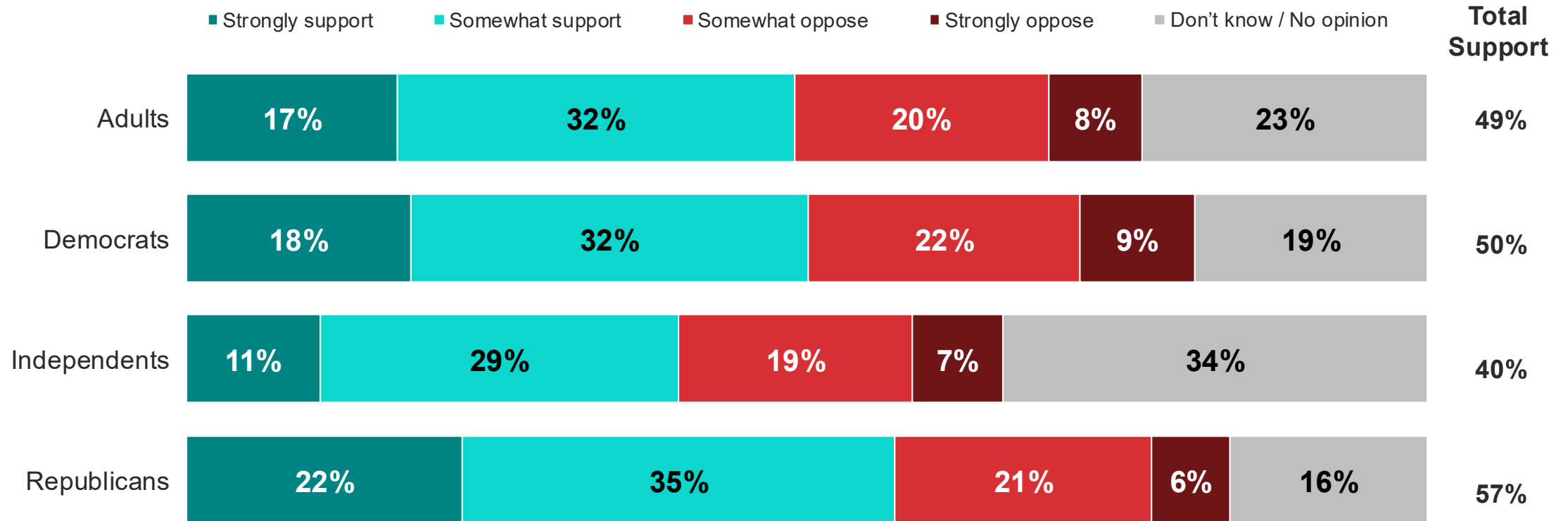


Total Support = % Strongly support + % Somewhat support

ULTRA-PROCESSED FOODS

After learning that excluding a food's nutritional value from the definition could lead nutrient dense foods to be classified as ultra-processed, support for relying only on processing methods and ingredients for classifying these foods falls -7 points.

Defining ultra-processed foods based only on manufacturing methods and the types or number of ingredients they contain could mean some foods high in protein, calcium, vitamins or other nutrients could also be classified as ultra-processed. Knowing this, do you support or oppose this approach to defining ultra-processed food?

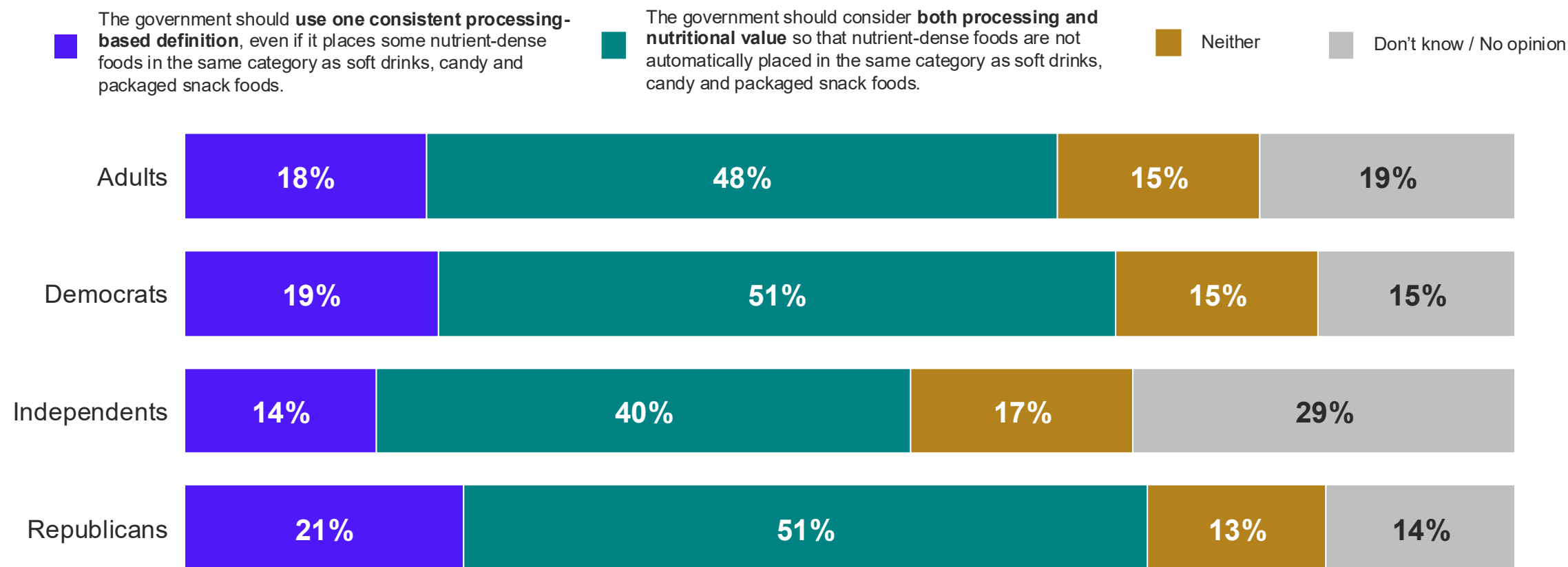


Total Support = % Strongly support + % Somewhat support

ULTRA-PROCESSED FOODS

About half of adults believe the government should consider both processing and nutritional value in ultra-processed food definitions so nutrient-dense foods are not placed in the same category as soft drinks and candy.

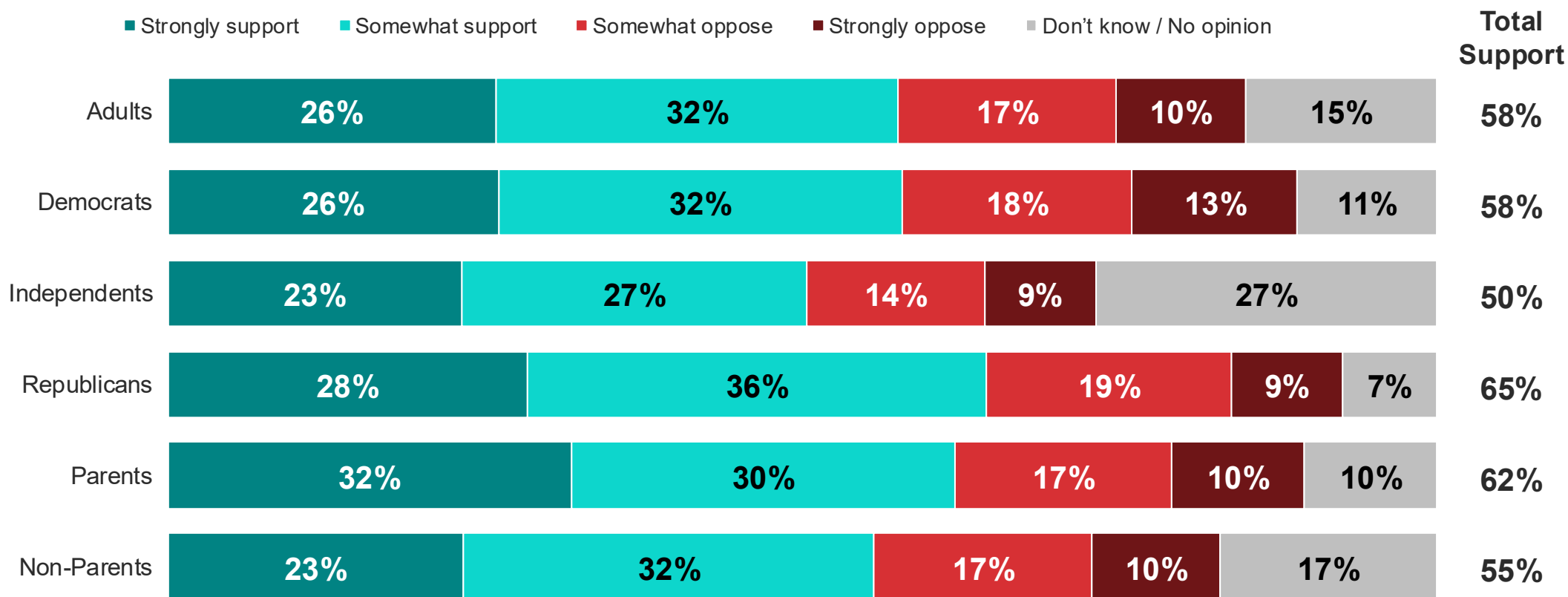
Which of the following approaches comes closer to your view?



ULTRA-PROCESSED FOODS

Two-in-three adults, and most parents, support offering flavored milk, flavored yogurt, and cheese in school meals and nutrition programs, regardless of how they are classified.

If flavored milk, flavored yogurt, and cheese were classified as ultra-processed, they could be removed from school meals and federal nutrition programs. Do you support or oppose offering flavored milk, flavored yogurt, and cheese in school meals and federal nutrition programs, regardless of how they are classified?

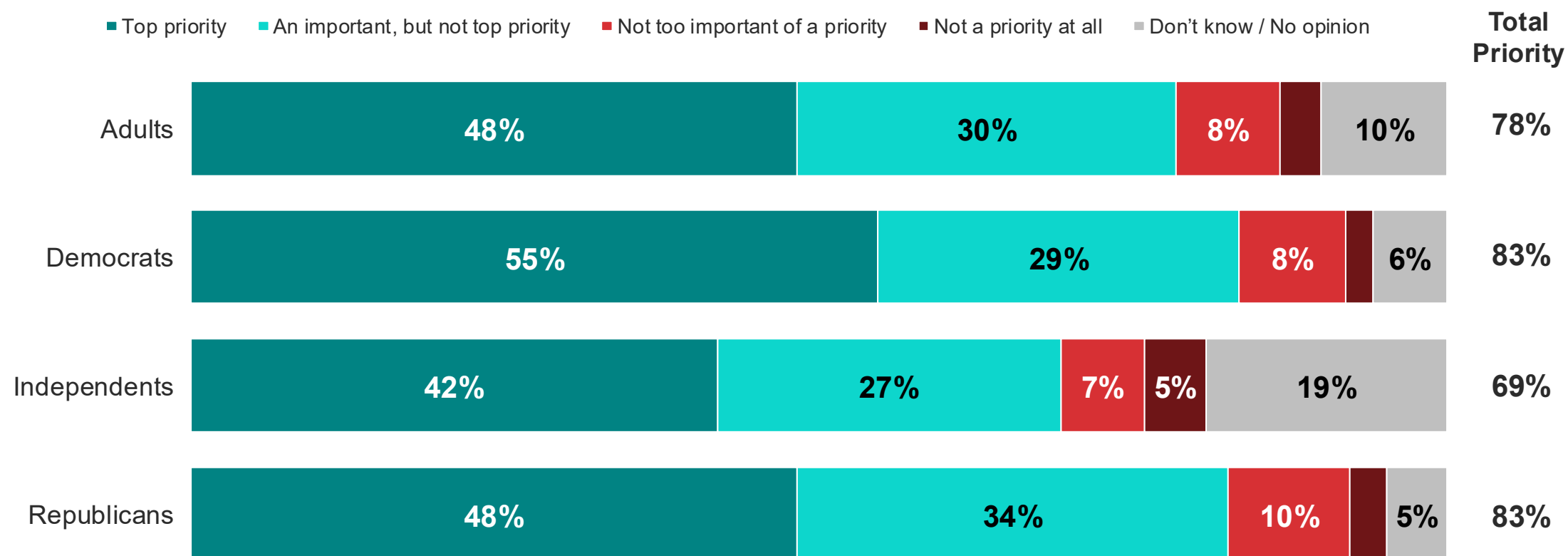


Total Support = % Strongly support + % Somewhat support

ULTRA-PROCESSED FOODS

The vast majority of adults see food affordability as a priority for lawmakers— including half of adults across party who view it as a *top priority*.

When creating new food and nutrition policies, how much of a priority, if at all, should affordability be for lawmakers?

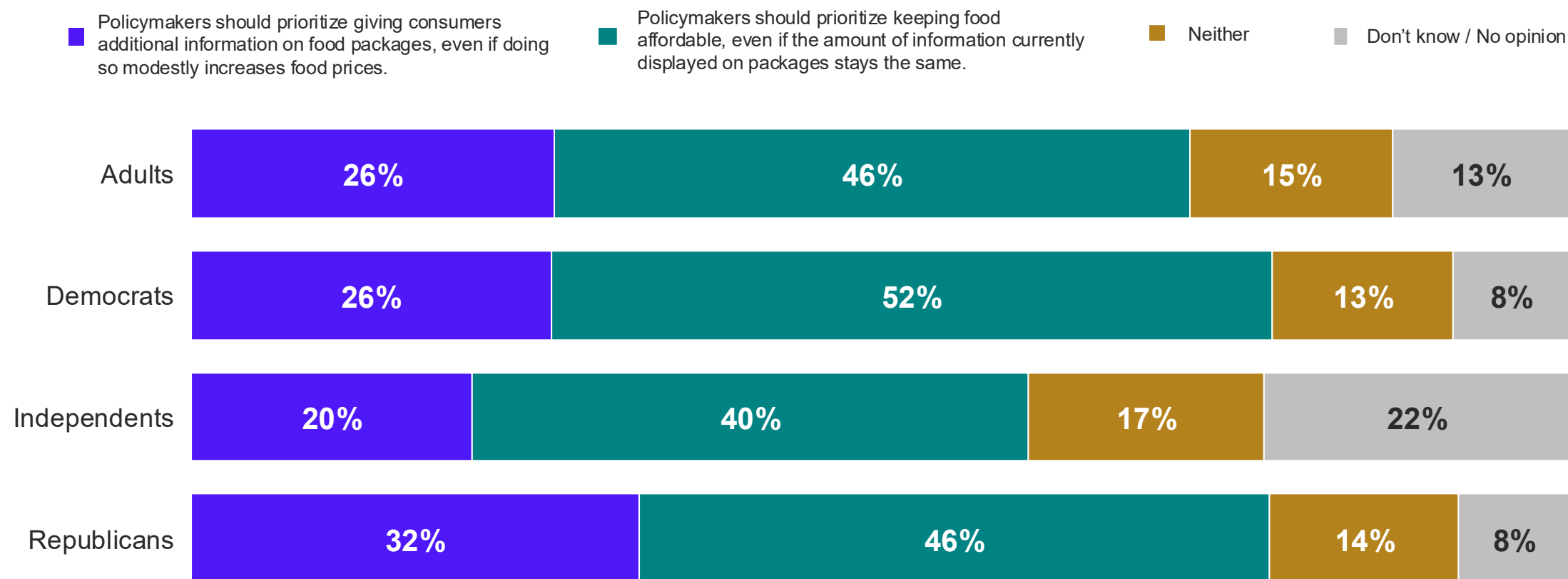


Total Priority = % Top priority + % An important but not top priority

ULTRA-PROCESSED FOODS

About half of adults would prefer policymakers prioritize keeping food affordable, even if the amount of information currently displayed on packages remains the same, over prioritizing additional information on food packaging.

Which of the following approaches comes closer to your view?



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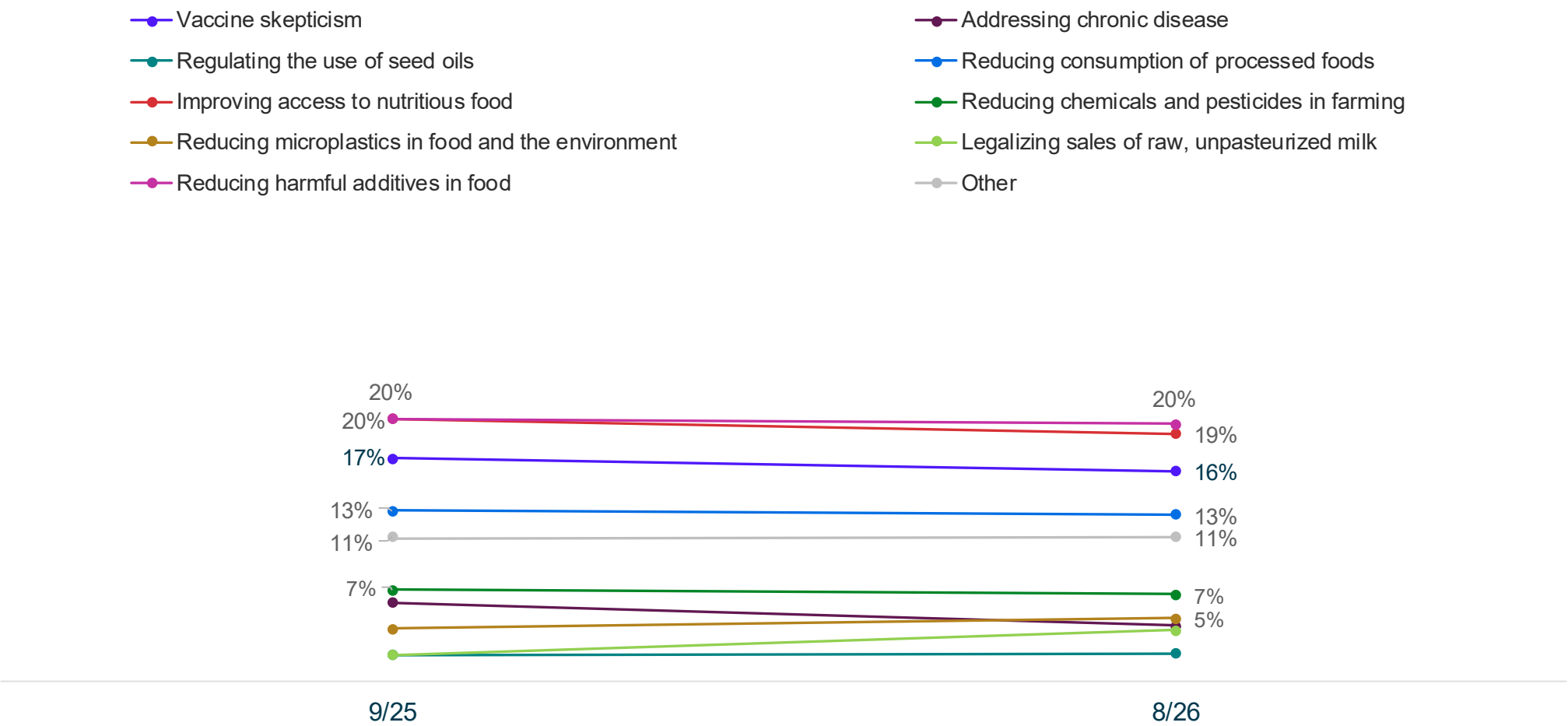
Ultra-Processed Foods

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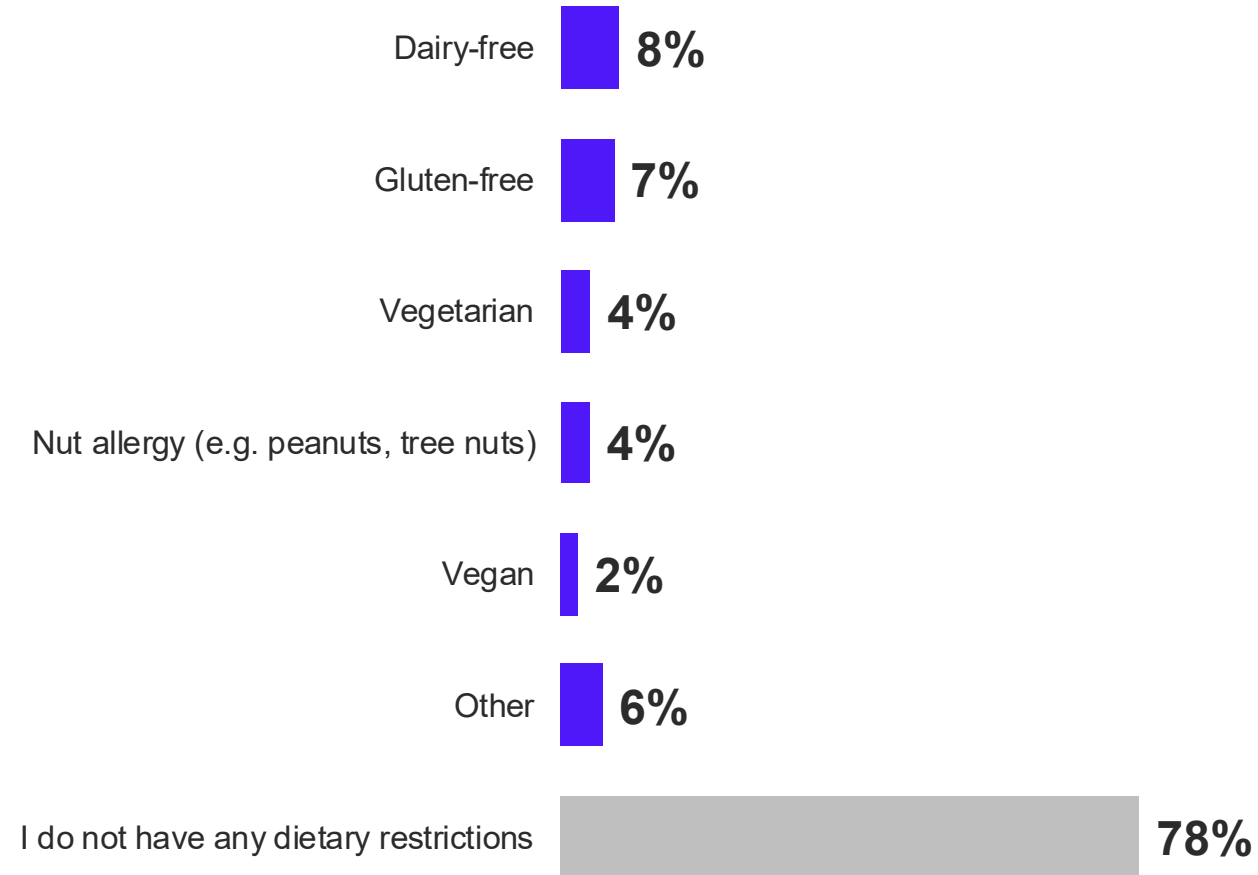
APPENDIX

What do you most associate with the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) movement? Asked among those who are aware of MAHA (n=1,778)



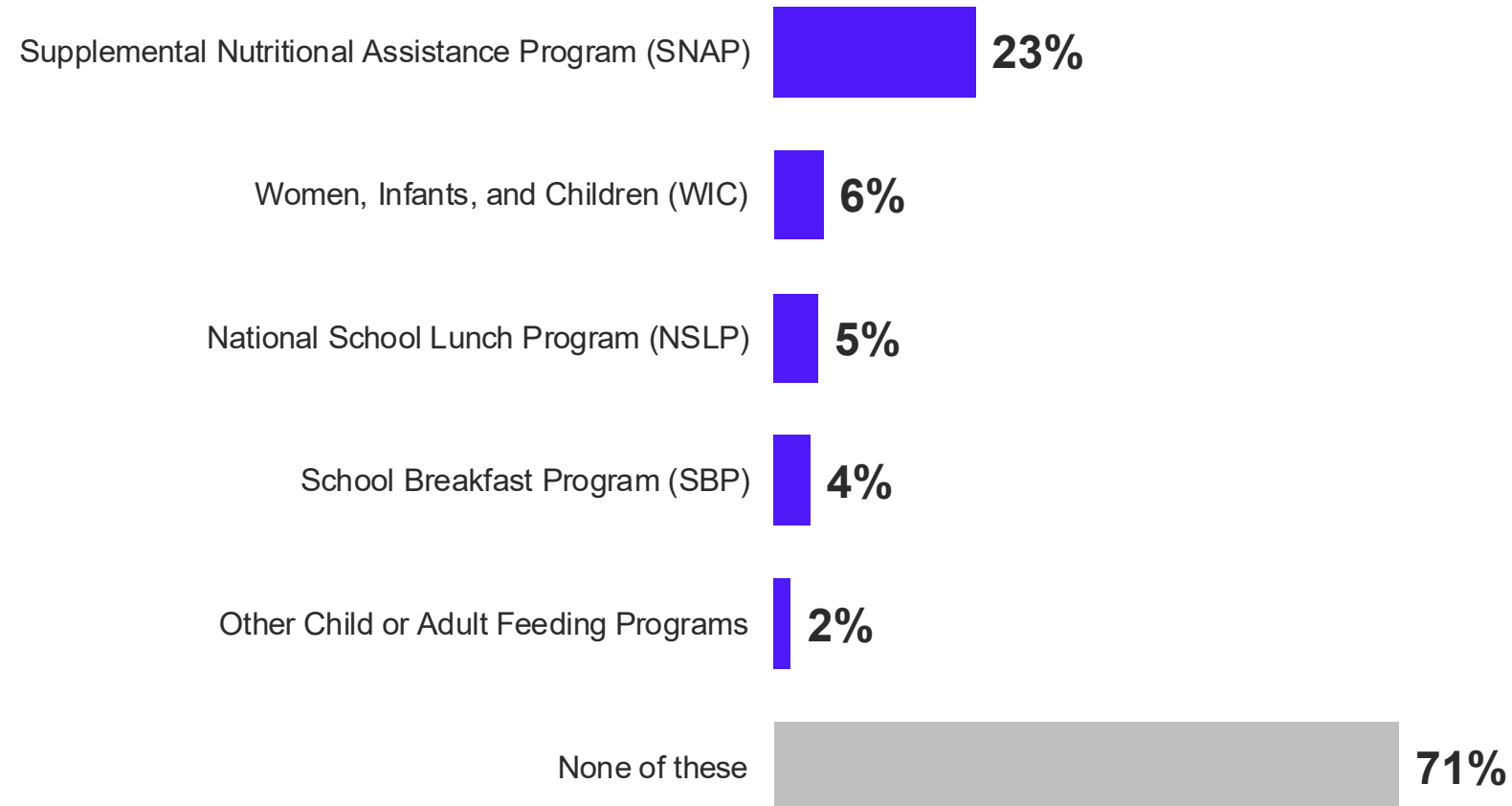
APPENDIX

Most report no dietary restrictions; dairy-free is most common



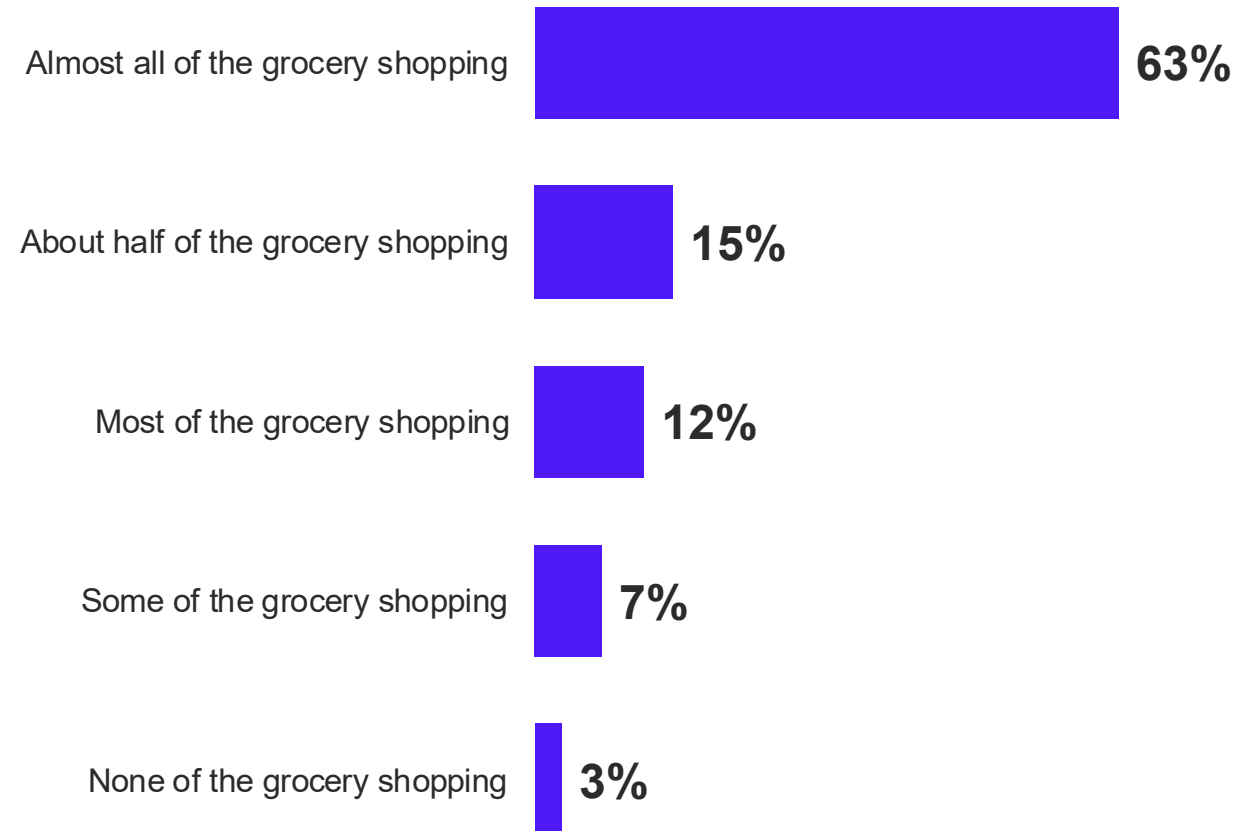
APPENDIX

SNAP is the most-used nutrition program, though most use none



APPENDIX

Most respondents do the bulk of their household's shopping



APPENDIX

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

<i>% Total Agree (%Strongly agree + % Somewhat agree)</i>	Adults	Favorable of MAHA	Unfavorable of MAHA	Federal Nutrition Programs Participant
<i>A strong healthcare system should focus on wellness, not just treating illness</i>	81%	89%	81%	84%
<i>Government policies should support healthier communities, including increased access to nutritious food, public parks, and fitness initiatives</i>	80%	89%	78%	80%
<i>Removing harmful additives from our food is a necessary step in making the nation healthier</i>	79%	89%	75%	81%
<i>America's food system should prioritize real, whole foods over chemically altered and ultra-processed products</i>	79%	89%	76%	81%
<i>We need to reduce our dependence on processed foods and artificial ingredients</i>	78%	87%	78%	77%
<i>America's food system should prioritize making food more affordable over restricting what foods I can purchase or eat</i>	74%	79%	81%	80%
<i>Supporting organic and regenerative farming practices is key to reducing pesticide exposure and improving public health</i>	69%	80%	65%	70%
<i>Highly processed seed oils contribute to inflammation and chronic disease — it's time to return to natural, healthier fats</i>	67%	82%	55%	69%
<i>The government's dietary recommendations are too confusing and do not prioritize healthy, wholesome foods</i>	60%	64%	69%	67%

