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2016 NASIS Food Report

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Table of Contents

Introduction

The following findings are based on the 2016 NASIS data. Please see the NASIS 2016 Methodology Report for information on the administration of the 2016 NASIS.

Overall Findings

When determining which factors respondents find most important when making their food selections, certain factors stood out more than others (Figure 1). Taste, in particular, was the overall most important factor, with 95.3% of respondents ranking it as either important or very important. Nutritional value (42.6%) and cost (42.4%) received the second and third highest percentages for very important deciding factors.

Nearly half (47.0%) of respondents reported that having their food be gluten free is not at all important. Having food that is certified organic (36.1%) also ranked low with over a third of respondents reporting that this is not at all important to them when making food selections.

Though the majority of respondents found every issue to be at least somewhat concerning, again some stood out more than others. As illustrated in Figure 2, over half (52.5%) of respondents are very concerned about foodborne illness. Nearly half of the respondents are also very concerned about chemicals, such as arsenic, mercury, and BPA in their food (47.7%), and carcinogens or other cancer-causing chemicals (46.6%). Pesticides followed closely behind with 41.8% of respondents reporting being very concerned. Respondents reported being less concerned about allergens in food and Biotechnology with roughly a quarter of respondents indicating that these two factors are not at all important to them. (Allergens 28.5%, Biotechnology 21.2%).

Figure 1. How important are the following factors when making food selections.

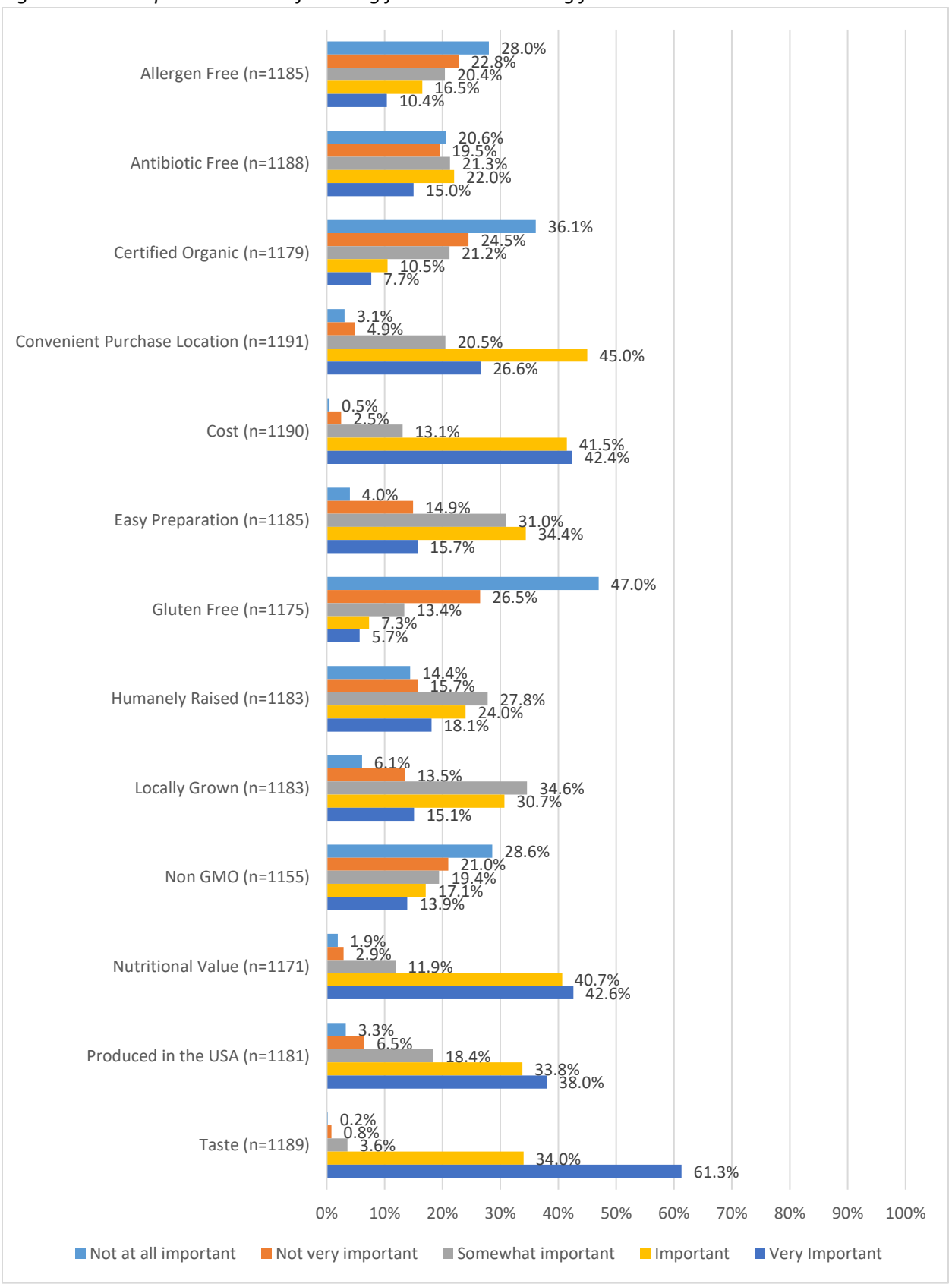
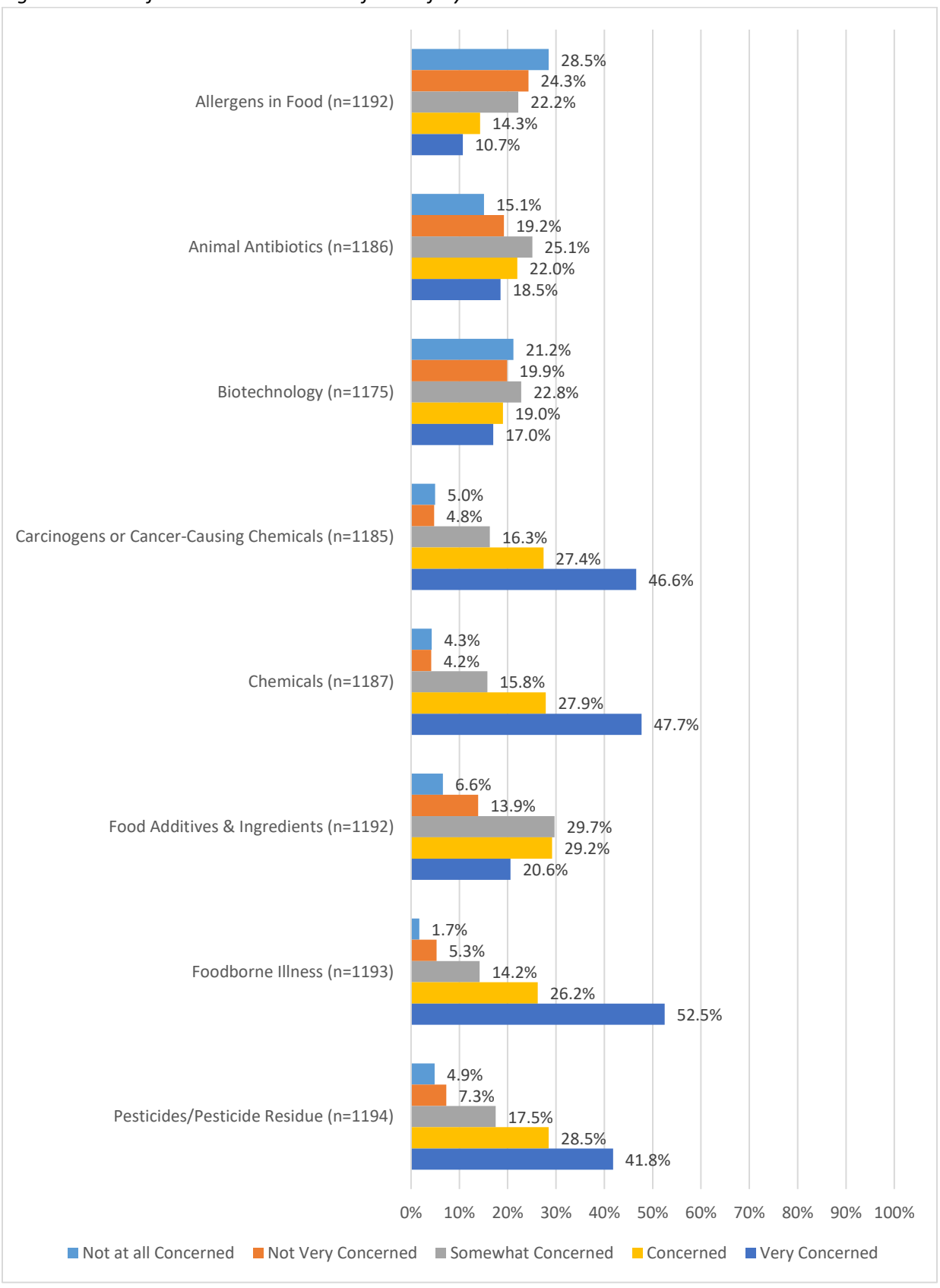
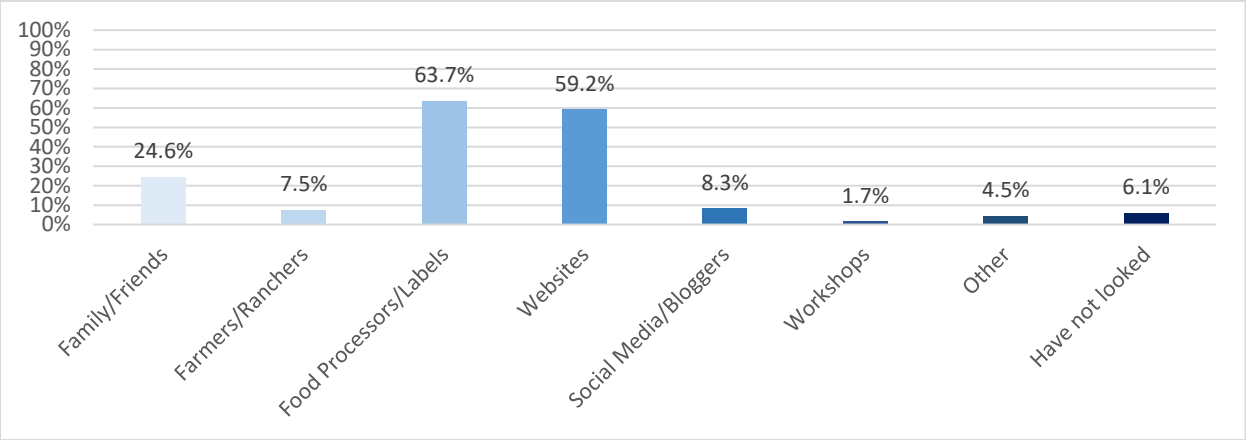


Figure 2. Level of concern about certain food safety issues.



When it comes to where respondents typically get information about the food they consume, the majority get this information from food processors and labels (63.7%) and/or websites (59.2%). About a quarter (24.6%) of respondents seek this information from family and friends, but only a small percentage (7.5%) get it from farmers and ranchers (Figure 3). Respondents had the ability to select more than one answer on this section, so the numbers do not add up to 100%.

Figure 3. Where respondents receive their information (n=1208).



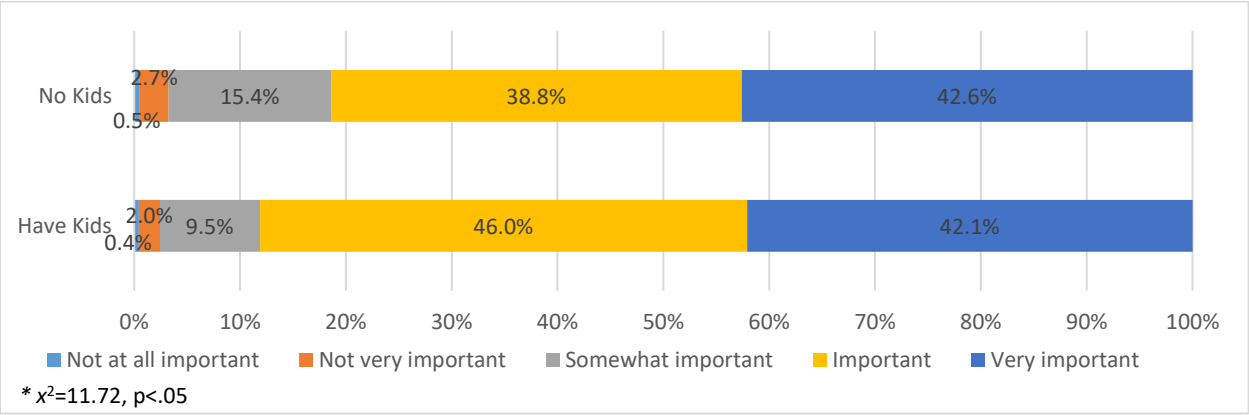
Findings by Cohort

The following section now breaks down results by demographics to see how variables, such as having kids in a household, age, gender, and health, have an effect on respondents' answers.

Kids in the Household

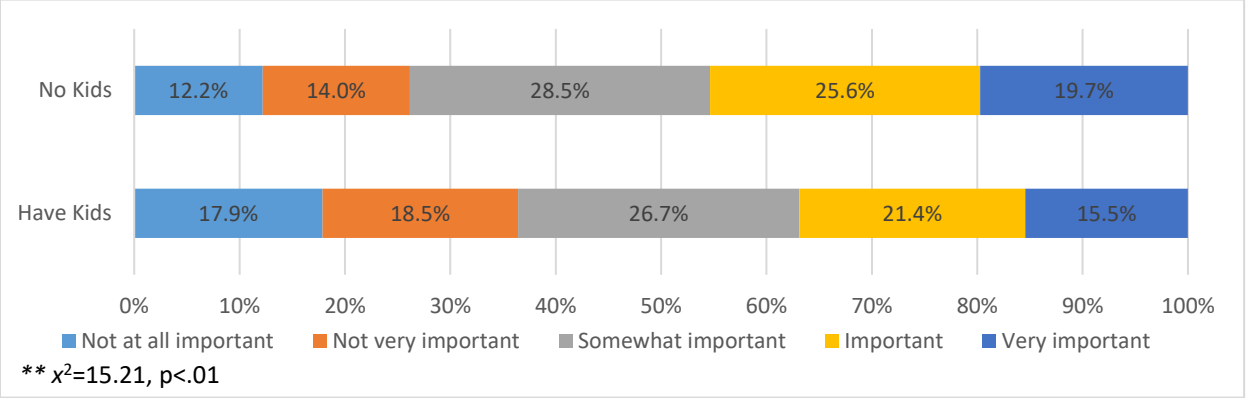
Interestingly, whether or not respondents have kids in their household did not make a significant difference on the majority of deciding factors when selecting food. Cost (see Figure 4), food being humanely raised (Figure 5), and taste (Figure 6) were the only significant factors with having kids showing the greatest influence in the importance of taste.

*Figure 4. Cost - Kids in Household (n=1189)**



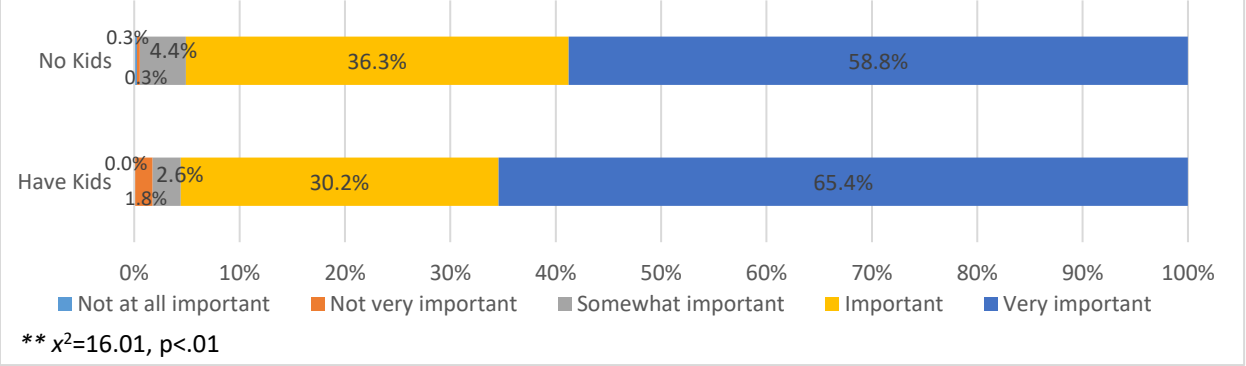
* x^2=11.72, p<.05

*Figure 5. Humanely Raised - Kids in Household (n=1183)***



** x^2=15.21, p<.01

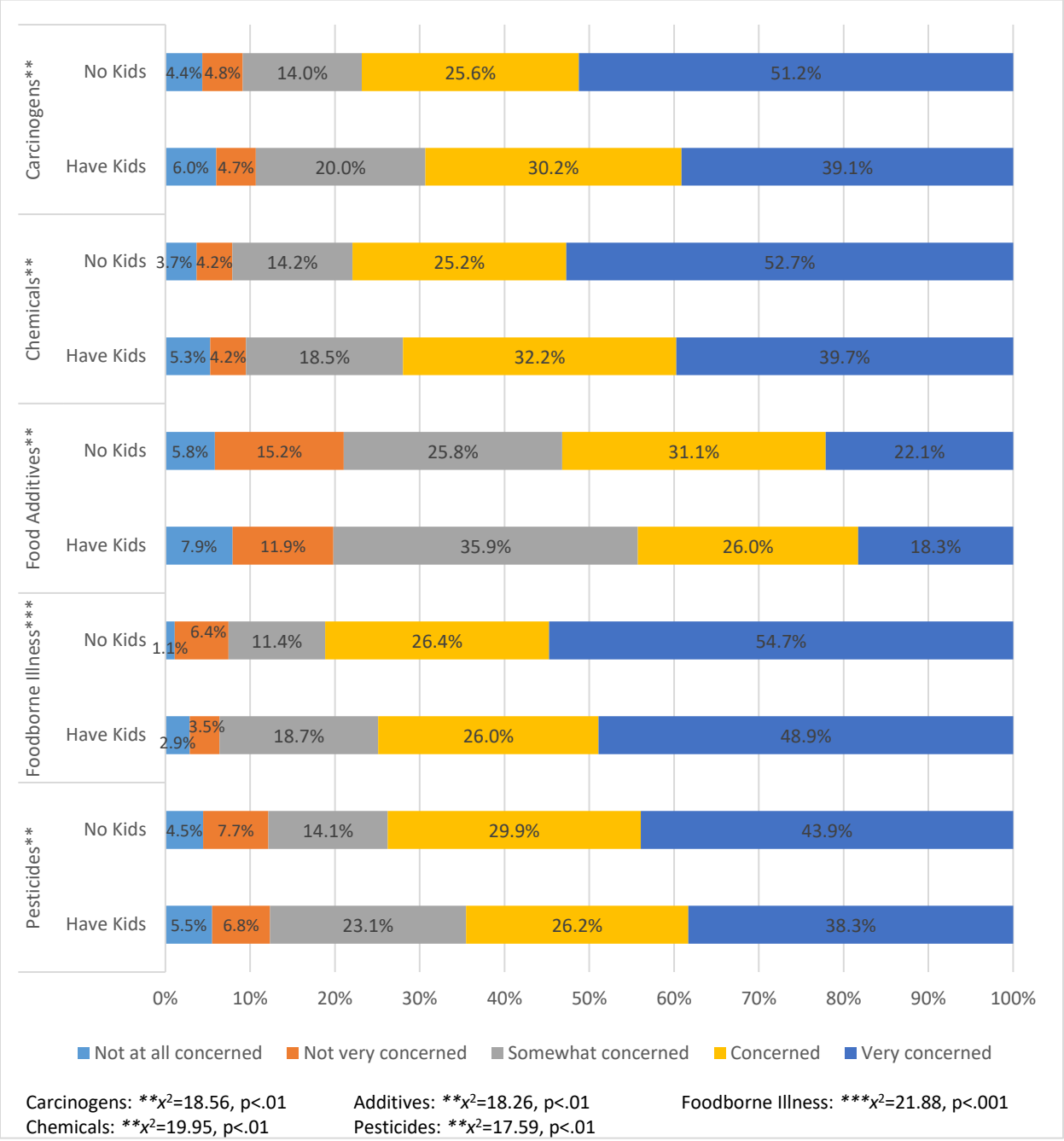
*Figure 6. Taste - Kids in Household (n=1189)***



** x^2=16.01, p<.01

Having kids in a household did show significant differences on respondents' levels of concern about the majority of food safety issues (see Figure 7). Surprisingly, respondents who do not have kids in their household actually showed more concern for all of the food safety factors. The percentage of respondents who showed no concern for the factors was higher on every factor for those who have kids.

Figure 7. Level of Concern - Kids in Household (n=1208)

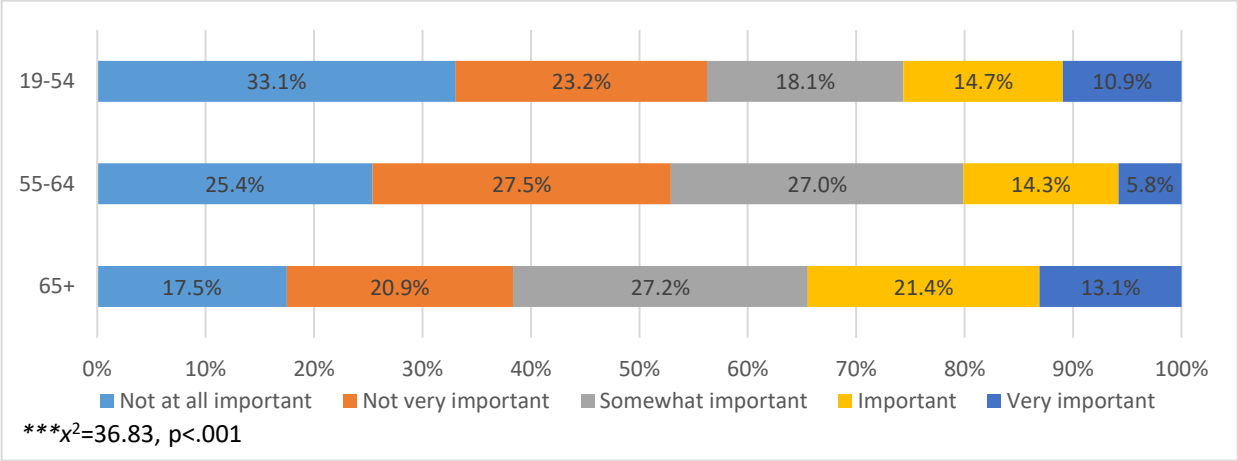


Carcinogens: $**x^2=18.56$, p<.01 Additives: $**x^2=18.26$, p<.01 Foodborne Illness: $***x^2=21.88$, p<.001
Chemicals: $**x^2=19.95$, p<.01 Pesticides: $**x^2=17.59$, p<.01

Age

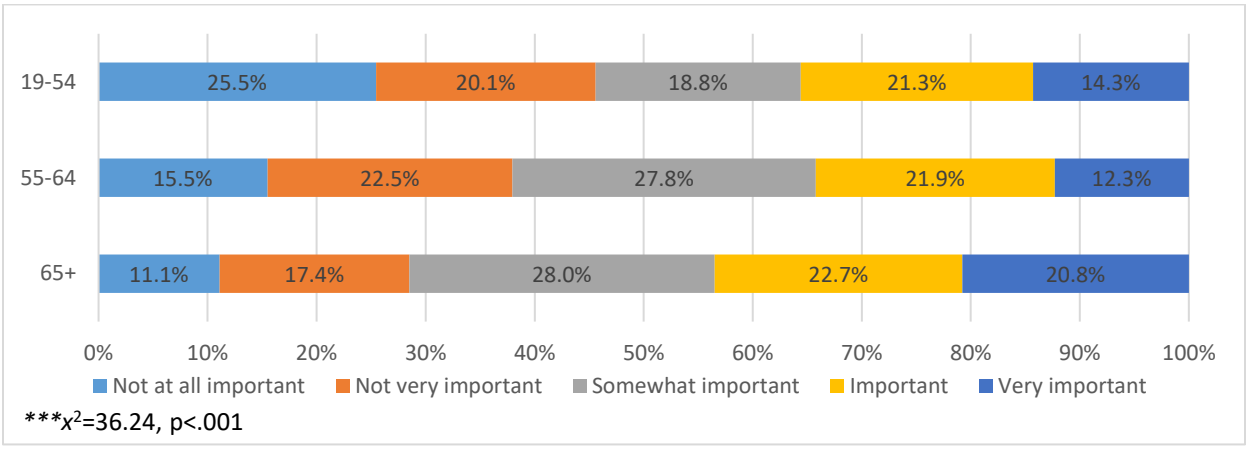
The only significant differences found by age were with the importance of food being allergen (Figure 8) and antibiotic (Figure 9) free. These results show these two factors decrease in importance as a respondents age increase with a third (33.1%) of 19-54 year olds, a quarter (25.4%) 55 to 64 year olds and only one in five (17.5%) 65 and older respondents rating the importance of allergen free foods as not at all important. The same trend is found in Figure 9 with the importance of antibiotic free foods.

*Figure 8. Allergen Free - Age (n=1163)****



****x^2=36.83, p<.001*

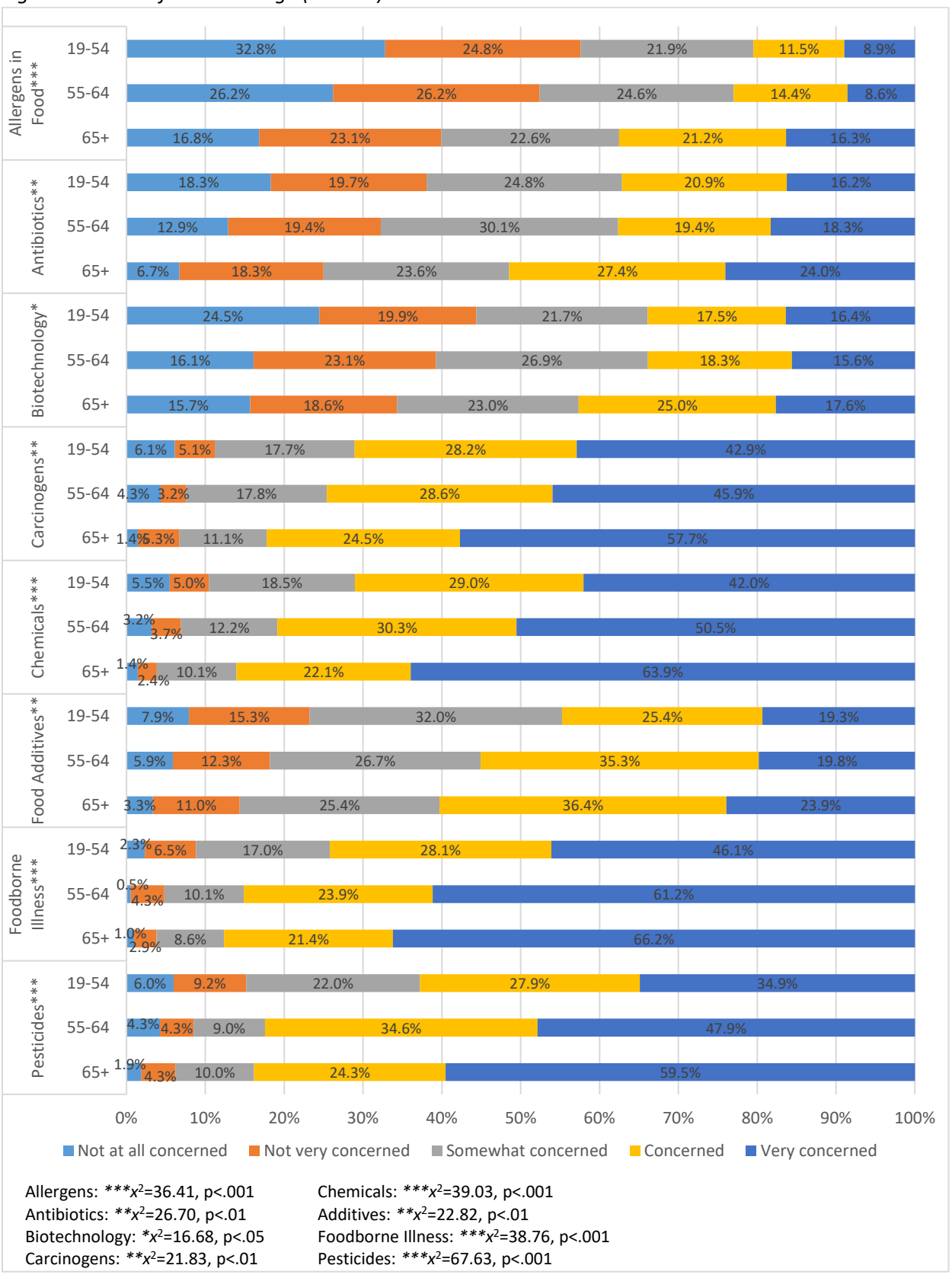
*Figure 9. Antibiotic Free - Age (n=1164)****



****x^2=36.24, p<.001*

Significant differences are found on every food safety factor asked about by age of respondent (Figure 10). When looking at how respondents in specific age groups compare on how concerned they are about certain food safety issues, there was a clear pattern of the level of concern increasing with age. On every variable, the 65 and older age group had the highest percentage out of the three age groups of being very concerned about these issues. Respondents in the 55-64 age range group had results that were more similar to those in the 19-54 range than those in the 65 and older range. Although these two age groups showed more similarities, those in the 55-64 age range still showed a higher percentage in almost every variable for a higher level of concern than those in the 19-54 range, following the pattern of the level of concern increasing with age. This also showed to be true on the percentage of respondents who chose not at all concerned, with the number of respondents not showing any concern decreasing as age increased. Overall, those in the 65 and older age group showed the most concern, those in the 19-54 age range showed the least concern, and those in the 55-64 age range were in the middle.

Figure 10. Level of Concern - Age (n=1183)



Allergens: ***x^2=36.41, p<.001
Antibiotics: **x^2=26.70, p<.01
Biotechnology: *x^2=16.68, p<.05
Carcinogens: **x^2=21.83, p<.01
Chemicals: ***x^2=39.03, p<.001
Additives: **x^2=22.82, p<.01
Foodborne Illness: ***x^2=38.76, p<.001
Pesticides: ***x^2=67.63, p<.001

Gender

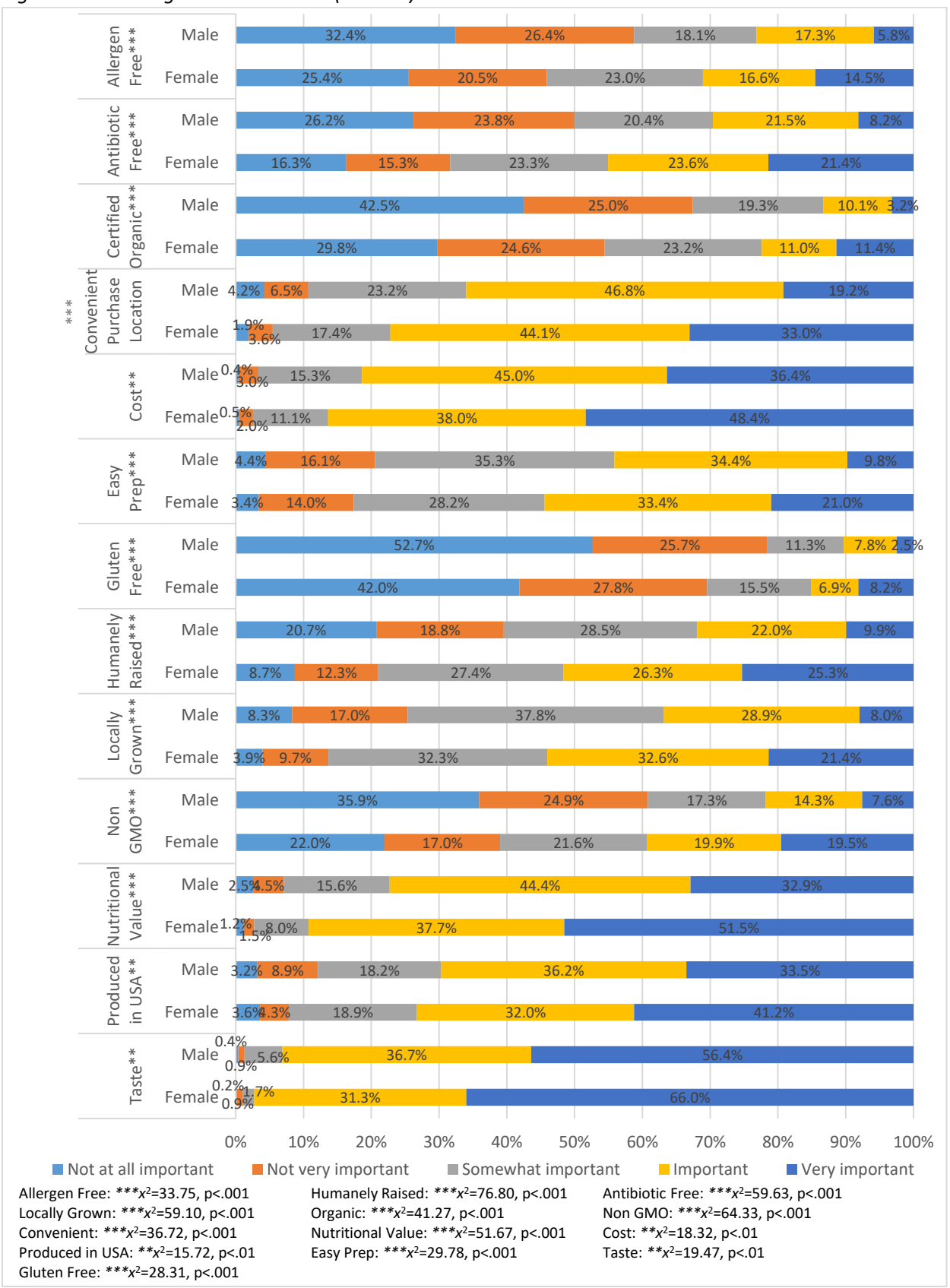
When comparing male to female respondents, every factor was found to be statistically significant, whether it was how important a deciding factor is or how concerned they are about food safety issues. Gender was the only demographic that showed a significant difference on every single factor.

Females were more likely to mark a factor as being very important than males on every factor (see Figure 11). Females were also less likely to mark a factor as being not at all important than males on almost every factor. This same pattern showed to be true on respondents' level of concern (see Figure 12), with more females than males marking being very concerned.

Some factors were clearly important to both genders, but even if males found something important, they were more likely to only respond with important rather than very important. The percentage of males and females who marked a factor as important was similar on most of the factors, with men even having a higher percentage of ranking a factor as important on some. However, the combined percentage of females who marked a factor as being important or very important was still higher than the male combined percentage of important and very important. For example, on nutritional value, over half (51.5%) of female respondents declared this as very important compared to only a third (32.9%) of males. However, more males (44.4%) marked this factor as important than females (37.7%), but the combined percentage of 89.2% of females choosing important or very important is greater than the 77.3% of males.

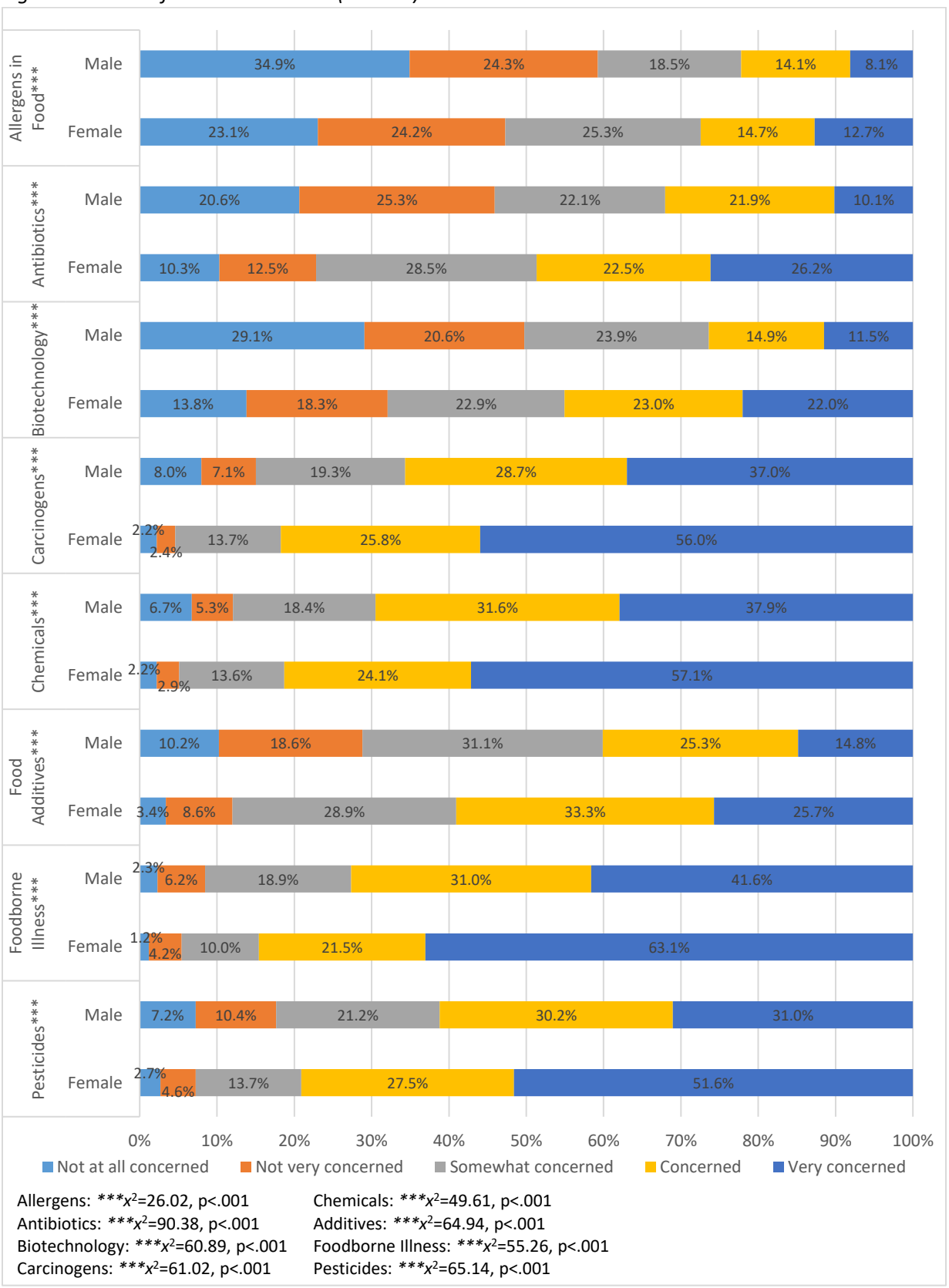
The same was true with level of concern when comparing gender (see Figure 12). Although male and female respondents showed similarities in the percentage of how many marked a factor as concerning, females were again more likely to choose very concerning than males, bringing the female combined percentage of concerned and very concerned higher than the male combined percentage. The presence of chemicals in food was a clear example of this on gender differences. Although both genders showed concern, 57.1% of females chose very concerned while only 37.9% of male respondents did. Males made up for this slightly by having a higher percentage of respondents (31.6%) chose important than females (24.1%). However, the combined 81.2% of females marking concerned or very concerned is much higher than the male combined 69.5%. Likewise, the combined percentage of males who chose not at all concerned and not very concerned is higher than the female combined percentage. For example, although male (24.3%) and female (24.2%) respondents were almost identical in their responses for not being very concerned about food allergens, males had a higher percentage (34.9%) of not being at all concerned, compared to 23.1% of females, increasing the male combined percentage.

Figure 11. Deciding Factors - Gender (n=1172)



Allergen Free: ***x^2=33.75, p<.001
Antibiotic Free: ***x^2=59.63, p<.001
Certified Organic: ***x^2=41.27, p<.001
Convenient: ***x^2=36.72, p<.001
Cost: **x^2=18.32, p<.01
Easy Prep: ***x^2=29.78, p<.001
Gluten Free: ***x^2=28.31, p<.001
Humanely Raised: ***x^2=76.80, p<.001
Locally Grown: ***x^2=59.10, p<.001
Non GMO: ***x^2=64.33, p<.001
Nutritional Value: ***x^2=51.67, p<.001
Produced in USA: **x^2=15.72, p<.01
Taste: **x^2=19.47, p<.01

Figure 12. Level of Concern - Gender (n=1172)



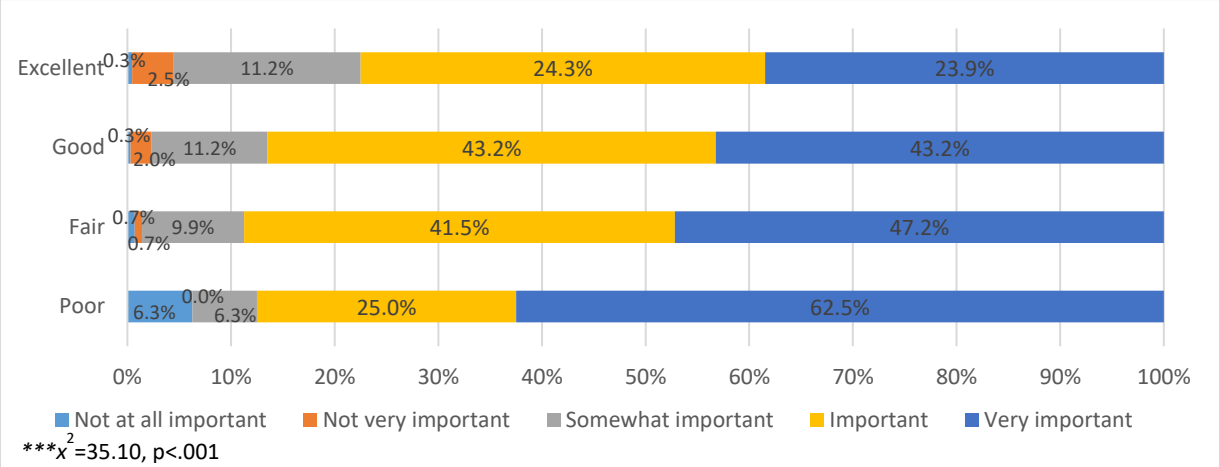
Allergens: ***x^2=26.02, p<.001
Antibiotics: ***x^2=90.38, p<.001
Biotechnology: ***x^2=60.89, p<.001
Carcinogens: ***x^2=61.02, p<.001
Chemicals: ***x^2=49.61, p<.001
Additives: ***x^2=64.94, p<.001
Foodborne Illness: ***x^2=55.26, p<.001
Pesticides: ***x^2=65.14, p<.001

Overall Health and Wellbeing

Respondents' level of overall health and wellbeing only showed a statistically significant difference on four of the variables when making food selections, and three of the variables about their level of concern for certain food safety issues. The deciding factors that were significantly different were cost (Figure 13), nutritional value (Figure 14), produced in the USA (Figure 15), and taste (Figure 16). As seen in cost and produced in the US, the importance of factors decreased as wellness increased.

When looking at cost those in poor health found cost to be most important, with 62.5% of these respondents choosing very important, while only 23.9% of those in excellent health chose very important.

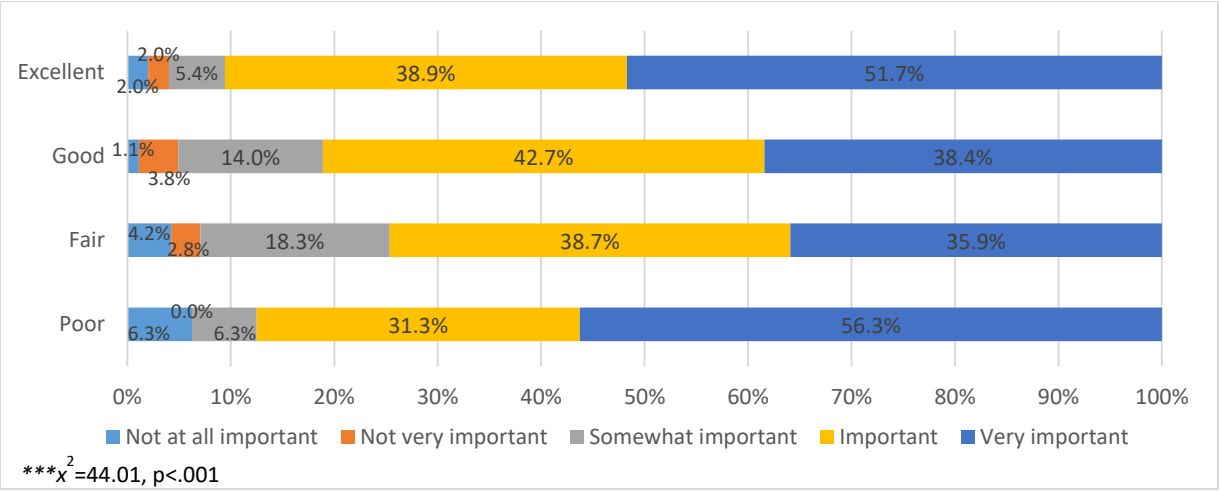
*Figure 13. Cost - Overall Health and Wellbeing (n=1154)****



***x^2=35.10, p<.001

Those in either excellent or poor health had the highest percentages of respondents mark nutritional value as being very important (see Figure 14). More than half (56.3%) of the respondents who marked their health as poor marked nutritional value as being a very important deciding factor, which was the highest percentage of respondents choosing very important out of the four groups. However, those in poor health also had the highest percentage (6.3%) out of the four groups of ranking nutritional value as not at all important.

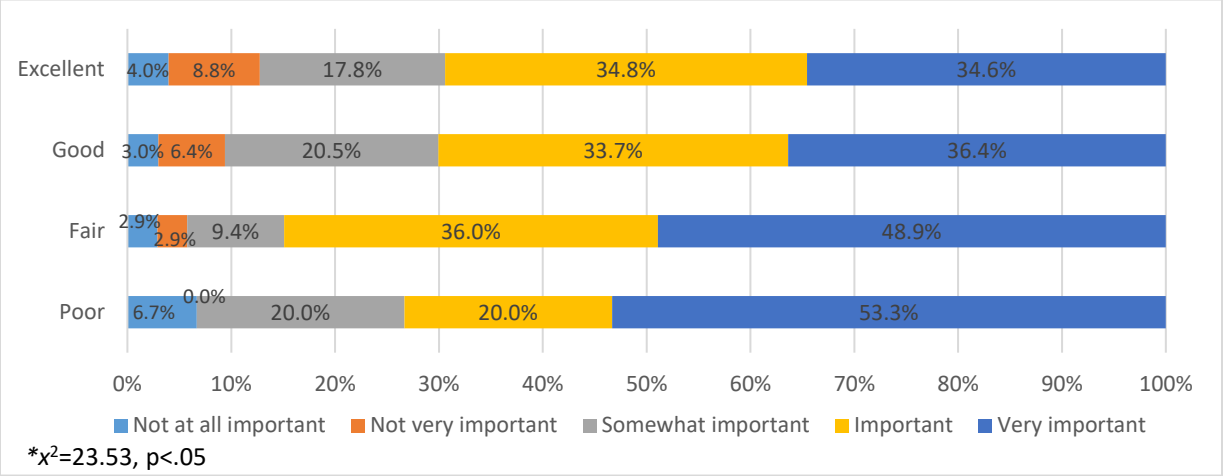
*Figure 14. Nutritional Value - Overall Health and Wellbeing (n=1138)****



***x^2=44.01, p<.001

Those in excellent health had very similar responses to how important it is to have food produced in the US to those in good health (see Figure 15), but those in poor health had the highest percentage (53.3%) of finding this to be very important. Those in fair health had the highest combined percentage of respondents finding this to be important or very important (84.9%).

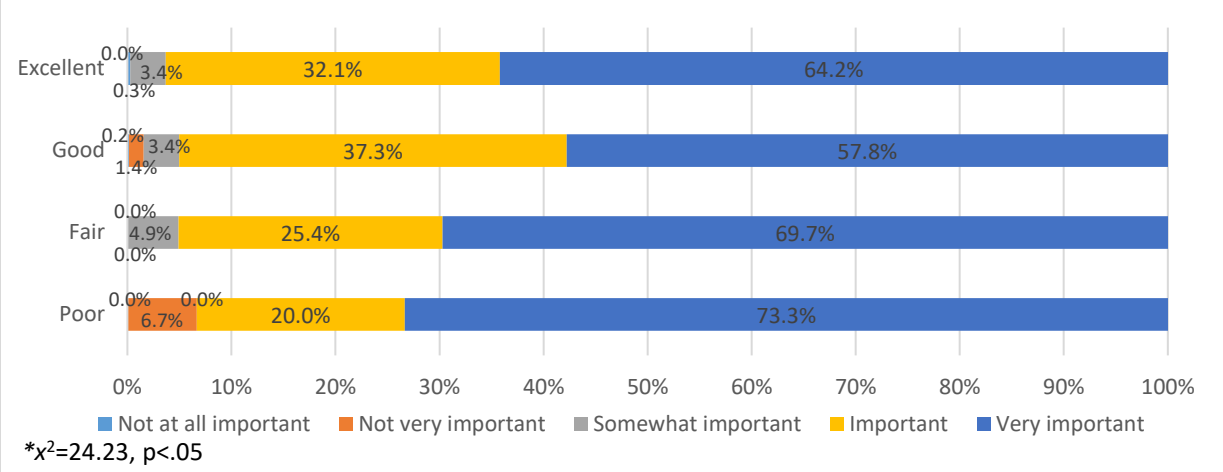
*Figure 15. Produced in the USA - Overall Health and Wellbeing (n=1145)**



*x^2=23.53, p<.05

Taste is an important factor, no matter the respondents' health, with the majority of respondents choosing either important or very important. Those in poor health had the highest percentage (73.3%) of respondents rank it as a very important factor, but these respondents also had the highest percentage (6.7%) of those who ranked this factor as not very important.

*Figure 16. Taste - Overall Health and Wellbeing (n=1153)**

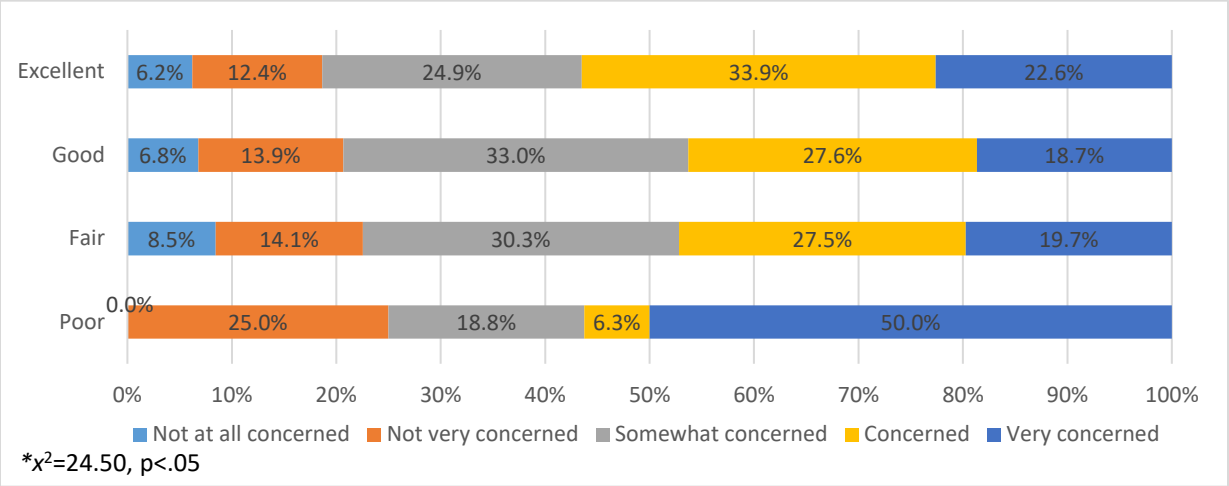


*x^2=24.23, p<.05

Regarding respondents' levels of concern, food additives, foodborne illness, and pesticides were the only factors that showed significant difference.

Half (50.0%) of the respondents in poor health consider food additives to be very concerning, but the combined percentage (56.3%) of respondents in this category who find food additives to be concerning or very concerning is nearly identical to the combined percentage (56.5%) of those in excellent health (see Figure 17). Those in either good or fair health had very similar responses for this particular factor.

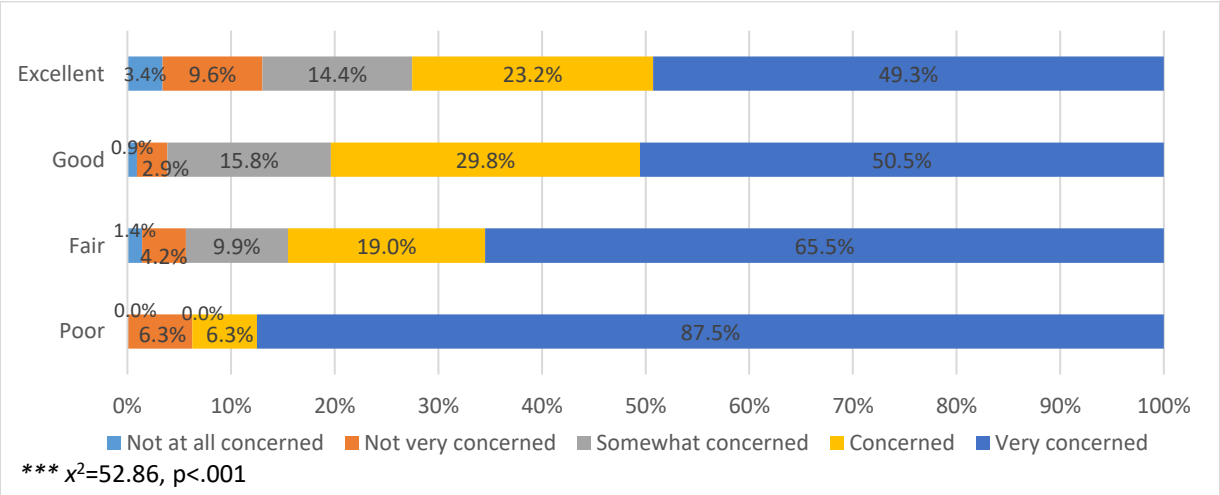
*Figure 17. Food Additives and Ingredients - Overall Health and Wellbeing (n=1160)**



*x^2=24.50, p<.05

Although all groups showed major concern for foodborne illness from bacteria (see Figure 18), 87.5% of those in poor health reported this being very concerning. Those in fair health also had a high response at 65.5% and although nearly half of those in excellent health also marked this as very concerning, they had the lowest percentage at 49.3%.

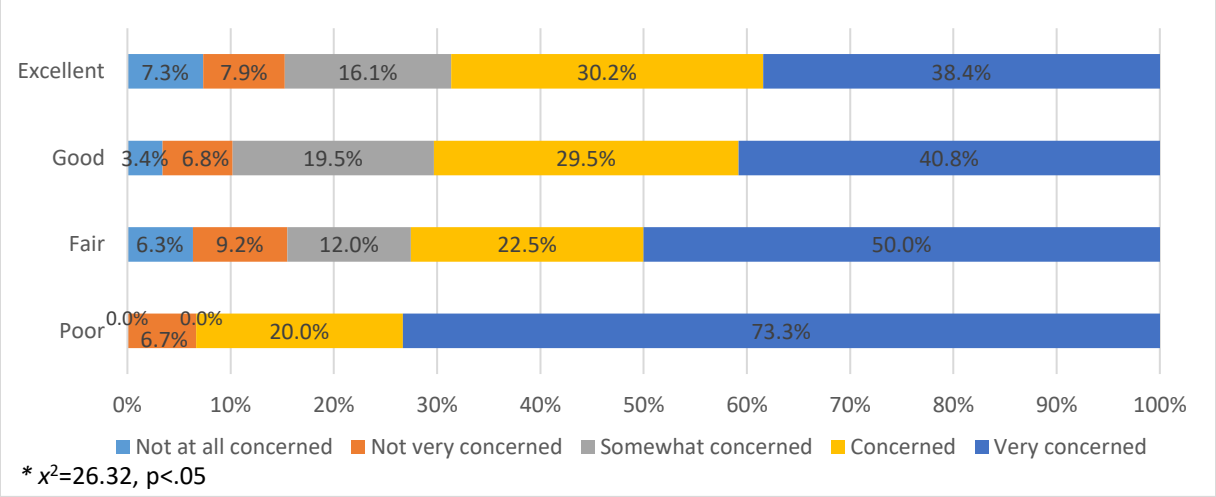
*Figure 18. Foodborne Illness from Bacteria - Overall Health and Wellbeing (n=1158)****



*** x^2=52.86, p<.001

The same showed to be true on pesticides (Figure 19), with 73.3% of those in poor health showing high concern compared to only 38.4% of those in excellent health. The level of concern increased as health decreased.

*Figure 19. Pesticides/Pesticide Residue - Overall Health and Wellbeing (n=1158)**



* x^2=26.32, p<.05