



# BREAKFAST SMARTER REPORT

APRIL 2026



British eggs are one of UK agriculture's success stories, with the British Lion scheme restoring a declining market to growth and helping UK-produced eggs dominate the market. In 2025, UK egg consumption reached 209 per person – up 27% over the past 20 years.

One of the most exciting trends this decade has been the resurgence of eggs at breakfast: both at home where consumers are seeking higher protein nutrient-dense meals to start the day, while reducing intake of ultra-processed foods; and out-of-home where the breakfast and brunch opportunity is one of the fastest-growing areas of hospitality.

Most encouragingly, these trends are being driven by younger adults, who are continuing to fuel the growth in UK egg sales. Our in-depth analysis shows that millennials and the upper ages of the Gen-Z generation are increasingly recognising eggs as the perfect food for the 21st century – a trend set to continue.

We are optimistic that eggs' unique combination of health benefits and their practicality, versatility and affordability, backed by recognition of the safety and quality of the British Lion mark, will ensure a bright future for British eggs.

**Nick Allen, British Egg Industry Council Chief Executive**

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# The market backdrop

Eggs have long been a firm favourite in UK households. Around 95% of British households buy eggs regularly<sup>1</sup>, and volumes are steadily growing.

In the past 20 years, consumption in the UK has grown by 4.5 billion eggs, according to industry estimates<sup>2</sup>. And in 2025, **retail sales grew in value by an estimated 10% to £2.1bn.**

Eggs are bought by all ages and socio-economic groups, across a wide variety of consumption occasions. However, figures point to **particular opportunities for 2026 across younger shoppers and at the breakfast/brunch occasion.**

**24.6m**  
UK households  
bought eggs in 2025

**8.6bn**  
eggs sold in UK  
retail in 2025

**£2.1bn**  
Estimated UK  
retail market

**39.6m**  
eggs eaten by  
Brits per day

<sup>1</sup> Kantar, GB household egg penetration, 52 w/e 22 February 2026  
<sup>2</sup> <https://www.egginfo.co.uk/egg-facts-and-figures/industry-information/data>

# Millennial growth

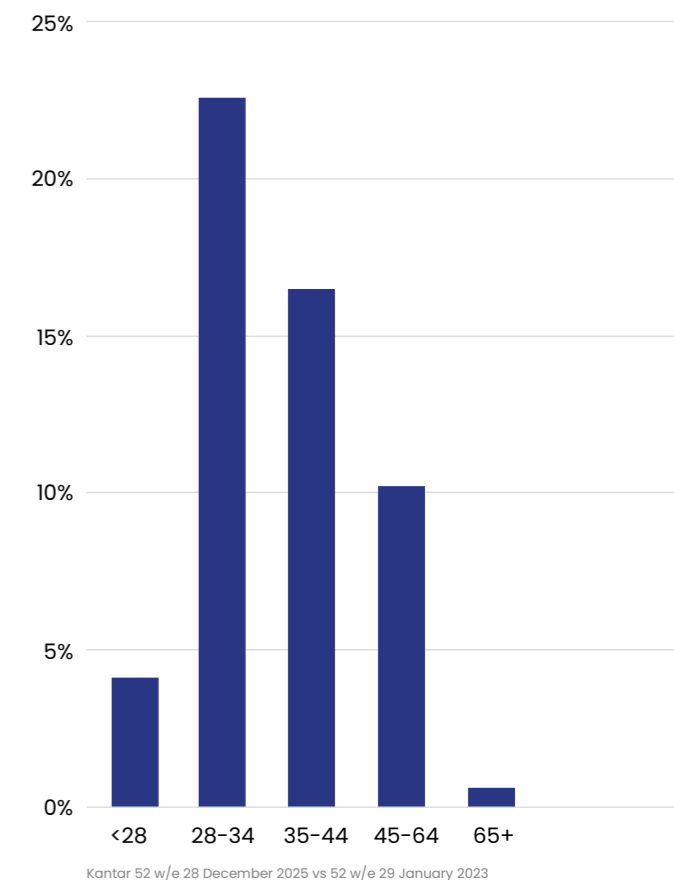
Eggs are popular across all age groups – but the real opportunity for continued additional growth is coming from millennials and the upper end of Gen Z.

Although over-65s continue to have the highest total consumption of all age groups, accounting for 23.7% of shell egg occasions in the home<sup>3</sup>, the millennial generation is driving growth. Consumers aged between 25 and 44 over index on egg consumption, accounting for 28% of shell egg occasions in the home environment.

Growth is particularly strong **among 28 to 34-year-olds, where volume per buyer has grown by 22.6% since 2023** and has more than doubled since 2008<sup>4</sup>.

Growth is also significant among 35 to 44-year-olds, where volume per buyer has increased 16.5% since 2023 and 68% since 2008.

## Egg volume growth by age group since 2022



<sup>3</sup> Kantar Worldpanel, 52 w/e 29 December 2024  
<sup>4</sup> Kantar, 52 w/e 28 December 2025 vs 52 w/e 10 September 2023 and 52 w/e 15 June 2008

# Breakfast and brunch opportunity

Breakfast has traditionally been the largest occasion for eggs. However, the opportunity for egg-based breakfasts – and the later brunch occasion – is growing. Breakfast's share of total shell egg occasions rose from 38.2% in 2021 to 47.3% in 2024<sup>5</sup>.

That has been supported by the recent return to cooked breakfasts. In 2022, 19% of consumers who ate breakfast at home prepared cooked options. That figure rose to 25% in 2024, according to a 2025 Mintel report<sup>6</sup>, which highlighted a corresponding boost in egg sales.

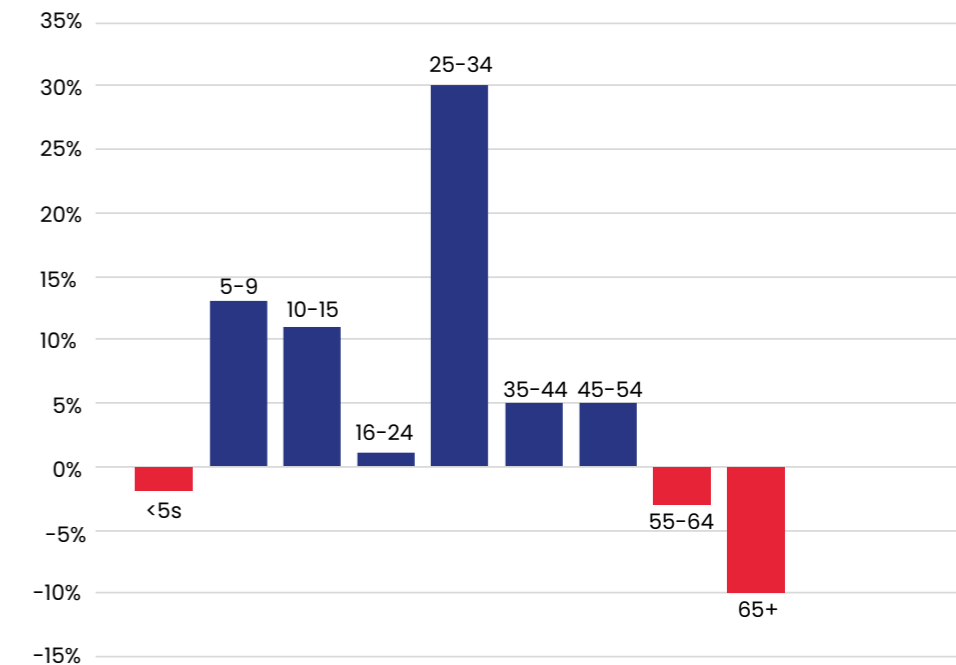
A particular opportunity lies in the **midweek breakfast**. Thanks to a rise in associations with health and convenience, more consumers are eating eggs during the week rather than reserving them for more leisurely weekend occasions. Nearly six in 10 (58%) breakfasts involving eggs now take place during the week, up 8% on last year. Crucially, this accounts for **92% of the growth in eggs at breakfast**.

In 2024, an extra **79 million** breakfasts included eggs.



Millennial and older Gen Z consumers are driving much of this growth. **The number of egg breakfast occasions among 25 to 34-year-olds rose by 30% in 2024<sup>7</sup>.** Demand has also increased among 35 to 44-year-olds, albeit at a slower rate over a longer period. Between 2020 and 2024, egg breakfast occasions involving this age group grew 22%<sup>8</sup>.

## Year-on-year change in egg breakfast consumption by age group



Our analysis identified a number of key factors driving growth in the breakfast market, continue reading to discover.



# Health

Eggs are widely seen as a healthy way to start the day. According to Kantar data, 30% of egg meals eaten at breakfast are perceived as a ‘positive health’ choice meaning they are consumed for their health benefits rather than as part of a restricted diet.

According to market research and intelligence company, Mintel:

*“Eggs’ suitability to savoury dishes gives them an edge amid the buzz around blood sugar, with 45% of people seeing a savoury breakfast as a good way to avoid spikes in blood sugar levels.*

Mintel believes eggs are perfectly positioned for continued growth, thanks to their status as a natural, complete protein at a time when consumer demand for protein is increasing.

## Change in number of breakfast occasions

Yoghurt	<b>+207 million</b>
Fruit	<b>+91 million</b>
Eggs	<b>+79 million</b>
Cereals	<b>- 93 million</b>
Cakes and pastries	<b>- 16 million</b>
Chocolate spread	<b>- 14 million</b>

Kantar, 52 w/e 29 December 2024 vs 52 w/e 31 December 2023

These attributes are important given that during weekdays, 43% of consumers look for breakfasts that are filling, and 35% of consumers prioritise health, according to a 2026 survey of over 2,200 consumers commissioned by the British Egg Industry Council (BEIC)<sup>9</sup>.

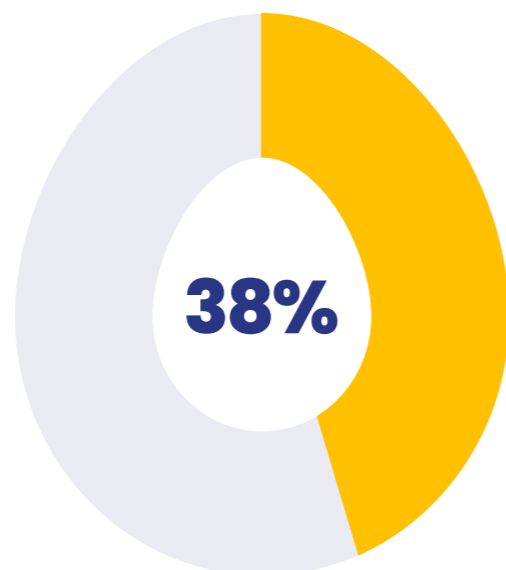
That priority is reflected in changing consumption habits. The growth in eggs at breakfast coincides with a rise in consumption of other choices perceived as healthy, such as yoghurts and fruit, and a decline in less healthy options, according to Kantar data.

# Value

As households continue to be squeezed by cost of living pressures, consumers are looking for breakfast options that offer value.

On weekdays, 38% of consumers name value as a key priority when choosing a breakfast option, according to the 2026 BEIC consumer survey. That figure rises to 43% among parents of children aged 18 or under.

Eggs can offer a value option for families – an attribute that is recognised by consumers. **Over four in 10 (42%) of people in the BEIC poll said value was a reason for their consumption of eggs.**



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# Convenience

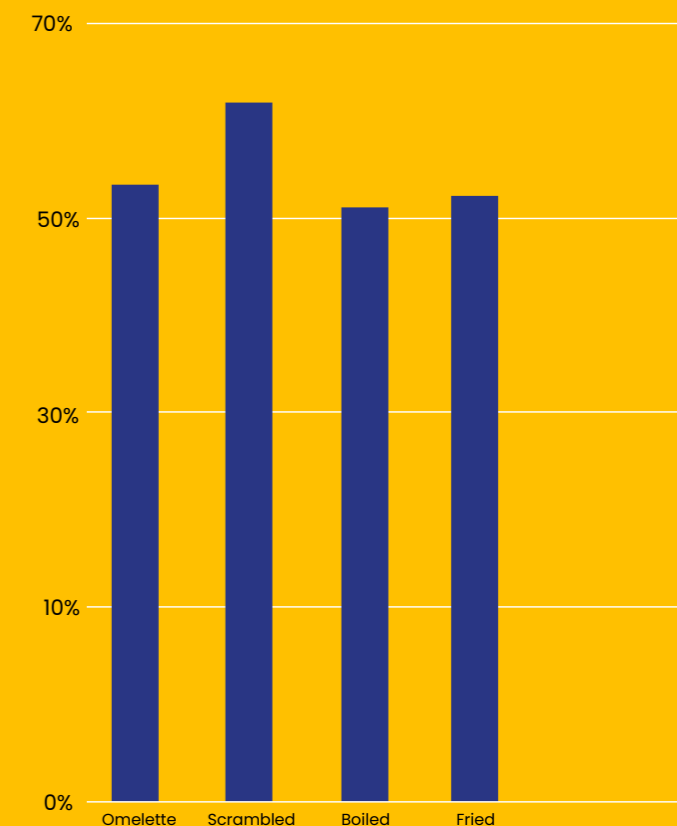
Consumers are increasingly prioritising shorter cooking times. In the BEIC's consumer poll, 32% cited ease as a key reason for their weekday breakfast choice, while 27% pointed to speed.

Eggs are well suited to this convenience mindset. More than half (57%) of consumers in the BEIC survey said they chose eggs because they were quick to cook.

Against that backdrop, simple egg dishes are proving particularly popular. Options such as eggs on toast and eggs on their own both reached a five-year high in consumption in 2024, according to Kantar. In the BEIC survey, scrambled eggs emerged as the most popular option, made regularly by 64% of those surveyed.

Omelettes, fried eggs and boiled eggs were the next most popular choices, regularly made by 53%, 52% and 51% of consumers respectively.

## Most popular quick egg breakfast dishes



Obsurant poll of 2,224 respondents on mobile and desktop devices, 12-16 February 2026

# New and exciting servings

Eggs may be thriving as a quick, convenient breakfast option, but they also lend themselves well to more leisurely breakfasts or brunches, when consumers are willing to spend more time cooking.

At weekends, consumers spend an average of 17 minutes making breakfast, around 13% longer than during the week, according to Kantar. Weekend breakfasts also tend to be eaten later – most typically between 9-10am, versus 7-8am in the week – according to the BEIC's consumer poll<sup>10</sup>.

Weekends may once have been strongly associated with the traditional fry-up, however, that is changing. Fry-ups now account for just 11% of all weekend breakfast occasions involving eggs, says Kantar. Instead, younger consumers in particular appear to be exploring more adventurous egg-based breakfasts at home. For example, 20% of respondents to the BEIC's consumer survey said they regularly made French toast, rising to 27% among 18-24 year olds.

There is also a clear influence from popular out-of-home dishes (see Part 3 for a wider exploration of trends). A third (33%) of consumers said they would attempt to make Eggs Benedict at home, while 23% would try Eggs Royale and 12% would attempt Shakshuka.

Some consumers are already preparing these dishes regularly at home. Shakshuka was enjoyed as an at-home dish by 7% of 25 to 34-year-olds, demonstrating the growing influence of the Middle Eastern dish on breakfast and brunch menus.

Further evidence of global culinary influence comes from Mintel, which recently highlighted the rising popularity of Asian-inspired savoury porridge with egg<sup>11</sup>.





# Nutrition

The nation's breakfast habits reflect changing attitudes to health. By the early 1950s, after the end of food rationing, roughly half of the British population began their day with an English breakfast, turning a meal for the wealthy into a national staple<sup>12</sup>.

The famous 'Go to Work on an Egg' campaign soon became part of British culture. However, the traditional egg and bacon fry-up was later replaced by the explosion of breakfast cereals, which were marketed as lower-fat and more convenient alternatives.

Today, many consumers have woken up to the nutritional benefits of eggs for breakfast. Eggs contain choline, folate, vitamin D, iodine, B vitamins and are a source of natural protein.

A 2023 review authored by Dr Carrie Ruxton described eggs as a "highly nutritious, accessible and affordable" source of food "and suggested there would be<sup>13</sup> "broad health benefits from including eggs in the diet at intakes higher than that currently consumed by European populations."

More recently, researchers<sup>14</sup> have also found that the unique combination of nutrients in eggs may support brain development during pregnancy, early childhood and adolescence.

# 02

# Benefits of breakfast

There is a particular opportunity to establish eggs as a breakfast option among children. Studies have found that regular breakfast consumption is linked to improved mood and cognitive function, especially in younger age groups. A review of 45 studies<sup>15</sup> found that eating breakfast improves key aspects of cognitive function - including attention, executive function and memory when compared with morning fasting.

A large study<sup>16</sup> of more than 154,000 children and adolescents from 42 countries also found higher levels of life satisfaction among regular breakfast consumers. The authors suggested this was due to the consumption of nutrient-rich foods in the morning which can influence mood.

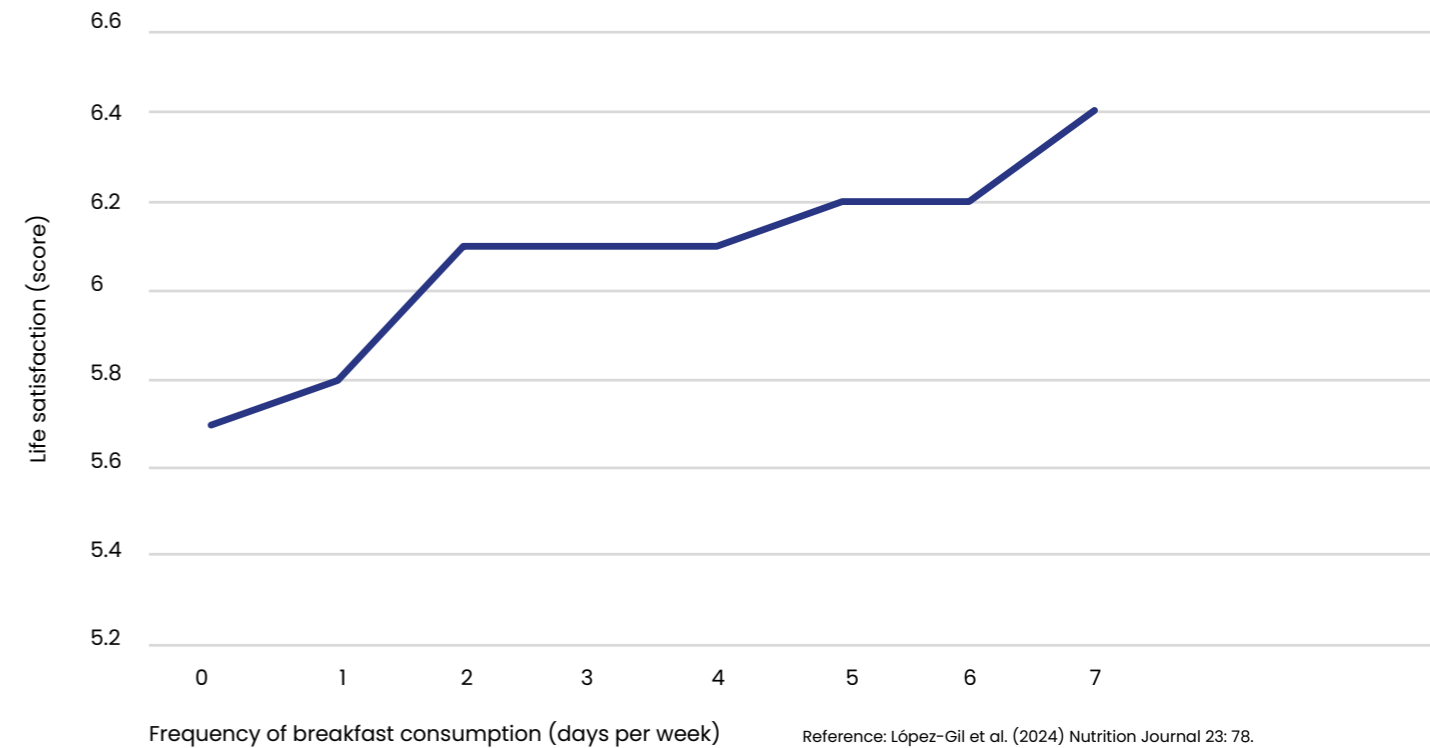
One study in adolescent girls has also examined the effects of eating versus skipping breakfast. The research found that skipping breakfast leads to lower levels of blood glucose mid-morning and a significantly greater glucose and insulin spike after lunch, indicating poorer metabolic control. Participants who skipped breakfast also reported feeling hungrier and experiencing lower energy and concentration throughout the day, which made exercise less enjoyable.

Nicole Pisani, Co-founder and Chief Innovation Officer at Chefs in Schools, a UK charity that supports schools with practical advice and training to improve food provision and food culture, said:

*"Everyone agrees that children learn best when they are well fed, especially at the start of the school day. But many schools running breakfast clubs face real challenges – tight budgets, limited staff time and skills, and rising food costs – which can make serving nutritious food difficult."*

Eggs offer a simple and joyful solution. They are naturally nutrient-dense, high in protein, affordable and quick to prepare. They're also familiar to children—whether boiled or as an egg muffin – making them an easy win for busy school kitchens."

## Life satisfaction score is higher in regular breakfast consumers



Nicole Pisani continues *"We believe eggs can play a small but powerful role in helping breakfast clubs serve food that is nourishing, practical and something children genuinely look forward to eating."*

Dietitian Nichola Ludlam-Raine highlights the benefits of including protein at breakfast, particularly compared with options higher in sugar and lower in nutrients. *"Some breakfast cereals can be higher in sugar and lower in protein, which*

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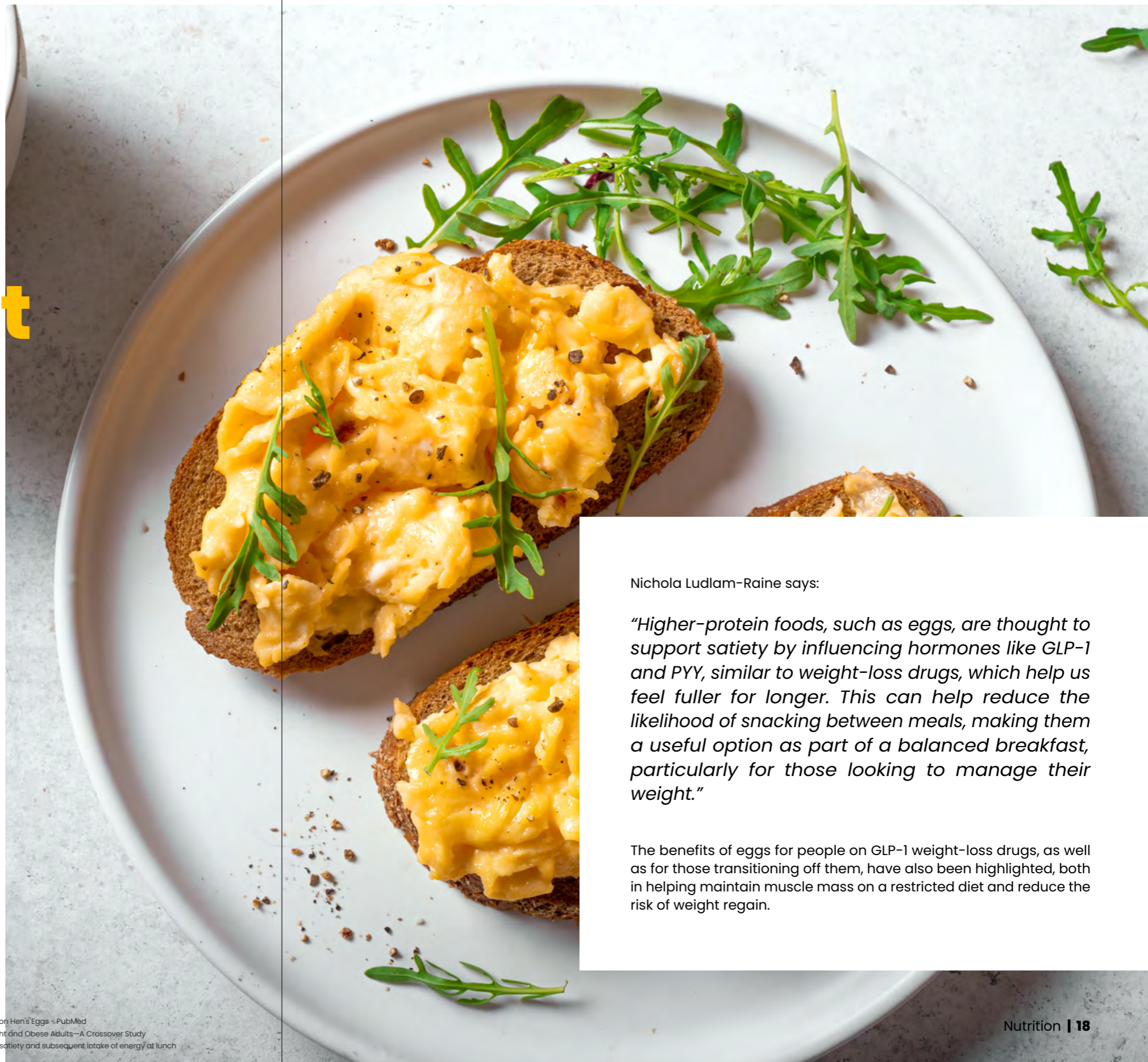
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# Weight management starts at breakfast

Adults can also benefit from maintaining a regular breakfast habit. High protein breakfast foods, particularly eggs, are a good choice for appetite management, according to several clinical trials<sup>17</sup>.

One study of 50 overweight adults<sup>18</sup> compared eggs on toast with a cereal-based breakfast. Although the meals were matched for calories, they had different effects on appetite and food intake later in the day. Participants who ate eggs for breakfast consumed around 180 calories fewer at lunch and reported feeling less hungry compared with a day when they ate cereal.

Another study involving 30 healthy men found that an egg-based breakfast led to lower calorie intake at both lunch and dinner, as well as greater feelings of satiety (fullness) throughout the day<sup>19</sup>.



Nichola Ludlam-Raine says:

*“Higher-protein foods, such as eggs, are thought to support satiety by influencing hormones like GLP-1 and PYY, similar to weight-loss drugs, which help us feel fuller for longer. This can help reduce the likelihood of snacking between meals, making them a useful option as part of a balanced breakfast, particularly for those looking to manage their weight.”*

The benefits of eggs for people on GLP-1 weight-loss drugs, as well as for those transitioning off them, have also been highlighted, both in helping maintain muscle mass on a restricted diet and reduce the risk of weight regain.



# Ultra-processed breakfasts

Busy lifestyles have led to a growing reliance on ultra-processed foods (UPF). According to a 2025 report by UNICEF<sup>20</sup>, children living in high-income countries now get two thirds of their daily calories from UPF. This includes extruded breakfast cereals, industrial breads, sweet spreads, biscuits, pastries, sugary drinks and snacks—foods often eaten at breakfast.

Bringing together recent scientific evidence, UNICEF found diets high in UPF contained more sugars, refined starches and unhealthy fats than minimally processed diets. UPF diets were also lower in essential nutrients such as fibre, iron, zinc, vitamin A, vitamin D, vitamin B12 and choline. Children who consumed large amounts of ultra-processed foods were also found to have a greater risk of obesity and nutrient deficiencies, as well as poorer cognitive outcomes.

Consumer research among UK parents conducted in February 2026 shows that 12% cite concerns about eating too many processed or ultra-processed foods as a reason why they see eggs as a good alternative, rising to 22% among parents in London.<sup>21</sup>

Nichola Ludlam-Raine adds:

*“Eggs can help contribute to nutrient intake, particularly in diets that rely more heavily on ultra-processed breakfast options. They provide high-quality protein, vitamin B12 for a healthy immune and nervous system, vitamin D for bone maintenance, iodine for energy metabolism, choline to support brain function and selenium for immune function. They also contain all nine essential amino acids. When paired with fibre-rich foods such as wholegrain toast and vegetables or fruit, they form an important part of a balanced and nutritious meal.”*

# Future breakfast trends

Powerful health and nutrition trends are helping to reshape food choices, and eggs are now widely recognised as a nutrient-rich, natural source of high-quality protein that fits seamlessly into modern health priorities.

A 2024 survey of British Dietetic Association members found that almost all recognised the high levels of protein in eggs, with most also aware of their rich supply of vitamins and minerals<sup>22</sup>.

One of the strongest drivers is the protein-first mindset. More than four in ten (43%) consumers have increased their protein intake over the past year, according to research by Ocado and Savanta in March 2025 – rising to 62% among 16 to 34-year-olds. Ocado also reported that searches on its site for high-protein foods have more than doubled (+105%) since last year.

These figures point to a growing focus on muscle health, metabolic wellbeing and satiety, with consumers increasingly seeking foods that deliver complete, bioavailable protein without excessive calories.



More than **43%** of consumers have increased their protein intake over the past year

Another key trend is the rapid rise of GLP-1 weight loss drugs, which is shifting attention from simple calorie counting towards nutrient density. Dietitian Nichola Ludlam-Raine explains: “As people become more interested in what food does for their body, rather than just calorie content, foods like eggs can be a practical choice. They’re affordable, filling, and provide nutrients such as vitamin D, choline and iodine, which are commonly under-consumed in UK diets. There are many ways to build a healthy breakfast – the key is aiming for a balance of protein, fibre and essential nutrients, which is why eggs stand out as a great food to include.”

Together, these trends are repositioning eggs as a smart, functional staple for modern eating.

# Out of home: Opportunity for eggs

The out-of-home breakfast market presents a huge opportunity. In 2024, the number of out-of-home breakfast occasions rose by 13.7%, according to Kantar Worldpanel<sup>23</sup>, outperforming the 8.7% growth across the wider out-of-home market. Kantar also noted particularly strong growth among Gen Z, whose out-of-home breakfast consumption grew by 23.7% year- on-year<sup>24</sup>.

Breakfast is also taking a larger share of the total eating-out market, rising from 10.8% of occasions in 2023 to 12.3% in 2025, underlining the growing importance of the morning daypart.

Additional footfall data reinforces this trend. Morning visits before midday increased by 8% in 2024, lifting their share of total daily traffic from 23% to 25% (Meaningful Vision). Industry commentary supports this shift, with operators noting that breakfast has not only recovered post-pandemic but is now outperforming other dayparts.

**Tim Martin, chairman of JD Wetherspoon, recently noted that breakfasts have “recovered their lustre and are now well ahead”.**





# Eggs: a proven commercial driver with room to grow

Lightspeed foodservice operator electronic point of sale data<sup>25</sup> reveals a clear and compelling role for eggs within this growing market.

Egg dishes consistently account for 8–9% of all breakfast transactions, demonstrating stable, year-round demand. However, the most successful operators generate more than 20% of breakfast revenue from eggs. This gap is significant. It shows that while demand for eggs is strong across the market, commercial performance varies dramatically depending on execution.

- Average sites: **8–9% of breakfast sales from eggs**
- Top-performing sites: **20%+ of breakfast revenue**
- Performance gap: **2–3x higher egg-driven revenue**

For operators, this represents a clear commercial opportunity. Eggs are not just a staple, they are one of the most reliable and scalable revenue drivers on the breakfast menu.

## **Operator takeaways:**

Eggs drive nearly 1 in 10 breakfast purchases, and up to 1 in 5 in top venues.

The best operators sell up to 3x more eggs than the average site.

If eggs are under 10% of your breakfast sales, there is a clear opportunity to unlock more value.

## Opportunity One

# Inspiring higher-value breakfast and brunch experiences

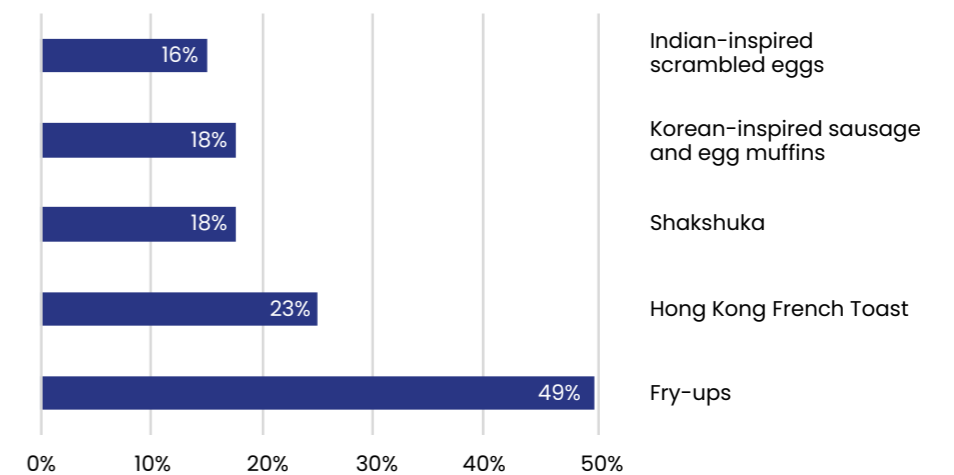
Eggs provide a versatile foundation for refreshing and elevating breakfast and brunch menus, enabling operators to introduce more distinctive, premium-feel dishes that justify higher price points and drive customer engagement.

Consumer expectations for breakfast are evolving, particularly at weekends, where the occasion is becoming more indulgent and experience-led. The growing popularity of brunch, now often positioned as a premium occasion, served with Champagne or cocktails, illustrates this shift.



While traditional options such as fry-ups still dominate (49%)<sup>26</sup>, there is clear interest in globally inspired egg dishes, particularly among younger consumers

### Which dishes would appeal to 25-34s when eating out at a weekend?



These types of dishes are increasingly appearing on breakfast and brunch menus, where consumers are willing to spend more for something distinctive.

Social media is further accelerating awareness of new egg-based formats. Dishes such as Hong Kong style café HOKA's French Toast (6 varieties) and Bone Daddies breakfast ramen are gaining traction through influencer content. Also, research shows that 38% of UK consumers have seen cured egg yolks online and 35% have seen muffin tin eggs, inspiring an openness to broader menu options.

## Opportunity Two

# Scalable premiumisation

Eggs provide a highly efficient route to trading customers up, enabling operators to increase spend without materially increasing cost, labour, or complexity.

Few ingredients operate as effectively across the full price spectrum. Eggs can anchor value-led formats such as breakfast baps, wraps, and egg pots, while also supporting premium dishes, including eggs Benedict and Shakshuka. This versatility allows operators to meet both indulgent and health-led needs using a single, familiar ingredient.

Crucially, this premiumisation does not introduce additional operational burden. Eggs are quick to prepare, require minimal specialist skill, and are supported by a range of pre-prepared formats, including poached egg pouches, liquid egg and pre-cooked option, which enable consistency, speed and scalability in high volume environments.



## Opportunity Three

# Winning in on-the-go occasions

Eggs provide a strong platform for expanding into high-growth, on-the-go breakfast occasions, enabling operators to capture incremental visits and meet a broader range of consumer needs.

Kantar research<sup>27</sup> shows that out-of-home breakfast is increasingly convenience-driven, with demand shifting towards portable, ready-to-eat options. Egg-based formats are well suited to this need, translating easily into:

- Breakfast baps, muffins, wraps, and burritos
- Egg pots and protein-led snacks

This versatility allows operators to extend eggs beyond dine-in and into faster, more frequent morning missions and increasing overall visit frequency.

# Cracking your egg offer

Eggs deliver stable demand and consistent sales, yet research shows that performance varies significantly between venues, highlighting a clear execution gap.

Top-performing sites can generate 20%+ of breakfast revenue from eggs, compared to 5–12% for most operators. This suggests that growth is not constrained by demand, but by how effectively eggs are used on menus.

The widespread availability of British Lion eggs, approved by the Food Standards Agency as safe to eat runny even for vulnerable groups, provides added reassurance for operators. This supports greater consistency in menu delivery and enables venues to confidently serve eggs to all customers.

## Higher performing sites tend to focus on:

- More compelling, differentiated dishes
- Premiumisation of core formats
- Strong menu visibility and positioning
- Expansion into new formats including brunch, grab-and-go



## Performance breakdown (eggs % of breakfast sales)

### 20%+ of sales (top performers)

- Eggs treated as a core revenue driver
- Multiple formats across value, premium, and on-the-go
- Used to drive higher spend per transaction

### 12–18% of sales

- Eggs positioned as a key menu feature
- Broader, more premium dish range
- Stronger alignment with brunch occasions

### 8–12% of sales (market average)

- Core egg dishes in place
- Consistent but limited premiumisation or upsell

### 5–8% of sales

- Eggs present but limited to standard formats
- Low visibility and limited standalone appeal

Closing this execution gap is one of the fastest and most reliable ways to grow breakfast and brunch revenue. While eggs are already a staple on most menus, successful operators use them more strategically to drive differentiation, increase perceived value and unlock higher spend across the morning occasion.

Eggs are a scalable growth lever, capable of driving frequency, spend and menu differentiation when executed effectively.

## Conclusion

# People are waking up to eggs

This review suggests British eggs are an increasingly popular food for the first meal of the day, particularly among millennials and older Gen Z consumers. Eggs are now widely recognised by health experts and consumers for their nutritional benefits.

Growing interest in natural, protein rich foods, is driving demand for healthier breakfasts. The rising use of weight-loss medications is also focusing attention on the importance of nutrient-dense protein foods, further strengthening eggs' appeal.

The most recent scientific evidence has laid previous concerns about the risks of dietary cholesterol to rest and historic Salmonella issues are firmly in the past after nearly three decades of the British Lion Quality scheme.

Out of home, breakfast is the fastest-growing meal occasion and eggs are well placed to meet demand and unlock profit opportunities. They offer both the familiar comfort dishes and the excitement of innovative, globally inspired menus, while also providing foodservice operators with a versatile and profitable ingredient.

In 2025, UK egg consumption reached 209 per person – up 27% over the past 20 years. With countless classic and contemporary ways to serve eggs at breakfast, both in and out of home, consumption can be expected to continue rising, as a new generation recognises eggs as a natural protein-packed, highly nutritious and affordable choice for breakfast, brunch and beyond.

*British*



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