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Northeast consumers' attitudes towards farmed seaweed

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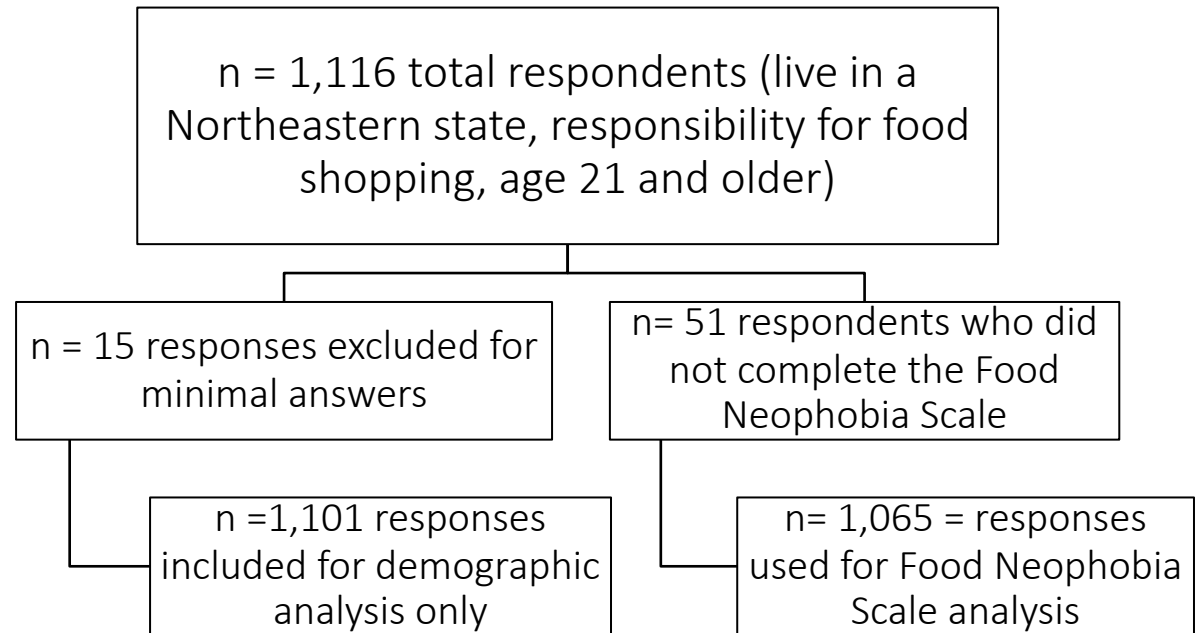
Background

- Very little public information is available about seaweed consumption and consumer attitudes about seaweed products in the United States.
- Food neophobic people do not like to try new foods, and may be less likely to try seaweed products.
- We undertook an online survey in Fall 2017 of residents of the Eastern coastal states who were at least 21 years old and responsible for most of the grocery shopping for their household.

Research Methods

- Survey Sampling International, LLC (now Dynata) sent link to randomly selected participants who were screened for inclusion criteria.
- Reading level = grade 7.7
- \$1.00 compensation
- Food Neophobia was grouped by tertile:
 - 10-29 = low Food Neophobia
 - 30-38 = medium Food Neophobia
 - ≥ 39 = high Food Neophobia

Results



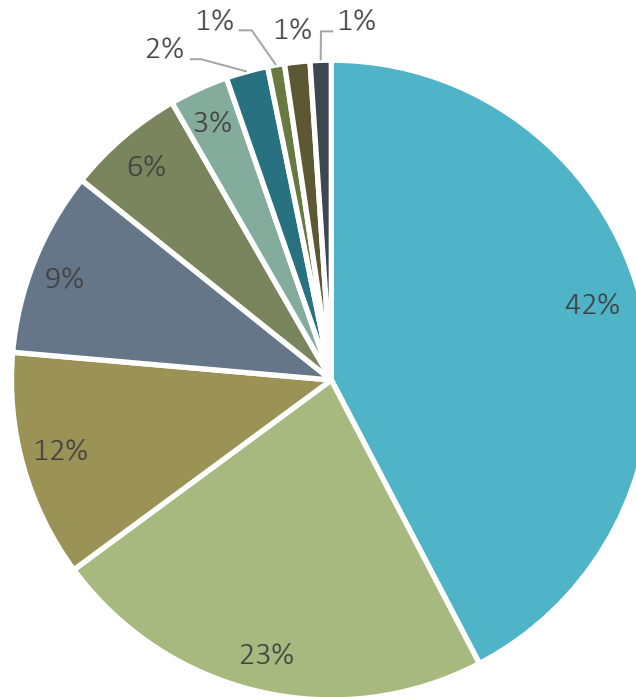
Demographic profile of FN groups

	Overall (n=1065)	Low (n=357)	Medium (n=340)	High (n=368)
<i>Age</i>				
(21-30)	25.7%	25.8%	27.0%	24.5%
(61-70)	20.0%	17.4%	18.5%	23.9%
<i>Education</i>				
College grad	29.0%	33.9%	27.9%	25.3%
Some college	23.9%	26.6%	24.7%	20.7%
High school	16.0%	14.0%	12.6%	20.9%
<i>Income</i>				
Under \$30,000	16.0%	12.3%	14.7%	20.9%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	18.6%	16.5%	21.2%	18.2%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	22.3%	23.8%	23.5%	19.8%
Over \$100,000	22.0%	27.7%	19.1%	19.0%
<i>Prior Seaweed intake</i>				
Yes	46.5%	63.6%	43.8%	32.3%
No	44.1%	27.7%	46.2%	58.2%

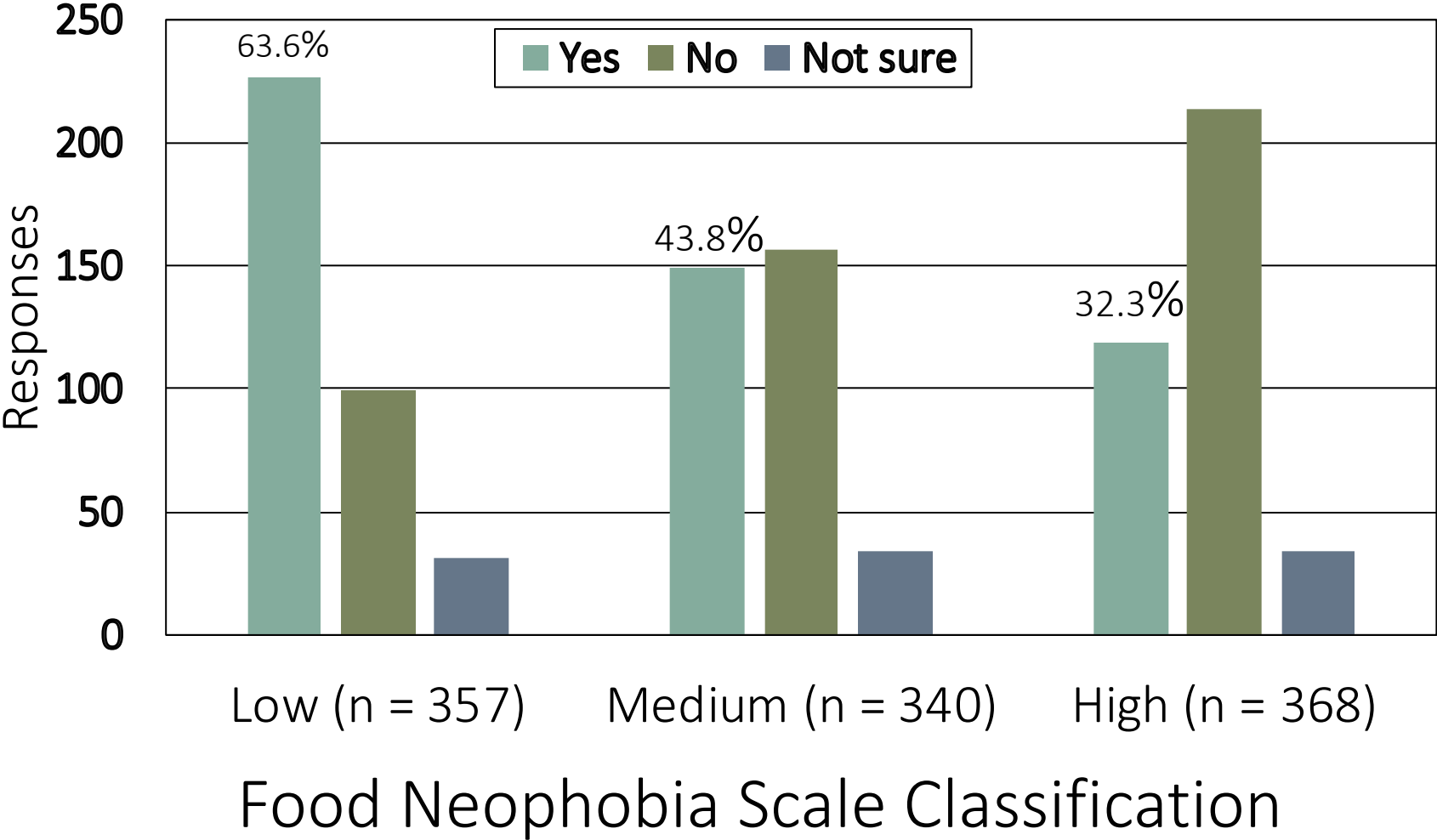
Barriers to Seaweed Consumption

N = 490

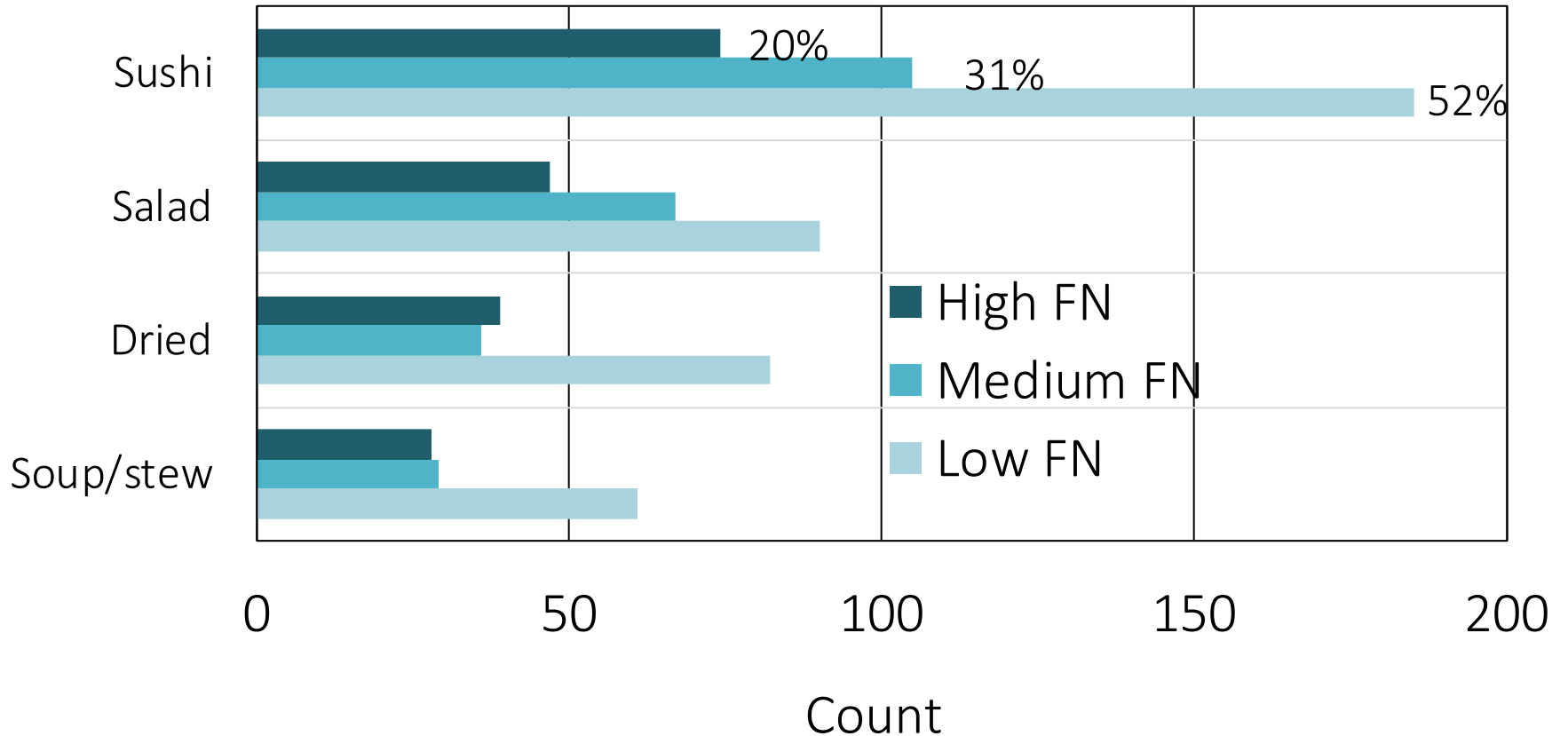
- No interest
- Never thought to try
- Where to find it?
- Not available
- Unsure if tried
- Afraid
- Thyroid health
- Safety
- Allergy
- Cost
- Other



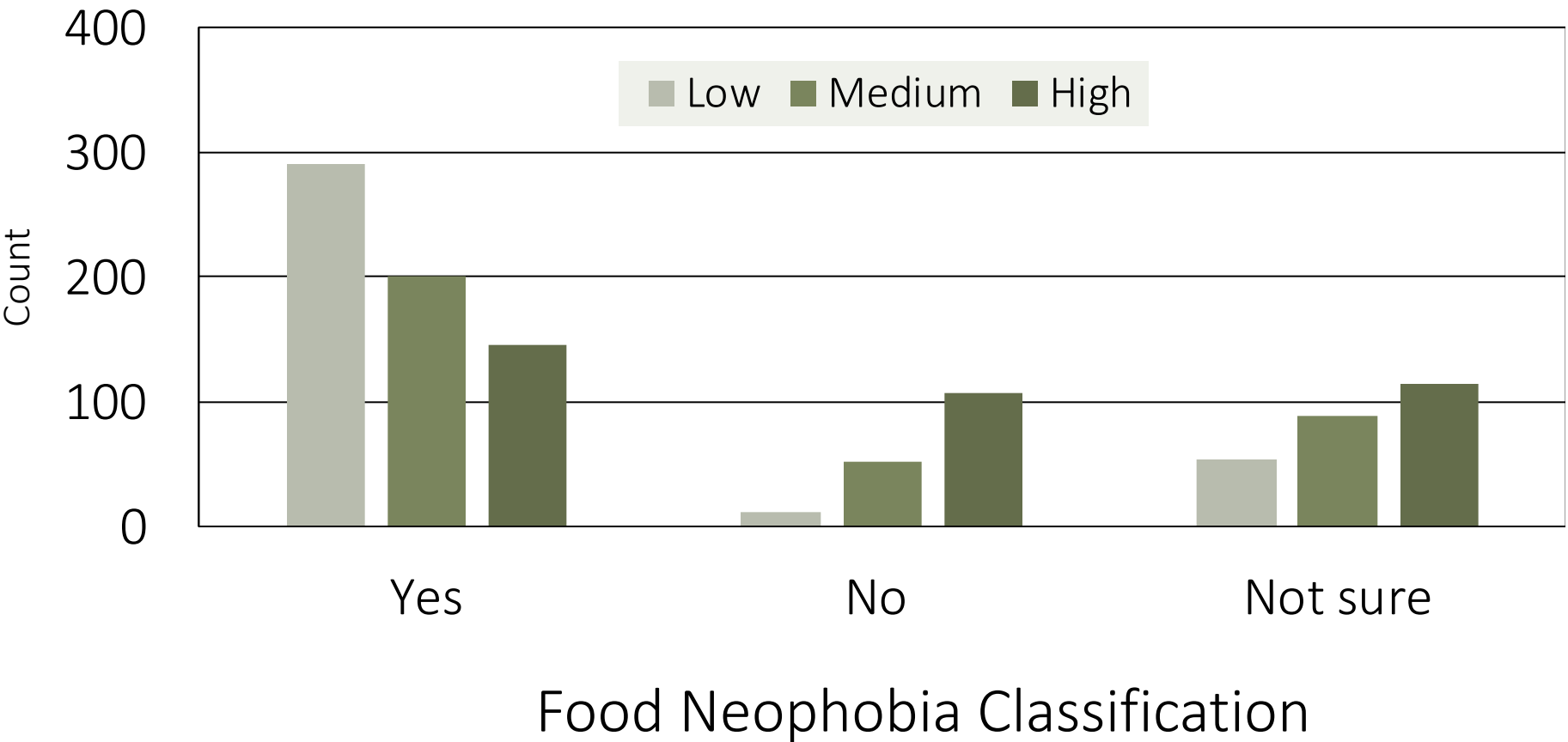
Food Neophobia Among People Who Ate Seaweed in the Past Year



Reported Seaweed Preparation



Survey Respondents' Interest in Foods with Seaweed Depends on Food Neophobia



Role of nutrition claims in respondents' purchasing behavior based on Food Neophobia

Claim	Low	Medium	High	Total
Low calorie	0	2	10	12
Source of Iodine	172	137	104	413
Source of Vitamin K	97	93	72	262
Organic	97	75	48	220
Local	120	110	79	309
Low carbohydrate	95	78	49	222
Source of calcium	93	67	52	212
Source of antioxidants	102	69	57	228
Sustainable	172	107	69	348
Have no interest in purchasing seaweed	86	67	31	182
None of the above motivates me	25	51	106	182

Conclusions

- Educational opportunity: respondents were not well aware of seaweed types they had consumed.
- All Food Neophobia groups agree on the value of cost, convenience, taste, nutrition & sustainability; how does the industry balance these messages?
- Future considerations
 - Influence of children in the household
 - Consumer overall impression of seaweed as healthy
 - Demographics of Food Neophobic groups in relation to purchasing behavior