



HEALTH

TAXING UNHEALTHY FOODS A BAD IDEA, SAY HALF OF CANADIANS

Oxford researchers say taxing fatty, salty, or sugary foods could help cut heart & stroke deaths – but 50% of Canadians think it's a bad idea

Younger, richer, those from Manitoba & Saskatchewan more likely to think it is a good idea

Conservatives dislike idea of tax, but NDP is more in favour

From July 13 to 16, 2007, Angus Reid Strategies conducted an online survey among a randomly selected, representative sample of 1,086 adult Canadians. The margin of error for the total sample is +3.0 %, 19 times out of 20. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure a sample representative of the entire adult population of Canada. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

Taxing unhealthy foods

**Contact: Craig Worden, Vice-President, Public Affairs
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**Public Release:
National Public Opinion Poll**

[VANCOUVER – July 27, 2007] – Half of Canadians think it's a bad idea to tax unhealthy foods to help cut health problems, a new Angus Reid Strategies poll has found.

Earlier this month, researchers from Oxford University published a study suggesting heart and stroke deaths would drop 1.7 per cent if the UK's 17.5 per cent Value Added Tax was applied to sugary, salty, and fatty foods. But in the online survey of a representative national sample, 50 per cent of respondents say they believe such a tax is a bad idea in Canada. Forty-three per cent of Canadians think the tax is a good idea, while 7 per cent are unsure.

By region, about half from most provinces feel a tax on unhealthy food is a bad idea. BC is divided over the question (45% say it is a good idea, while 49% say it is bad). Only Manitoba and Saskatchewan has a higher number who think the tax is a good idea, with 51 per cent selecting this option when asked.

Canadians aged 18-34 and those in households earning \$100,000 or more are also tend to agree that such a tax is a good idea. Fifty-one per cent of young Canadians agree that the tax is a good idea, as well as 53 per cent of those in the highest income bracket.

And NDP supporters are also more likely to agree. Fifty-five per cent of NDP voters say the tax is a good idea, while 55 per cent of Conservative supporters say it is a bad idea. The Liberals are more split on the topic, with 49 per cent saying it is a good idea, and 47 per cent saying it is a bad idea.

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50% think taxing unhealthy foods is a bad idea

Q. Earlier this month, researchers at Britain's Oxford University suggested the implementation of a higher value-added tax on foods deemed unhealthy in order to reduce both consumer demand and the number of heart attacks and strokes. Do you personally think charging higher taxes on unhealthy foods is a good idea or a bad idea?

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ONT	PQ	ATL
A good idea	43%	45%	41%	51%	42%	42%	42%
A bad idea	50%	49%	52%	39%	51%	51%	52%
Not sure	7%	6%	7%	10%	8%	7%	7%

	Total	Age			Household Income			Vote in next federal election		
		18-34	35-54	55+	<\$50K	\$50-99K	\$100K+	Cons	Lib	NDP
A good idea	43%	51%	38%	41%	43%	39%	53%	37%	49%	55%
A bad idea	50%	42%	55%	50%	50%	56%	41%	55%	47%	38%
Not sure	7%	7%	6%	9%	8%	5%	6%	8%	4%	7%

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Angus Reid Strategies is a North American full-service polling and market research firm which is a leader in the use of the Internet and rich media technology to collect high-quality, in-depth insights for a wide array of clients. Dr. Angus Reid and the Angus Reid Strategies team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995. Located in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, and Montreal, our team of specialists provides solutions across every type and sector of research.

Angus Reid Strategies polls are conducted using the Angus Reid Forum online panel (www.angusreidforum.com), which is recruited via an industry-leading process that incorporates a randomized, widespread invitation approach and a triple opt-in screening procedure. The panel is maintained through state-of-the-art sampling techniques and frequent verifications of personal identity, contact information, and demographic characteristics. This premier online survey platform presents respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses.

Angus Reid Strategies has been successful in predicting the outcome of this year's provincial elections:

In Quebec: <http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=news&newsid=37>

In Manitoba: <http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=news&newsid=56>

More information on the way Angus Reid Strategies conducts public opinion research can be found at http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/uploads/pages/pdfs/ARS.ARF_WHITE_PAPER.pdf

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**For more information, please contact
our spokesperson listed in the footnote.**

**Copies of this poll are available on our website:
www.angusreidstrategies.com**

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