

## GLP-1 Use and Protein Demand

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## Abstract

The use of glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1) receptor agonists for weight loss is reshaping food demand, particularly for protein. This research estimates how GLP-1 use alters protein demand curves using methods of causal inference applied to structural demand modeling. Data from a public survey are balanced via matching to address endogenous selection into GLP-1 treatment. Demand shifts and rotations are then estimated using a discrete choice model and an Almost Ideal Demand System. GLP-1 use increases willingness-to-pay for most evaluated protein products, though the effects vary by product and outlet. Own-price elasticities for several retail products become up to 0.22 more inelastic. Our findings of shift effects of GLP-1 use on protein demand indicate externalities that are internal to the U.S. food system and that extend beyond simple consumption changes.

Keywords: AIDS, demand transformation, GLP-1, protein, random utility

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15

### 16 **1 Introduction**

17 Changes in food demand can reflect i) a pure shift where consumers purchase more or less at any  
18 given price (or, conversely, spend more or less for any given quantity), ii) a pure, mean-preserving  
19 rotation where price responsiveness changes, or iii) both (Johnson & Myatt, 2006). The emergence  
20 of glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1) receptor agonists represents such a demand shock. Shift effects  
21 may arise from GLP-1 users' reduced appetites and desire to purchase less at prevailing prices,  
22 while rotation effects may occur if users seek nutrient density and become less price sensitive when  
23 purchasing foods that are "GLP-1 friendly." Thus, we examine how GLP-1 use alters protein  
24 demand, considering both shifts and rotations while accounting for endogenous selection into  
25 treatment.

26 Originally developed to treat type 2 diabetes, GLP-1 medications are now widely used for  
27 weight loss, promoting satiety and suppressing appetite (Latif et al., 2024; Mayo Clinic, 2024). By  
28 spring 2024, six to twelve percent of U.S. adults had used these medications (Montero et al., 2024;  
29 Witters & Maese, 2024), and usage continues to grow (Gratzl et al., 2024; Hristakeva et al., 2025).  
30 Thus, a large and growing group of consumers are self-selecting into a medical treatment that  
31 directly affects their desire to eat.

32 Industry responses have been swift. Conagra Brands now labels certain high-protein items  
33 as "On Track" to signal GLP-1 compatibility, while Nestlé has introduced high-protein, portion-  
34 aligned meals and beverages (Conagra Brands, Inc., 2024; Naidu, 2024; Nestlé, 2024). These  
35 initiatives share the common message that GLP-1 users should favor protein-dense foods. Yet,  
36 empirical evidence on actual demand changes is mixed. Some research finds users reduce their

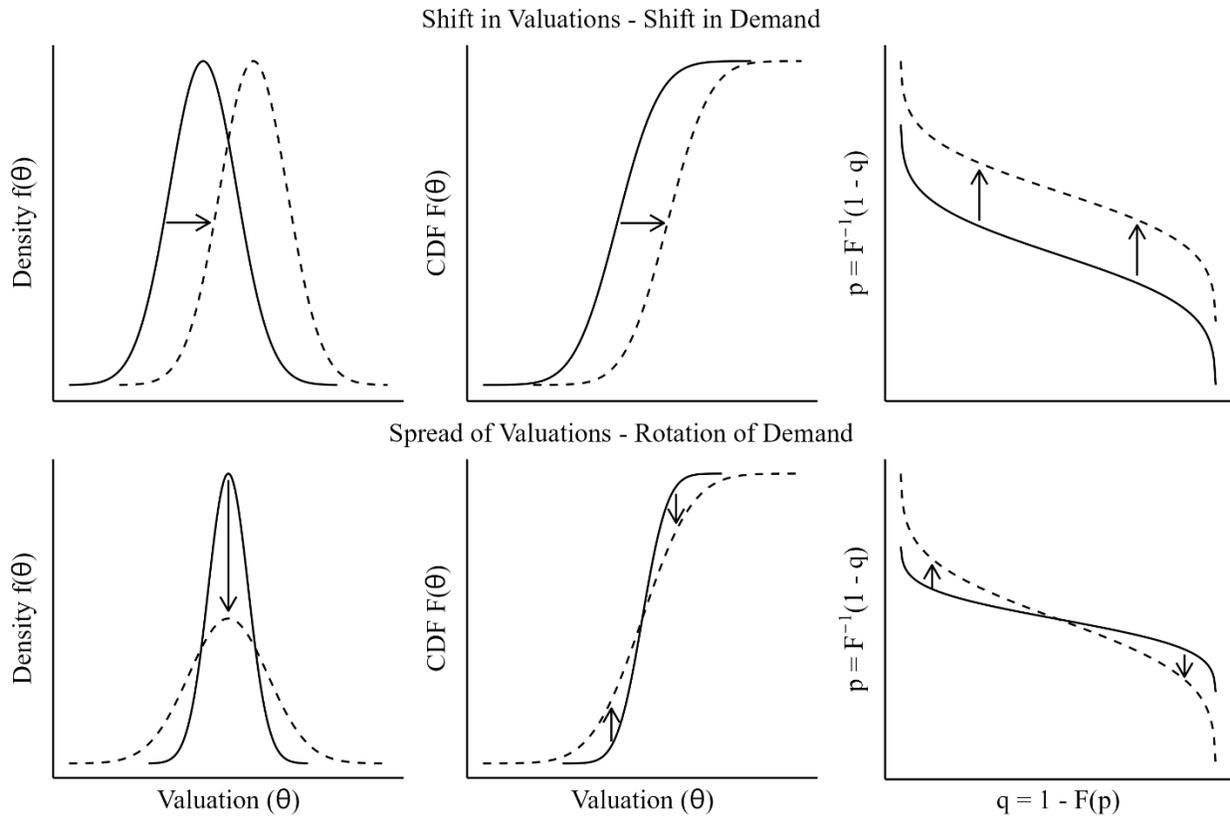
37 consumption of various protein sources even as desirability of protein-dense products remains the  
38 same or increases (Dilley et al., 2025), while others show equal shares of users increasing and  
39 decreasing their meat consumption (Roe, 2025). This ambiguity, combined with protein's  
40 economic importance, warrants further investigation.

41 To address this, we evaluate two dimensions. "Study 1" estimates causal effects of GLP-1  
42 use on willingness-to-pay (WTP) for protein products, reflecting pure demand shifts [i.e., changes  
43 in what users will spend for a given quantity]. Prior research linking high-protein diets to improved  
44 weight loss outcomes (Leidy et al., 2015; Westerterp-Plantenga et al., 2012) and dieticians'  
45 recommendations that users consume lean proteins (Mozaffarian et al., 2025) suggests that GLP-  
46 1 adoption may raise protein valuations. Such shifts in protein demand influence both industry  
47 economic performance and consumer welfare as aggregate prices adjust to GLP-1 users' altered  
48 demand.

49 "Study 2" examines demand rotations, or changes in price sensitivity following GLP-1  
50 adoption. Prior findings indicate that GLP-1 users prioritize high-protein foods (Circana, 2024)  
51 and that fitness-conscious consumers exhibit lower price sensitivity for protein (Bina & Tonsor,  
52 2024). Hence, there is some industry and empirical backing that GLP-1 medications may reduce  
53 sensitivity to own-price changes, making demand for various protein products more inelastic. This  
54 can occur if some users prioritize protein consumption per dietary recommendations (Mozaffarian  
55 et al., 2025) and, thus, find a protein-dense product to be highly desirable while other users avoid  
56 fatty or satiating foods [such as those high in protein or fiber (Holt et al., 1995)] and, thus, find the  
57 same product to be highly undesirable. This ultimately lowers users' willingness to adjust  
58 quantities as prices change.

59 We illustrate Study 1 and 2 demand transformation concepts in Figure 1, following Johnson  
 60 and Myatt (2006). Suppose a consumer will pay up to  $\theta$  for a protein product, where  $\theta$  is drawn  
 61 from distribution  $F(\theta)$ . Given a price  $p \geq 0$ , a portion of consumers  $q = 1 - F(p)$  will buy the  
 62 product. If  $q$  units are to be sold, the inverse demand curve is then  $p = F^{-1}(1 - q)$ .

63 **Figure 1. Demand Transformations**



64 Note: The left panel depicts probability density functions, the middle panel depicts cumulative  
 65 distribution functions, and the right panel depicts inverse demand curves.  
 66

67  
 68 A unanimous change in consumers' valuations for a protein product as they begin GLP-1  
 69 use reflects a shift in users' probability density function of valuations, the associated cumulative  
 70 distribution function (CDF), and the inverse demand curve (which is equivalent to the inverse  
 71 CDF). Conceptually, GLP-1 use and associated dietary recommendations to consume lean protein  
 72 sources (Mozaffarian et al., 2025) may act in a similar way to Johnson and Myatt (2006)

73 advertising “hype” in that users become aware of various protein products and any objective  
74 qualities those products may possess (e.g., protein density that may be valued by all users). In this  
75 simple case, users’ demand for these products shifts outwards (Figure 1, top panel).

76         However, the assumption that GLP-1 medications will uniformly increase users’ demand  
77 is strong. Again following the Johnson and Myatt (2006) taxonomy, GLP-1 therapy and dietary  
78 recommendations (or individuals’ independent research) may consist of “real information” that  
79 allows users to discern their own personal matches with various protein products. For example,  
80 one user, upon receiving dietary advice, may purely prioritize protein intake regardless of other  
81 product characteristics, while another user may elect to limit consumption of fattier red meats. If  
82 we consider a product like ribeye steak, which is high in both protein and fat, the two users will  
83 move toward opposite ends of the distribution of valuations, increasing the dispersion of valuations  
84 among users. This results in a clockwise rotation of users’ inverse demand curve for ribeye steak  
85 and reduced price sensitivity [i.e., more inelastic demand] (Figure 1, bottom panel).

86         Because GLP-1 use is endogenous, methods of causal inference are essential to identifying  
87 these protein demand transformations. We use matching methods to balance covariates between  
88 GLP-1 users and non-users (Hristakeva et al., 2025) and then quantify the impacts of GLP-1 use  
89 on demand for protein products using structural demand estimation. Results indicate that GLP-1  
90 use increases WTP for most retail and foodservice protein products, with magnitudes of effects  
91 varying across products and outlet. Own-price sensitivity decreases for some retail products,  
92 making demand up to 0.22 more inelastic.

93         This research adds to conversation around GLP-1 medications by improving policymakers’  
94 awareness of externalities related to subsidized GLP-1 use. Since users exhibit higher WTP for  
95 protein, subsidized insurance coverage may elevate adoption rates and lead to increases in average

96 protein prices, straining lower-income consumers' access to protein. If adoption rates continue to  
97 rise, expanded interagency collaboration and data access will likely be needed to balance economic  
98 and public health outcomes. Moreover, GLP-1 medications are a potential opportunity for  
99 sustainability as they reduce aggregate meat consumption (Dilley et al., 2025; Hristakeva et al.,  
100 2025) while raising consumers' valuations, thus reflecting a premiumization of meat protein. The  
101 shift from quantity to quality may reduce agriculture's environmental footprint, but this is only  
102 economically viable if food producers can capture higher protein valuations through labeling and  
103 value-added marketing. Thus, government-subsidized and GLP-1-focused labeling may help  
104 maintain economic outcomes while advancing social (i.e., reduced obesity prevalence) and  
105 environmental goals.

## 106 **2 Data**

### 107 ***2.1 The Meat Demand Monitor***

108 This research uses data from the Meat Demand Monitor (MDM), launched in February 2020  
109 through funding from the U.S. Beef and Pork Checkoff programs (Tonsor, 2020). The MDM tracks  
110 U.S. retail and foodservice meat demand through monthly, online surveys distributed by Dynata  
111 to a nationally representative sample.<sup>1</sup> Roughly 3,000 usable responses are obtained each month,  
112 forming a pooled cross-sectional dataset. Participants receive redeemable "points" to incentivize  
113 quality responses.

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<sup>1</sup> The MDM survey tracks retail demand for ribeye steak, ground beef, pork chops, bacon, chicken breast, plant-based patties, shrimp, and beans and rice; and foodservice demand for ribeye steak, hamburger, pork chops, baby back ribs, chicken breast, plant-based patties, shrimp, and salmon entrées.

114 Since July 2024, the MDM has included questions on GLP-1 use, enabling assessment of  
115 how the medications influence consumers' protein preferences (Tonsor, 2024). Participants are  
116 asked: “*Are you currently taking GLP-1 medications (such as Ozempic, Mounjaro, etc.) to aid in*  
117 *weight loss, treat diabetes, or meet another personal health goal?*” The survey also includes  
118 discrete choice experiments (DCE) measuring preferences for retail and foodservice protein  
119 products, and an “open-ended” choice experiment (OECE) capturing retail preferences. These  
120 experiments precede GLP-1 questions, reducing potential framing bias.

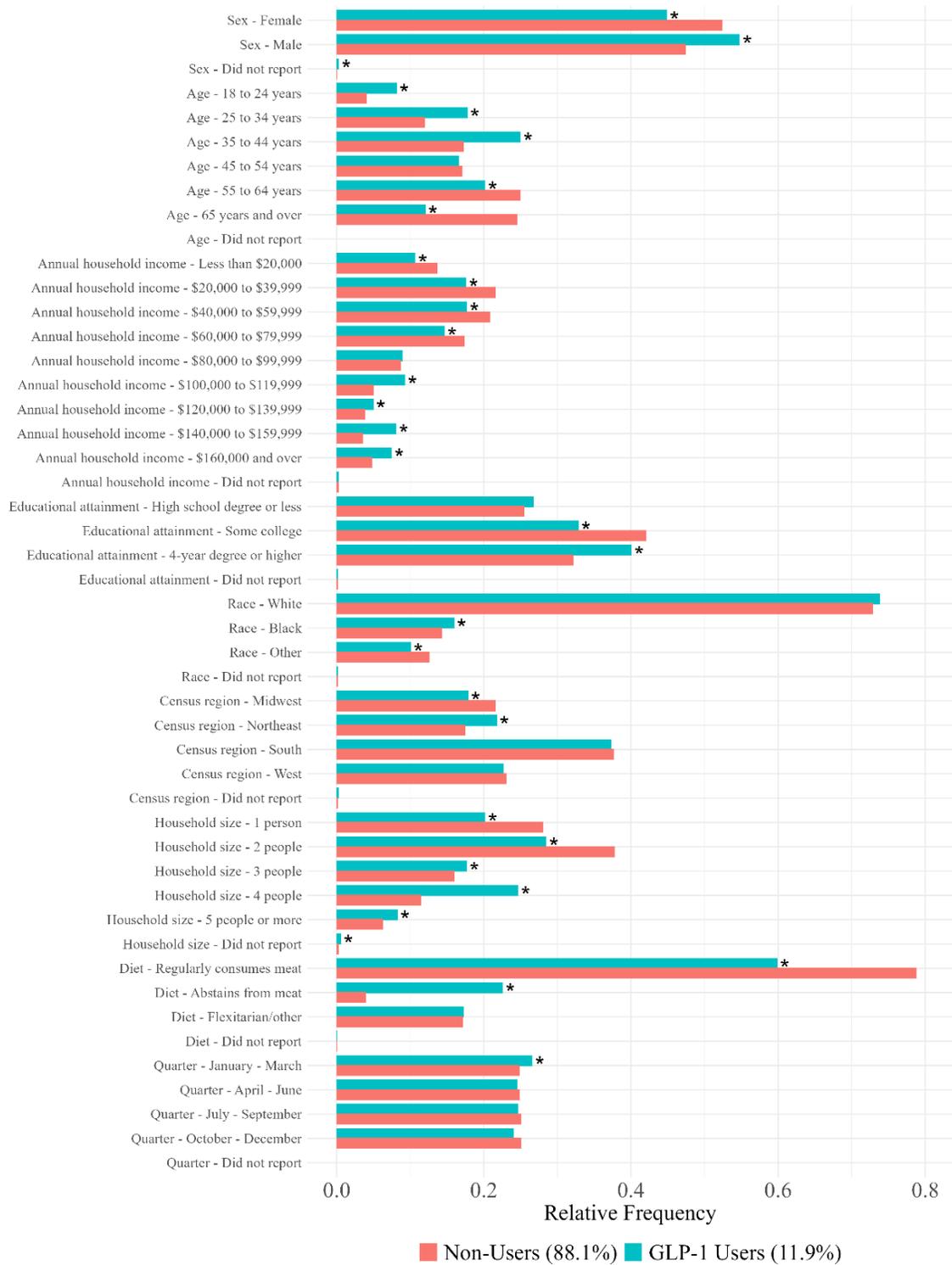
## 121 ***2.2 Descriptive Statistics***

122 We analyze MDM responses from July 2024 through June 2025. Respondents are excluded if they  
123 are under 18, fail attentiveness checks, or are not their household's primary grocery shopper  
124 (Tonsor, 2020), leaving 36,406 observations, whose descriptive statistics are reported in Figure 2.  
125 Excluding non-primary shoppers (1,475 of the omitted responses) ensures accuracy for retail  
126 demand but may be inappropriate for foodservice assessments. However, sensitivity analyses  
127 confirm that including them yields similar results. Missing sociodemographic data is rare and  
128 roughly balanced between GLP-1 users and non-users, reducing concerns about nonresponse bias  
129 related to sensitive topics (e.g., income). Consequently, participants with missing  
130 sociodemographic information are further omitted from the analyses.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The final number of observations used in each study is further dependent on completion of all DCE and OECE choice tasks and a series of matching procedures.

131 **Figure 2. Descriptive Statistics of Meat Demand Monitor Sample**



132  
 133 Note: Asterisks (\*) indicate proportions in the GLP-1 user group that are statistically  
 134 different than the non-user group at the five percent level or lower using two-proportions  
 135 z-tests. GLP-1 use status and age are forced responses in the MDM survey, while time of  
 136 completion (i.e., quarter) is automatically captured.

137           Around 11.9 percent of participants report current GLP-1 use (4,347 of 36,406  
138 participants), which exceeds the 3 to 6 percent reported in spring 2024 (Montero et al., 2024;  
139 Witters & Maese, 2024) and 8.3 percent in July 2024 (Hristakeva et al., 2025) but is consistent  
140 with rising adoption (Gratzl et al., 2024; Hristakeva et al., 2025).<sup>3</sup> Among GLP-1 users, 54.8  
141 percent are male, 51.0 percent are between the ages of 18 and 44, and 29.9 percent have annual  
142 household incomes of at least \$100,000. This is compared to non-users, of which 47.5 percent are  
143 male, 33.4 percent are between the ages of 18 and 44, and 17.3 percent have annual household  
144 incomes of at least \$100,000. Users also differ in education, race, region, household size, and diets.

### 145 **3 Establishing Causality**

#### 146 ***3.1 Matching Methods***

147 Current GLP-1 use is treated as the exposure variable. Because characteristics correlated with  
148 GLP-1 adoption (Figure 2) also influence meat consumption (Daniel et al., 2011; Wang et al.,  
149 2010; Zeng et al., 2019), there is a clear endogeneity issue. Thus, matching techniques are used to  
150 correct for non-random selection into treatment. Our primary method is coarsened exact matching  
151 (CEM), which balances observed covariates between GLP-1 users and non-users without relying  
152 on functional form assumptions (Cochran, 1968; Iacus et al., 2011; Stuart, 2010).

153           Using CEM, GLP-1 users and non-users are placed into strata where individuals in each  
154 are identical across sex, age, annual household income, education, region, household size, and diet.  
155 Although subgroup differences are not sizable in magnitude, we also stratify by race and quarter

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<sup>3</sup> We acknowledge that the MDM survey data underrepresents younger and higher-income individuals, which may yield an understated GLP-1 adoption rate. However, our objective is not to provide precise estimates of GLP-1 use in the broader population. Rather, we seek to obtain consistent estimates of our model parameters and tests of the hypothesis we explain in the narrative. To this end, our identification strategy does not rely on representativeness of the sample.

156 of survey response to reduce variance in estimated treatment effects (Brookhart et al., 2006).  
157 However, we avoid stratifying on bodyweight and exercise habits, as these are likely impacted by  
158 treatment, creating selection bias if included in the matching process (Greenland, 2003; Stuart,  
159 2010).

160 Two alternative matching methods are used for sensitivity analysis. The first is 1:1 nearest  
161 neighbors matching (1:1 NNM) using propensity scores from a logistic regression and a caliper of  
162 0.25 standard deviations of the propensity score to improve match quality (Rosenbaum & Rubin,  
163 1985; Stuart, 2010). The second is generalized full matching [GFM] (Sävje et al., 2021), which is  
164 a generalization of the full matching stratification method that minimizes within-group covariate  
165 heterogeneity based on the average distances between treated and control individuals (Hansen,  
166 2004; Stuart, 2010).

167 Matching is conducted separately for each study because some participants lack complete  
168 responses for either the DCE or OECE choice tasks. Covariate balance across 1:1 NNM and GFM  
169 samples is evaluated using absolute standardized mean differences, depicted in Appendix Figures  
170 A1 through A6. CEM assures perfect balance across treated and control subgroups; thus, further  
171 diagnostics are unnecessary.

### 172 ***3.2 Sensitivity to Selection on Unobservables***

173 Matching relies on the selection on observables assumption. This assumption is that, after  
174 controlling for all observed confounders, the decision to adopt GLP-1 medications is effectively  
175 random. Violations of this assumption cannot be directly tested, which is a limitation of matching  
176 techniques. Moreover, the absence of panel data and valid instrumental variables limits our ability  
177 to fully address endogeneity.

178 To assess sensitivity to unobserved confounders, we use the Rosenbaum bounds framework  
179 (DiPrete & Gangl, 2004; Rosenbaum, 1987, 2002). This method uses outcomes for treated and  
180 control groups and a Wilcoxon signed-rank test to derive a sensitivity parameter,  $\Gamma$ , representing  
181 the potential influence of an unobserved variable on treatment assignment. The critical  $\Gamma$  value is  
182 the smallest potential hidden bias that would cause the estimated treatment effect to lose statistical  
183 significance. Values of 2.0 or greater are generally considered as strong evidence that the estimated  
184 treatment effect is robust to unobserved bias (Proserpio & Zervas, 2017). Although initially  
185 designed for matched case studies (Rosenbaum, 1987), this framework has since been extended to  
186 stratification methods (Rosenbaum, 2018).

## 187 **4 Study 1—Impacts of GLP-1 Use on Willingness-to-Pay for Protein**

### 188 ***4.1 Methods***

189 We estimate the causal effect of GLP-1 use on WTP for protein using the MDM’s retail- and  
190 foodservice-framed DCEs. Participants are randomly assigned to one of the two DCEs, which each  
191 present eight protein products and an “opt-out” option (Tonsor, 2020). The protein products and  
192 price levels of these DCEs are depicted in Appendix Table A1. The choice tasks are blocked into  
193 three groups such that each MDM participant is randomly assigned to one set of nine choice tasks  
194 (after being assigned to either the retail- or foodservice-framed DCE).

195 We use a random utility framework and the multinomial logit (MNL) model (McFadden,  
196 1973). Utility for individual  $i$  and alternative  $j$  is  $U_{ij} = V_{ij} + e_{ij}$ , where  $e_{ij}$  is the stochastic portion  
197 of utility that is not observed by the analyst. The observable portion of utility is defined as:

$$(1) \quad V_{ij} = \theta_{ij} + \gamma_i p_j$$

198 where  $\theta_{ij}$  is an alternative-specific constant (ASC) that reflects the marginal utility of alternative  
199  $j$  relative to the opt-out option (which is normalized to zero),  $\gamma_i$  is the marginal utility of a price  
200 change, and  $p_j$  is the price of alternative  $j$ . The ratio  $-\theta_{ij}/\gamma_i$  is consumer  $i$ 's WTP for alternative  
201  $j$  relative to no purchase.

202 GLP-1 users may desire protein-dense foods relatively more than non-users or may have a  
203 preference for some protein sources over others to meet their perceived dietary needs. Thus, we  
204 let preference parameters vary across individuals. Let  $\theta_{ij} = \delta_j + \sum_{k=1}^K \delta_{jk} z_{ik} + \pi_j GLP_i$ , where  $\delta_j$   
205 is the marginal utility obtained from product  $j$  (over the opt-out option) when all covariates are set  
206 equal to zero;  $z_{ik}$  is the vector of survey participant characteristics that is used in the matching  
207 procedures (reflected in Figure 2) and that influence choice through the parameters  $\delta_{jk}$ ; and  $GLP_i$   
208 is a treatment indicator that is equal to one if a participant is currently using a GLP-1 medication  
209 and that influences choice through the parameters  $\pi_j$ . Further, GLP-1 users may be less sensitive  
210 to price changes than non-users considering their investment in weight loss goals. Thus, we let  
211  $\gamma_i = \alpha + \omega GLP_i$ , where  $\alpha$  is the price responsiveness of non-adopters and where GLP-1 use is  
212 allowed to alter price responsiveness through the parameter  $\omega$ .<sup>4</sup> Additionally, we assess sensitivity  
213 of our findings to this specification by i) restricting GLP-1 impacts on ASCs to zero (i.e.,  $\pi_j =$   
214  $0 \forall j$ ) and ii) restricting the GLP-1 impact on price responsiveness to zero (i.e.,  $\omega = 0$ ).

215 Equation (1) is estimated separately for retail and foodservice choice data via maximum  
216 likelihood and using the Apollo package (S. Hess & Palma, 2019) in R version 4.4.1. Matching  
217 weights are incorporated into estimation to ensure that GLP-1-using and non-using subgroups are

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<sup>4</sup> Price responsiveness may vary by characteristics other than GLP-1 use. However, this level of flexibility yields marginal utility from a price increase (rather than disutility) and nonsensical WTP estimates for many participants.

218 balanced across the confounding characteristics. Post-estimation, we implement a doubly robust  
219 standardization procedure (Chatton & Rohrer, 2024; Funk et al., 2011; Snowden et al., 2011;  
220 Vansteelandt & Keiding, 2011). This entails i) predicting  $\theta_{ij}$  and  $\gamma_i$  among GLP-1 users assuming  
221 that  $GLP_i = 1$ , ii) predicting  $\theta_{ij}$  and  $\gamma_i$  among GLP-1 users assuming that  $GLP_i = 0$ , iii) estimating  
222 individual-specific WTP in each counterfactual, iv) calculating an average of WTP across all GLP-  
223 1 users in each counterfactual, and v) calculating the difference in the averages. This provides an  
224 average treatment effect on the treated (ATT) that is unbiased if either the outcome model (equation  
225 [1]) is correctly specified or the matching procedure sufficiently reduces imbalance in covariates  
226 between GLP-1 users and non-users (Chatton & Rohrer, 2024; Funk et al., 2011).

227         There is debate whether uncertainty in the matching process should be considered in  
228 variance estimation (Stuart, 2010). Further, bootstrap confidence intervals around matching and  
229 outcome estimation are not practical in this application. We instead construct Krinsky and Robb  
230 (1986) confidence intervals by resampling from the original parameter estimates. This considers  
231 uncertainty in outcome estimation but not uncertainty in the matching procedures.

## 232 **4.2 Results**

233 Table 1 reports unmatched mean WTP estimates for GLP-1 users and non-users, along with ATT  
234 estimates derived using CEM, 1:1 NNM, and GFM. Bracketed values show Rosenbaum bounds  
235 critical  $I^*$  values, where values of 2.0 or greater indicate robustness to confounding from  
236 unobserved factors. Appendix Tables A2 and A3 summarize key parameter estimates and model  
237 fit measures.

238 **Table 1. Mean Willingness-to-Pay and Effects of GLP-1 Use**

| Retail WTP (\$/lb) |       |           |            |   |                                |                           |
|--------------------|-------|-----------|------------|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Product            | Users | Non-Users | Difference | Doubly Robust Average Treatment Effect on the Treated |                                |                           |
|                    |       |           |            | Coarsened Exact Matching                              | 1:1 Nearest Neighbors Matching | Generalized Full Matching |
| Ribeye steak       | 22.99 | 16.00     | 6.99       | 2.30* [>100]  | 5.53* [13.4]                   | 5.45* [11.7]              |
| Ground beef        | 14.76 | 7.64      | 7.12       | 1.69* [>100]  | 5.72* [60.8]                   | 6.12* [>100]              |
| Pork chop          | 12.67 | 6.34      | 6.33       | 1.19* [>100]  | 5.02* [31.9]                   | 5.51* [73.0]              |
| Bacon              | 10.20 | 5.40      | 4.80       | 1.30* [>100]  | 4.04* [16.4]                   | 4.25* [21.2]              |
| Chicken breast     | 12.80 | 7.56      | 5.24       | 1.52* [>100]  | 4.16* [28.2]                   | 4.54* [84.0]              |
| Plant-based patty  | 9.42  | 6.96      | 2.46       | 1.55* [>100]  | 1.73* [2.5]                    | 1.41* [<2.0]              |
| Shrimp             | 12.64 | 9.22      | 3.42       | 1.06* [>100]  | 2.94* [6.4]                    | 2.90* [6.6]               |
| Beans and rice     | 5.38  | 2.87      | 2.51       | 0.14 [<2.0]   | 1.39* [3.8]                    | 1.26* [3.5]               |

| Foodservice WTP (\$/meal) |       |           |            |   |                                |                           |
|---------------------------|-------|-----------|------------|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Product                   | Users | Non-Users | Difference | Doubly Robust Average Treatment Effect on the Treated |                                |                           |
|                           |       |           |            | Coarsened Exact Matching                              | 1:1 Nearest Neighbors Matching | Generalized Full Matching |
| Ribeye steak              | 37.84 | 25.19     | 12.66      | 3.87* [>100]  | 9.75* [44.0]                   | 10.94* [61.5]             |
| Hamburger                 | 31.31 | 18.41     | 12.89      | 3.73* [>100]  | 9.35* [50.1]                   | 10.92* [82.5]             |
| Pork chop                 | 24.55 | 15.11     | 9.43       | 2.34* [86.2]  | 7.09* [13.1]                   | 7.38* [11.7]              |
| Baby back ribs            | 26.20 | 17.82     | 8.38       | 3.07* [>100]  | 7.19* [19.6]                   | 7.96* [26.9]              |
| Chicken breast            | 25.30 | 17.41     | 7.90       | 3.22* [>100]  | 6.55* [24.1]                   | 7.31* [56.0]              |
| Plant-based patty         | 12.33 | 10.86     | 1.47       | -0.23 [<2.0]  | -0.10 [<2.0]                   | -0.46 [<2.0]              |
| Shrimp                    | 25.02 | 17.18     | 7.84       | 3.20* [>100]  | 6.62* [20.8]                   | 7.64* [53.4]              |
| Salmon                    | 25.04 | 18.64     | 6.40       | 1.42* [11.8]  | 4.90* [8.3]                    | 5.78* [12.6]              |

239 Note: Asterisks (\*) denote statistical significance using Krinsky and Robb (1986) 95 percent  
 240 confidence intervals. We use 10,000 draws in the Krinsky and Robb (1986) resampling procedure.  
 241 Values in brackets are critical *F* values from Rosenbaum bounds sensitivity testing.

242  
 243 CEM estimates show GLP-1 use yields a \$1.06 (shrimp) to \$2.30 (ribeye steak) per pound  
 244 premium for retail protein, holding other traits constant. These correspond to 9.6 (shrimp) to 38.1  
 245 (chicken breast) percent increases in WTP over midpoint retail DCE prices (Appendix Table A1).  
 246 Further, the CEM-derived “GLP-1 premiums” for protein reflect 18.8, 26.7, 27.7, 18.0, and 36.1  
 247 percent increases over August 2025 national average prices for beef steaks, ground beef, pork  
 248 chops, bacon, and chicken breast, respectfully (Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, 2025a). With  
 249 retail food spending fixed, this may imply higher WTP for proteins and lower WTP for other foods.

250 Alternatively, users may value protein more per unit but prefer smaller quantities, broadly  
251 consistent with Dilley et al. (2025). Thus, higher-margin, GLP-1-focused products may offset  
252 volume reductions, though premium capture depends on effective communication of GLP-1-  
253 friendly attributes and precise market targeting.

254 Foodservice effects are similarly substantial, with WTP increases of \$1.42 (salmon) to  
255 \$3.87 (ribeye steak) per meal using CEM. These estimates reflect 8.4 (salmon) to 31.1 (hamburger)  
256 percent increases over midpoint foodservice DCE prices (Appendix Table A1). This suggests  
257 potential for second-degree price discrimination, such as offering smaller, protein-dense and  
258 “GLP-1-friendly” meals sold at higher prices. Menus trading portion size for protein density or  
259 other GLP-1-friendly attributes may help mitigate risks of reduced appetites, though profitability  
260 of any price discrimination strategy depends on standard single-crossing and monotone hazard  
261 conditions, among others (Anderson & Dana, 2009).

262 Relative to prior research, Van Loo et al. (2011) find 35 to 104 percent WTP premiums for  
263 organic chicken breast labels, while Van Loo et al. (2014) report 12 to 93 percent premiums for  
264 various sustainability labels likewise placed on chicken breast. Lusk et al. (2018) document smaller  
265 premiums, finding up to a 23 percent premium for a “USDA Good, Better, Best” quality labeling  
266 scheme for pork chops and noting considerable heterogeneity in WTP across consumers. Last,  
267 Yang and Renwick’s (2019) meta-analysis on WTP for credence attributes of livestock products  
268 reports mean premiums of 26 percent (environmentally-friendly labels) to 63 percent (food safety  
269 labels). Overall, our CEM estimates rest at the lower end of these findings, though direct  
270 comparison is limited by differing research objectives.

271 Using multiple matching methods, doubly robust standardization, and Rosenbaum bounds  
272 sensitivity analysis strengthens confidence in the positive GLP-1 effects. Results are robust to

273 specification of ASCs and price responsiveness, and the inclusion of non-primary shoppers  
 274 (Appendix Table A4).

### 275 *4.3 Sensitivity to Unobserved Preference and Price Heterogeneity*

276 Random parameters logit (RPL) models test Study 1’s sensitivity to preference and price  
 277 heterogeneity. We compare four specifications (Table 2) that each include normally and  
 278 independently distributed ASCs (with mean  $\theta_j$  and standard deviation  $\sigma_j$ ), but that vary in price  
 279 responsiveness (i.e., common versus product-specific price terms; fixed versus zero-bounded and  
 280 triangularly distributed price terms). Price response that follows a zero-bounded and triangular  
 281 distribution (with mean  $\gamma$ ) ensures marginal disutility from a price increase across all consumers  
 282 and aids in convergence compared to a negative lognormal distribution.

283 **Table 2. Random Parameters Logit Specifications**

| Model | Utility Specification   |
|-------|---|
| 1     | $U_{nj} = (\theta_j + \sigma_j d_{nj}) + \gamma p_j + \varepsilon_{nj}; d_{nj} \sim N(0,1)$   |
| 2     | $U_{nj} = (\theta_j + \sigma_j d_{nj}) + \gamma_j p_j + \varepsilon_{nj}; d_{nj} \sim N(0,1)$   |
| 3     | $U_{nj} = (\theta_j + \sigma_j d_{nj}) + \left( \gamma + \gamma * \frac{b_n + c_n}{2} \right) p_j + \varepsilon_{nj}; d_{nj} \sim N(0,1), b_n \sim U(0,1), c_n \sim U(0,1)$                 |
| 4     | $U_{nj} = (\theta_j + \sigma_j d_{nj}) + \left( \gamma_j + \gamma_j * \frac{b_{nj} + c_{nj}}{2} \right) p_j + \varepsilon_{nj}; d_{nj} \sim N(0,1), b_{nj} \sim U(0,1), c_{nj} \sim U(0,1)$ |

284  
 285 We estimate the RPL models via simulated maximum likelihood separately for GLP-1  
 286 users and non-users with CEM samples. Thus, sixteen models are estimated across 4 specifications,  
 287 2 outlets (i.e., retail and foodservice), and 2 groups (i.e., GLP-1 users and non-users). CEM weights  
 288 are applied in each to facilitate estimation of ATT. Each model uses 500 individual-specific  
 289 Modified Hypercube Sampling Draws, which avoid correlation patterns and outperform Halton  
 290 draws in higher-dimension integration (S. Hess et al., 2006).

291 These complex models (incorporating up to 16 random coefficients) preclude use of  
 292 sociodemographic controls and the doubly robust standardization procedure. Instead, GLP-1  
 293 effects are assessed via simulated WTP estimates and Poe et al. (2005) hypothesis testing.  
 294 Following Hensher and Greene (2003), we take 1,000 Krinsky and Robb (1986) draws for  
 295 statistical variation and, within each, a subsequent 1,000 drawings for preference heterogeneity.  
 296 Means and standard deviations of WTP are identified within each Krinsky and Robb (1986) draw,  
 297 generating empirical distributions. We then construct Poe et al. (2005) complete combinatorials  
 298 defined as GLP-1 users' mean WTP (or standard deviation of WTP) *less* non-users'. That is, we  
 299 take the difference between each combination of users' and non-users' WTP estimates (1,000 \*  
 300 1,000 = 1,000,000 total differences). From this procedure, 95 percent confidence intervals around  
 301 the mean differences are easily identified.

302 Table 3 shows RPL-derived ATT estimates alongside primary, MNL-derived CEM results.  
 303 For brevity, RPL models 2 and 4 (with product-specific price response) are excluded, as they  
 304 produce implausible WTP estimates for some products. This is likely due to the MDM design,  
 305 which includes widely varying price ranges for each product and only three price levels.

306 **Table 3. GLP-1 Effects on Means and Standard Deviations of Willingness-to-Pay**

| Product        | Retail Average Treatment Effects on the Treated |                         |                          |
|----------------|---|-------------------------|--------------------------|
|                | MNL (primary)                                   | RPL<br>fixed price term | RPL<br>random price term |
| Ribeye steak   | 2.30*   | 2.45*<br>(0.48)         | 2.10*<br>(0.80)          |
| Ground beef    | 1.69*   | 1.51*<br>(0.05)         | 1.63*<br>(0.07)          |
| Pork chop      | 1.19*   | 1.46*<br>(-0.32)        | 1.40*<br>(-0.42)         |
| Bacon          | 1.30*   | 1.40*<br>(-0.86*)       | 1.34*<br>(-0.82*)        |
| Chicken breast | 1.52*   | 1.27*                   | 1.18*                    |

|                   |       |          |         |
|-------------------|-------|----------|---------|
|                   |       | (0.64*)  | (0.65*) |
| Plant-based patty | 1.55* | 0.95     | 1.78*   |
|                   |       | (1.31*)  | (0.06)  |
| Shrimp            | 1.06* | 1.41*    | 0.89*   |
|                   |       | (-0.13)  | (0.18)  |
| Beans and rice    | 0.14  | 0.55     | 0.52    |
|                   |       | (-0.90*) | (-0.66) |

Foodservice Average Treatment Effects on the Treated

| Product           | MNL (primary) | RPL              |                   |
|-------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
|                   |               | fixed price term | random price term |
| Ribeye steak      | 3.87*         | 2.72*            | 3.61*             |
|                   |               | (1.35*)          | (0.59)            |
| Hamburger         | 3.73*         | 2.68*            | 2.63*             |
|                   |               | (1.32*)          | (0.83*)           |
| Pork chop         | 2.34*         | 3.23*            | 2.49*             |
|                   |               | (-0.55)          | (-0.43)           |
| Baby back ribs    | 3.07*         | 2.65*            | 2.45*             |
|                   |               | (0.44)           | (0.36)            |
| Chicken breast    | 3.22*         | 1.21*            | 1.73*             |
|                   |               | (2.00*)          | (1.73*)           |
| Plant-based patty | -0.23         | 0.84             | 0.25              |
|                   |               | (-0.26)          | (0.45)            |
| Shrimp            | 3.20*         | 2.05*            | 2.21*             |
|                   |               | (1.58*)          | (1.26*)           |
| Salmon            | 1.42*         | 0.61             | 0.09              |
|                   |               | (1.00)           | (1.54*)           |

307 Note: Asterisks (\*) denote statistical significance at the five percent level or lower.  
308 Treatment effects from RPL models are obtained via simulation and Poe et al. (2005)  
309 complete combinatorials. Values in parentheses are standard deviation of WTP.

310

311 GLP-1 effects on mean WTP remain consistent with primary results when accounting for  
312 preference and price heterogeneity. Effect sizes vary by specification, though directions and  
313 significance generally hold. Exceptions include non-significant effects for retail plant-based patties  
314 (fixed-price RPL model) and foodservice salmon (both RPL models).

315 **4.4 Industry Implications**

316 Study 1 shows GLP-1 users have higher WTP for protein-rich foods in both retail and foodservice,  
317 much of which reflects GLP-1 use rather than income or other factors. However, effects are  
318 selective in the sense that they are consistent for animal proteins but inconsistent or absent for  
319 plant-based options (i.e., plant-based patties and beans and rice). Similar selectivity may extend to  
320 other protein categories, such as dairy or meat snacks, warranting further study. Moreover, if food  
321 budgets remain fixed, increased protein spending necessitates reduced spending elsewhere,  
322 underscoring the need to examine substitution patterns both across and within all food groups.

323 These findings support a “protein premium” among GLP-1 users ranging from 18.0 to 36.1  
324 percent over August 2025 retail prices (Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, 2025a) and, further,  
325 supports the initial industry pivot toward protein-focused products (Conagra Brands, Inc., 2024;  
326 Naidu, 2024, 2024). Thus, developing higher-protein items may be economically sound given  
327 GLP-1’s positive effects on WTP. Nonetheless, food manufacturers must balance research and  
328 development expenses, input costs, and competitor’s strategies. Future research should evaluate  
329 firms’ equilibrium response to GLP-1 use in price and attribute spaces to inform product  
330 reformulation and marketing decisions. Importantly, research and industry efforts to make GLP-1  
331 demand forecasts and craft appropriate business strategies should recognize the role of  
332 confounders, as shown by differences in Table 1 associations and treatment effects.

## 333 **5 Study 2—GLP-1 Effects on Retail Protein Demand Elasticities**

### 334 ***5.1 Methods***

335 Differences in price sensitivity for retail protein between GLP-1 users and non-users is assessed  
336 using the MDM’s OECE. Participants complete one choice task showing eight retail protein items  
337 (matching the retail DCE), with prices randomly drawn from product-specific ranges (Appendix

338 Table A5). Given these prices, they select which goods to buy and their quantities from “zero” to  
 339 “five or more pounds.” This multi-product, multi-quantity design allows for complementary goods  
 340 and traditional demand estimation (Bina & Tonsor, 2024; Dennis et al., 2021).

341 Retail protein demand is estimated using the popular AIDS framework (Deaton &  
 342 Muellbauer, 1980). The budget share for good  $j$  is described as:

$$(2) \quad w_j = \bar{\alpha}_j + \sum_{l=1}^8 \gamma_{jl} \ln(p_l) + \beta_j \ln(X/P)$$

343 where  $p_l$  is the price of the  $l$ th good,  $X$  is the total expenditure across the eight goods,  $P$  is a price  
 344 index defined by:

$$(3) \quad \ln(P) = \alpha_0 + \sum_{j=1}^8 \bar{\alpha}_j \ln(p_j) + \frac{1}{2} \sum_{j=1}^8 \sum_{l=1}^8 \gamma_{jl} \ln(p_j) \ln(p_l)$$

345 and  $\gamma_{jl}$  and  $\beta_j$  are parameters to be estimated. Non-price factors are included in the intercept terms  
 346  $\bar{\alpha}_j$  such that  $\bar{\alpha}_j = \alpha_j + \sum_{k=1}^K \delta_{jk} z_k$ , where  $z_k$  is again the vector of participant characteristics used  
 347 in the matching procedures (reflected in Figure 2) that shift demand through  $\delta_{jk}$ . We use the  
 348 notation of Coffey et al. (2011), but note that observations are at the participant level (i.e., indexed  
 349 by  $i$ ). Weak separability of the eight OECE goods is a maintained assumption and homogeneity,  
 350 adding-up, and symmetry are imposed as:  $\sum_{j=1}^8 \alpha_j = 1$ ,  $\sum_{j=1}^8 \delta_{jk} = 0 \forall k$ ,  $\sum_{j=1}^8 \beta_j = 0$ ,  $\sum_{j=1}^8 \gamma_{jl} =$   
 351  $0$ , and  $\gamma_{jl} = \gamma_{lj}$ . Expenditure and price elasticity calculation follows Green and Alston (1990).

352 Estimation of equation (2) must address the censored nature of the OECE data. We apply  
 353 the expectation maximization (EM) algorithm to obtain consistent estimates (Dempster et al., 1977).  
 354 This method avoids the issues with i) the Kuhn-Tucker approach, which struggles with identifying  
 355 estimable utility functions and ensuring probabilities of purchase regimes sum to one, and ii) two-

356 step Amemiya-Tobin approaches that impose adding-up only on latent, not observed, budget shares  
357 (Dong et al., 2004; Nava & Dong, 2022).

358 The EM method entails iteratively estimating the demand system, replacing zero budget  
359 shares with positive predicted shares until parameter estimates stabilize. This is done separately  
360 for GLP-1 users and non-users using iterative seemingly unrelated regression via SAS 9.4's  
361 MODEL procedure.<sup>5</sup> As before, matching weights are applied in demand estimation to balance  
362 confounders. We halt the EM process when the change in all parameter estimates from one iteration  
363 to the next is less than 0.0001. Elasticity estimates and differences in elasticities between GLP-1  
364 users and non-users are calculated using the final sets of parameter estimates. Confidence intervals  
365 around the differences are constructed using 500 bootstrap samples (i.e., matching and demand  
366 estimation is conducted for each sample) and Poe et al. (2005) hypothesis testing.

## 367 **5.2 Results**

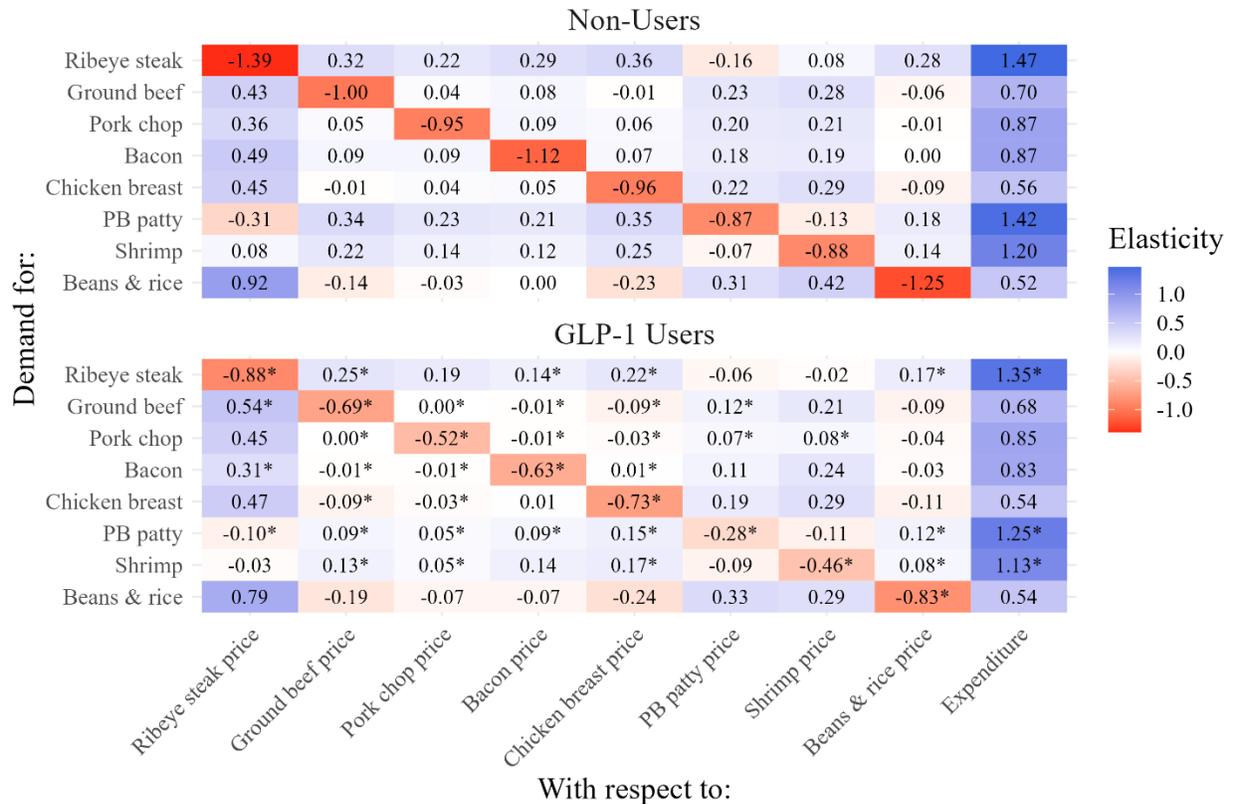
368 Unweighted, full sample AIDS model results are in Appendix Table A6. Since these contain  
369 hundreds of parameters, we present only price and expenditure effects and model fit measures. We  
370 focus on differences in elasticities between GLP-1 users and non-users, comparing traditional and  
371 causal inference methods. Figure 3 presents elasticities from the full, unmatched sample, which do  
372 not account for subgroup covariate imbalances. Differences are calculated as user *less* non-user  
373 elasticities, with significance tested via bootstrap resampling and the Poe et al. (2005) method. For  
374 interpretation, non-users reduce quantity demanded of ribeye steak by 1.39 percent following a  
375 ribeye steak price increase of 1 percent (top left corner, top panel), whereas users reduce their

---

<sup>5</sup> Prices in the OECE are randomly generated and can be treated as exogenous. Instrumental variable methods are not necessary.

376 quantity demanded by 0.88 percent (top left corner, bottom panel). Thus, GLP-1 use is associated  
 377 with a 0.51 reduction in own-price sensitivity (-0.88 less -1.39).

378 **Figure 3. GLP-1 User and Non-User Expenditure and Compensated Price Elasticities—Full**  
 379 **Sample**



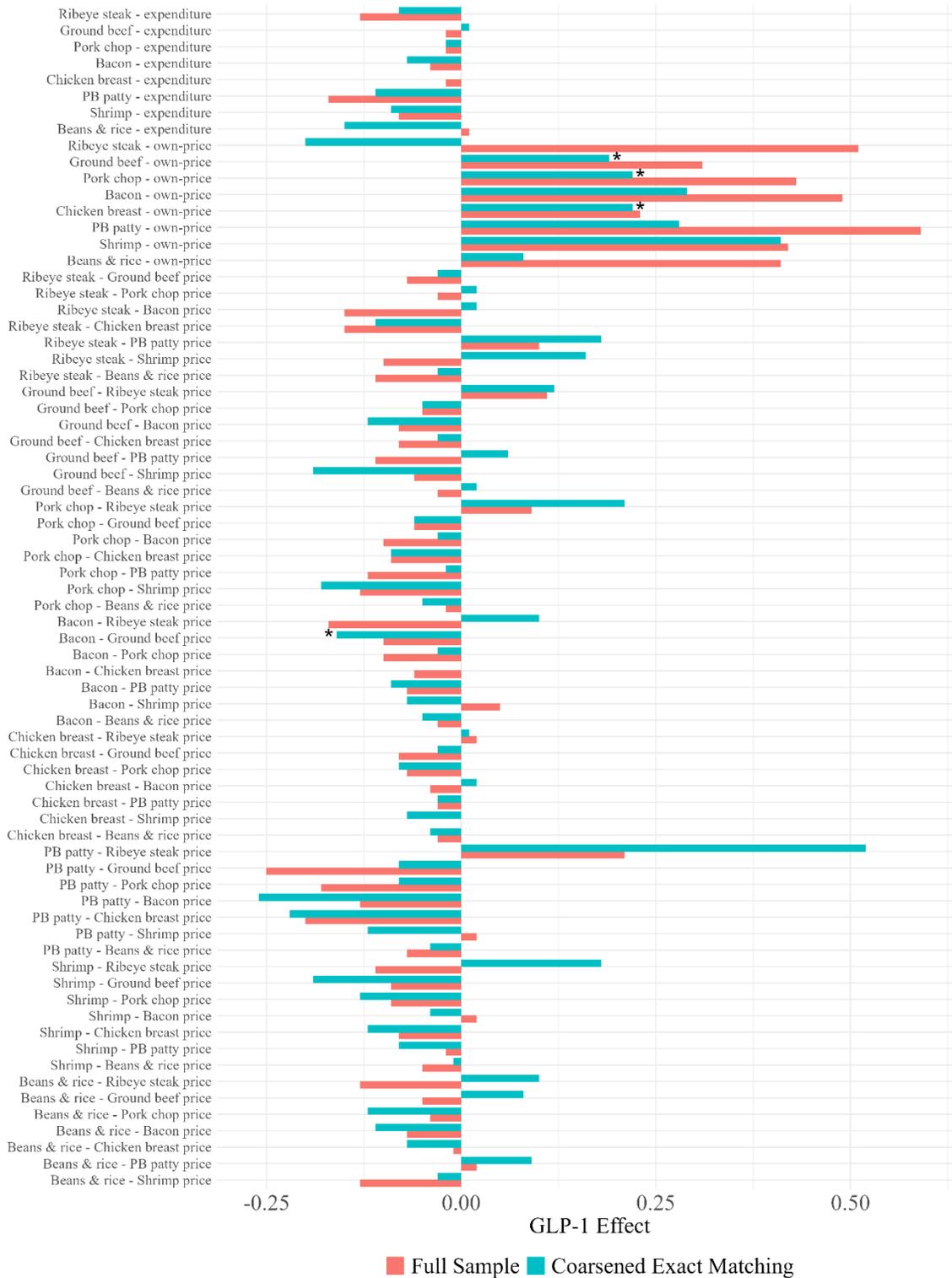
380 Note: Elasticities are calculated at the mean values of the budget shares obtained from the final  
 381 iteration of the EM estimation. Asterisks (\*) denote GLP-1 user elasticities that are statistically  
 382 different than non-user elasticities using 500 bootstrap samples and Poe et al. (2005) 95 percent  
 383 confidence intervals.  
 384

385  
 386 GLP-1 users are slightly less responsive to expenditure than non-users in their demand for  
 387 ribeye steak, plant-based patties, and shrimp, with expenditure elasticities 0.12, 0.17, and 0.07  
 388 lower, respectively. Other products show no significant subgroup differences. Substitution patterns  
 389 are largely similar, as cross-price elasticities differ little in magnitude between groups. The largest  
 390 difference occurs in plant-based patty quantity response to ground beef price, where the cross-

391 price elasticity is 0.25 lower for users. Notably, GLP-1 users are less own-price sensitive, with  
392 own-price elasticities between 0.23 (chicken breast) and 0.51 (ribeye steak) closer to zero than  
393 non-users. Similar patterns appear among fitness-motivated consumers (Bina & Tonsor, 2024),  
394 though prior work does not address potential confounding, which we do next.

395 Figure 4 reports ATT estimates from the CEM approach (i.e., differences in elasticities  
396 between users and non-users using CEM samples and weighted demand estimation) and the  
397 differences in elasticities from traditional estimation discussed above. For interpretation, GLP-1  
398 use reduces own-price sensitivity for ground beef by 0.19 (i.e., the ground beef own-price elasticity  
399 moves closer to zero by 0.19), which is statistically significant at the five percent level. This is  
400 compared to the simple association, which is 0.31. Unlike Study 1, Rosenbaum bounds are  
401 infeasible here, so results may reflect unobserved confounders influencing both GLP-1 use and  
402 protein demand. Nonetheless, robust treatment effects observed in Study 1 using the same survey  
403 data increase confidence in the following estimates.

404 **Figure 4. GLP-1 Effects on Expenditure and Compensated Price Elasticities**



405  
 406 Note: Asterisks (\*) denote coarsened exact matching-derived GLP-1 effects that are  
 407 statistically significant. Significance is assessed using 500 bootstrap samples and Poe et al.  
 408 (2005) 95 percent confidence intervals.

409 Utilizing matching to balance covariates, GLP-1 use yields lower ribeye steak and shrimp  
410 expenditure sensitivity by 0.06 to 0.10 using 1:1 NNM and GFM (Appendix Figure A7), however  
411 these effects lose statistical significance in our primary use of CEM depicted in Figure 4. Further,  
412 treatment effects on cross-price elasticities are slight and only occasionally statistically significant  
413 across product combinations and matching methods. For instance, using CEM, GLP-1 use alters  
414 only bacon quantity response to ground beef prices, reducing the cross-price elasticity by 0.16 and  
415 making the goods more complementary.

416 GLP-1 use exhibits smaller effects on own-price sensitivity than implied by the standard  
417 heterogeneity assessment. Ribeye steak and plant-based patty own-price elasticities do not differ  
418 significantly between groups across any matching method (see Appendix Figure A7 for 1:1 NNM  
419 and GFM results). Further, only chicken breast, ground beef, and pork chop differ using CEM.  
420 Differences in CEM-derived own-price elasticities for ground beef and pork chops are smaller than  
421 the associations, whereas chicken breast is similar. Specifically, users' own-price elasticities for  
422 ground beef and pork chops are 0.19 and 0.22 greater (i.e., closer to zero) than non-users',  
423 respectively, using CEM but 0.31 and 0.43 greater using the unmatched sample. Still, CEM results  
424 indicate meaningful demand-rotation effects for these three protein sources, with own-price  
425 elasticities between 0.19 and 0.22 greater for GLP-1 users.

426 Although these estimated 0.19 to 0.22 reductions in price sensitivity appear modest, they  
427 are economically meaningful relative to prior benchmarks. Meta-analyses report mean own-price  
428 elasticities for beef, pork, and poultry of -0.75, -0.72, and -0.68 (Andreyeva et al., 2010) and  
429 medians of -0.87, -0.78, and -0.65 (Gallet, 2010), respectively. Thus, a roughly 0.20 upward move  
430 represents a 23 to 31 percent reduction in price sensitivity compared to historical averages,  
431 acknowledging methodological and aggregation differences. More recent demand estimation using

432 household scanner data finds fresh ground beef, chicken, and pork median own-price elasticities  
433 of -1.34, -0.97, and -0.65, respectively (Nouve et al., 2025). Our CEM effect estimates are still  
434 sizable relative to these most recent findings, representing between 14 (ground beef) and 34 (pork  
435 chops) percent reductions in price sensitivity, again acknowledging aggregation differences. In a  
436 practical sense, roughly 0.20 own-price elasticity increases imply that a 10 percent retail price  
437 increase would lead GLP-1 users to reduce purchases by about 2 percentage points less than non-  
438 users (independent of sociodemographic differences between groups). This is non-trivial given  
439 adoption has risen from 5.5 percent of U.S. adults in October 2023 to 8.3 percent in July 2024 per  
440 external estimates (Hristakeva et al., 2025). Going forward, research should incorporate supply-  
441 side behavior to evaluate how these elasticity changes impact price pass-through, equilibrium  
442 outcomes, and aggregate welfare.

### 443 ***5.3 Industry Implications***

444 Study 2 reveals several implications. First, null or inconsistent effects of GLP-1 use on expenditure  
445 elasticities indicate that protein demand responds similarly to total food budgets across users and  
446 non-users (holding other consumer traits fixed). Thus, purchase volatility for premium items like  
447 ribeye steak and shrimp (with expenditure elasticities over 1.0) amid economic cycles or income  
448 shifts is unlikely to change as GLP-1 adoption grows.

449 Second, minimal effects of GLP-1 use on cross-price elasticities suggest adoption does not  
450 meaningfully alter substitution patterns between popular meat products. Bina and Tonsor (2024)  
451 note consumers may avoid substitutions misaligned with perceived health goals, which may  
452 explain this result. However, it is important to recognize that MDM data, and our associated  
453 separability assumptions, precludes demand shifts toward other proteins or food categories  
454 potentially more aligned with GLP-1 users' preferred substitutions.

455 Third, GLP-1 users exhibit lower own-price sensitivity for protein (Figure 3), meaning  
456 their purchase volumes respond less to price changes. Thus, price reductions may not incentivize  
457 greater consumption. Instead, as Study 1 suggests, capturing users' elevated WTP through value-  
458 added offerings may be a more effective response to GLP-1 adoption, though more research is  
459 needed to inform marketing and product development strategies. Lower price sensitivity also  
460 implies GLP-1 users will represent a larger share of protein purchases (in terms of aggregate  
461 quantities purchased) as prices increase and non-users disproportionately reduce purchases,  
462 echoing Lusk and Tonsor (2016) comments on relatively inelastic meat demand among higher-  
463 income consumers and underscoring the importance of monitoring shifts in buyer composition as  
464 GLP-1 adoption rises and prices fluctuate.

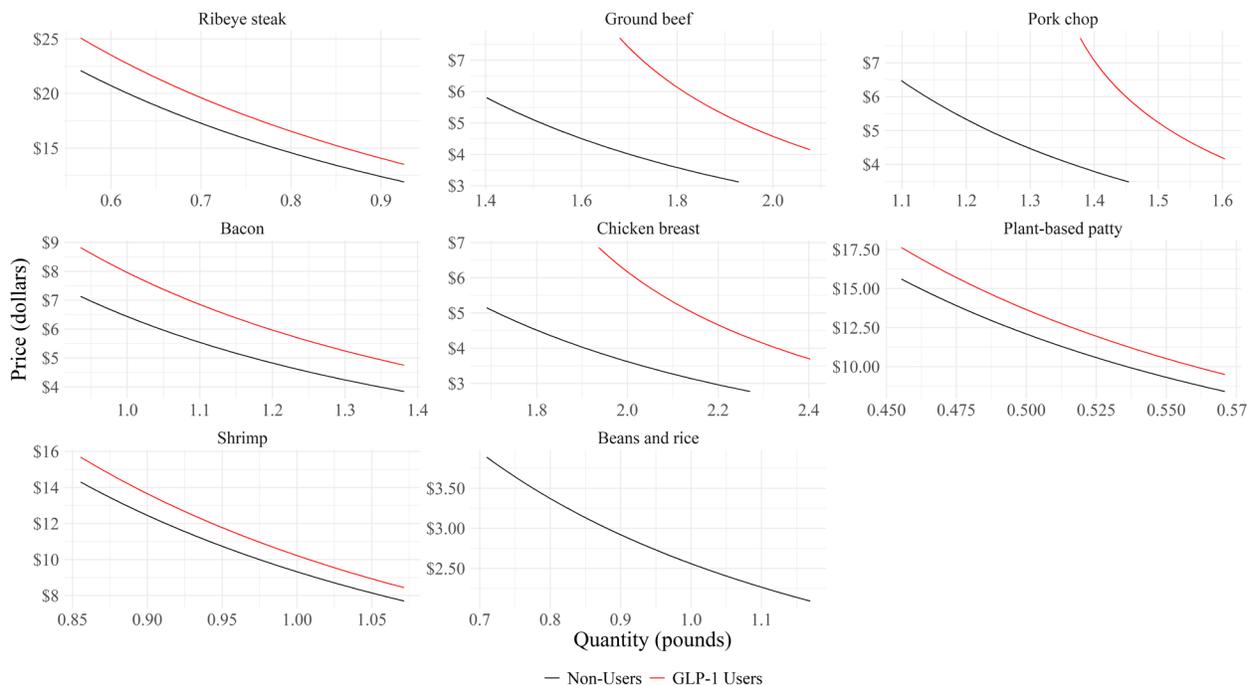
465 Further, matching methods reveal that much of users' apparent insensitivity to own-price  
466 changes stems from sociodemographic characteristics rather than GLP-1 effects. Nonetheless,  
467 CEM estimates show GLP-1 use reduces own-price sensitivity for chicken breast, ground beef,  
468 and pork chops by up to 0.22. Thus, rising GLP-1 adoption may smooth aggregate purchases of  
469 these proteins as prices fluctuate seasonally or through economic booms and downturns. This  
470 would further explain steady per capita red meat and poultry disappearance in recent years despite  
471 rising prices (Bina, 2025; A. Hess, 2025).

## 472 **6 Discussion**

473 GLP-1 use is reshaping U.S. food demand, creating uncertainty throughout the food system and  
474 requiring improved understanding of potential consequences. Industry responses indicate the  
475 protein sector is especially important (Conagra Brands, Inc., 2024; Naidu, 2024; Nestlé, 2024).  
476 This study quantifies GLP-1's impact on protein demand, finding positive effects on WTP for meat  
477 products in retail and foodservice. GLP-1 use also reduces price sensitivity for select retail

478 products with own-price elasticities becoming up to 0.22 more positive. A summary of retail results  
 479 is depicted in Figure 5. Compensated demand curves from the full (unmatched) non-user sample  
 480 are in black, whereas CEM-derived rightward shifts (Study 1) and clockwise rotations (Study 2)  
 481 are in red. We emphasize here that Figure 5 is illustrative only and intended to convey economic  
 482 intuition. Demand shifts and rotations were quantified separately using different choice  
 483 experiments and empirical methods.

484 **Figure 5. Summary of Retail Demand Transformations**



485

486

487 These findings raise key policy considerations. First, future GLP-1 coverage under private  
 488 health insurance and subsidized healthcare is uncertain, as are costs (Office of Health Policy  
 489 Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, 2024). Over 40 percent of privately insured U.S.  
 490 adults could receive coverage if prescribed for diabetes or weight-related health issues (McGough  
 491 et al., 2024). Further, the medications remain uncovered under Medicare and Medicaid if

492 prescribed for weight loss. A late-2024 proposal by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid  
493 Services would have extended coverage to obesity treatment, potentially benefiting 7.4 million  
494 adults (Office of Health Policy Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, 2024). However,  
495 the proposed extension was rescinded in spring 2025 amid various federal budget cuts (Park,  
496 2025).

497 Beyond healthcare impacts, subsidizing GLP-1 coverage will generate externalities  
498 throughout the food system. Broader adoption will alter food purchasing patterns, ultimately  
499 changing quantities, WTP, and price sensitivity. Further policy discussions should therefore weigh  
500 economic as well as public health outcomes. Importantly, policymakers should remain cognizant  
501 that GLP-1 users have higher WTP (Table 1). Thus, increased adoption may widen dietary divides  
502 as higher-WTP users drive up national protein prices, limiting lower-income consumers' access to  
503 protein. This is especially important given the current high-price environment for red meat and  
504 poultry (Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, 2025b) and lower-income consumers' relatively elastic  
505 demand for these products (Lusk & Tonsor, 2016). Any government initiative that yields elevated  
506 GLP-1 adoption rates and (indirectly) increases protein prices may progressively push lower  
507 earners out of the market for red meat and poultry.

508 Second, GLP-1 use is rising rapidly (Gratzl et al., 2024; Hristakeva et al., 2025) and will  
509 increasingly shape U.S. food demand, requiring monitoring and management of related shifts. The  
510 USDA Economic Research Service (ERS) has historically shared proprietary data for policy-  
511 relevant research (U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service, 2025), including  
512 Circana retail and household scanner data. Precedent exists for granting access to special datasets,  
513 such as Circana Household COVID-19 Response Data, to study consumer behavior during  
514 abnormal market periods. Our findings show that GLP-1 therapies substantially affect protein

515 demand, which, along with rapid increases in adoption, suggest that ERS should acquire GLP-1  
516 use data (Circana, 2025) and offer access to researchers via standard third-party agreements. This  
517 would enhance understanding of GLP-1's economic and dietary impacts while helping identify  
518 how food manufacturers can offset reduced consumption through product reformulation or other  
519 strategies.

520 Third, GLP-1 medications significantly shift protein demand independent of income and  
521 other factors, highlighting a key link between pharmaceutical and food sectors. Interagency  
522 collaboration related to food consumption is well established, as the USDA Food Safety and  
523 Inspection Service and the Food and Drug Administration's Department of Health and Human  
524 Services co-manage food safety. Extending on prior interagency efforts, new GLP-1-focused  
525 workgroups could help integrate pharmaceutical trends into dietary and agricultural policymaking.  
526 Such coordination would support research on medication-driven food spending and improve  
527 dietary guidance during GLP-1 therapy. Further, the medications demonstrate how health and food  
528 systems interact endogenously: GLP-1 use alters diets, influencing broader health outcomes. For  
529 instance, higher protein demand may increase red meat's share of the diet, which has been linked  
530 to chronic diseases (Ekmekcioglu et al., 2018; Wolk, 2017). Thus, research and policy groups  
531 working in this intersection are key to balancing the economic and health impacts of rising GLP-  
532 1 use.

533 Last, previous research shows GLP-1 users consume less meat (Dilley et al., 2025;  
534 Hristakeva et al., 2025), yet our results reveal higher WTP for meat products. This apparent  
535 contradiction reflects a shift from quantity to quality, where users buy less but value each unit more  
536 highly. This behavior aligns with a premiumization pattern, in which individuals reduce total intake  
537 while seeking greater satisfaction, quality, or nutrient profiles compatible with successful GLP-1

538 therapy. Because livestock, especially cattle, account for a disproportionate share of agricultural  
539 greenhouse gas emissions (Pelton et al., 2024; U.S. Department of Agriculture Agricultural  
540 Research Service, 2023), this shift may contribute to a lower environmental footprint for the sector.  
541 The feasibility of these sustainability gains, however, depends on producers' ability to capture  
542 elevated per-unit valuations through value-added activities, such as transparent labeling or the  
543 development of GLP-1-friendly product attributes. Policymakers could support this alignment of  
544 economic, environmental, and social (i.e., reduced obesity prevalence) outcomes by subsidizing  
545 credible labeling efforts and tightening oversight to prevent misleading "GLP-1-friendly" claims  
546 on products whose attributes are inherently GLP-1 friendly (i.e., lean proteins).

547         Though this study has important implications for the food system and policymaking, it has  
548 several limitations. Our identification of GLP-1 effects on protein demand relies on matching  
549 methods that cannot address unobserved confounders. Since the MDM survey lacks data on  
550 participants' motivation for GLP-1 use, selecting into treatment for diabetes versus weight  
551 management may confound our effect estimates if those motivations likewise influence protein  
552 demand. For instance, being diagnosed with diabetes increases the likelihood of using a GLP-1  
553 medication while realistically lowering demand for certain protein products (e.g., red meat),  
554 creating a negative bias in our effect estimates. Further, other behavioral factors, such as pre-  
555 adoption health focus and concurrent lifestyle changes, may also influence outcomes and cannot  
556 be disentangled from medication effects. As with Hristakeva et al. (2025), we thus document  
557 *overall* adjustments to GLP-1 adoption across related behavioral changes.

558         Second, the cross-sectional and meat-centric MDM data precludes analysis of how GLP-1  
559 effects vary over time and across foods. Future research should use longitudinal household scanner  
560 data to capture temporal and substitution patterns, and to enable panel data-based causal inference

561 methods that better address unobserved confounders. Still, our extensive sensitivity analyses  
562 related to data exclusion criteria, matching approaches, utility specifications, and unobserved  
563 confounding and heterogeneity consistently show positive GLP-1 effects on WTP for meat  
564 proteins.

565         Last, this study focuses on U.S. consumers' GLP-1 use and protein demand, so global  
566 applicability is uncertain. The U.S. remains the largest market for GLP-1 medications, but  
567 international adoption could reach 10 percent of the obese population by 2035 (Flynn, 2025). Great  
568 Britain is already experiencing such increases, with current users rising from 2.3 to 4.1 percent of  
569 the adult population from March 2024 to August 2025 (Kennaugh & Pattni, 2025), while Australia  
570 has observed elevenfold increases in adoption from 2014 to 2022 [though largely for diabetes  
571 treatment] (Lin et al., 2023). Since global per capita consumption of red meat and poultry is  
572 generally increasing over time (Godfray et al., 2018; Milford et al., 2019), GLP-1 effects on protein  
573 demand may span globally. More research is needed to determine if the magnitudes of effects differ  
574 across countries for cultural or institutional reasons. However, we believe we identify a general  
575 finding in that weight loss medications that place a premium on protein consumption will change  
576 both the shape and location of demand as we describe here.

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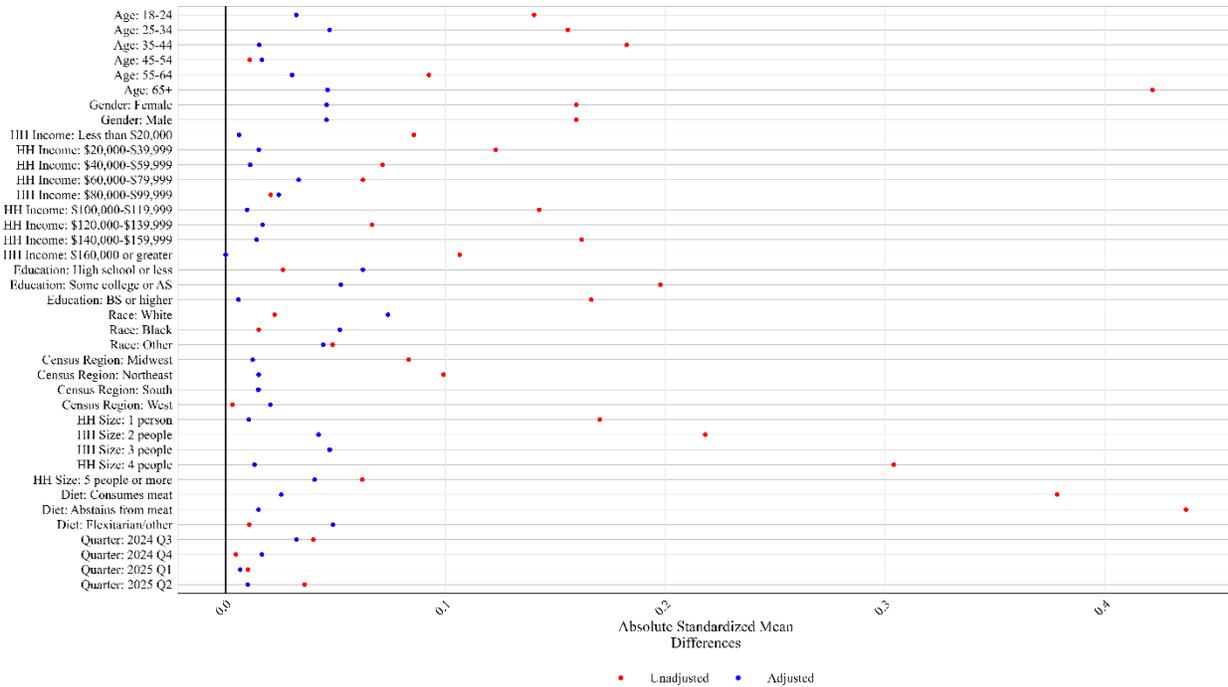
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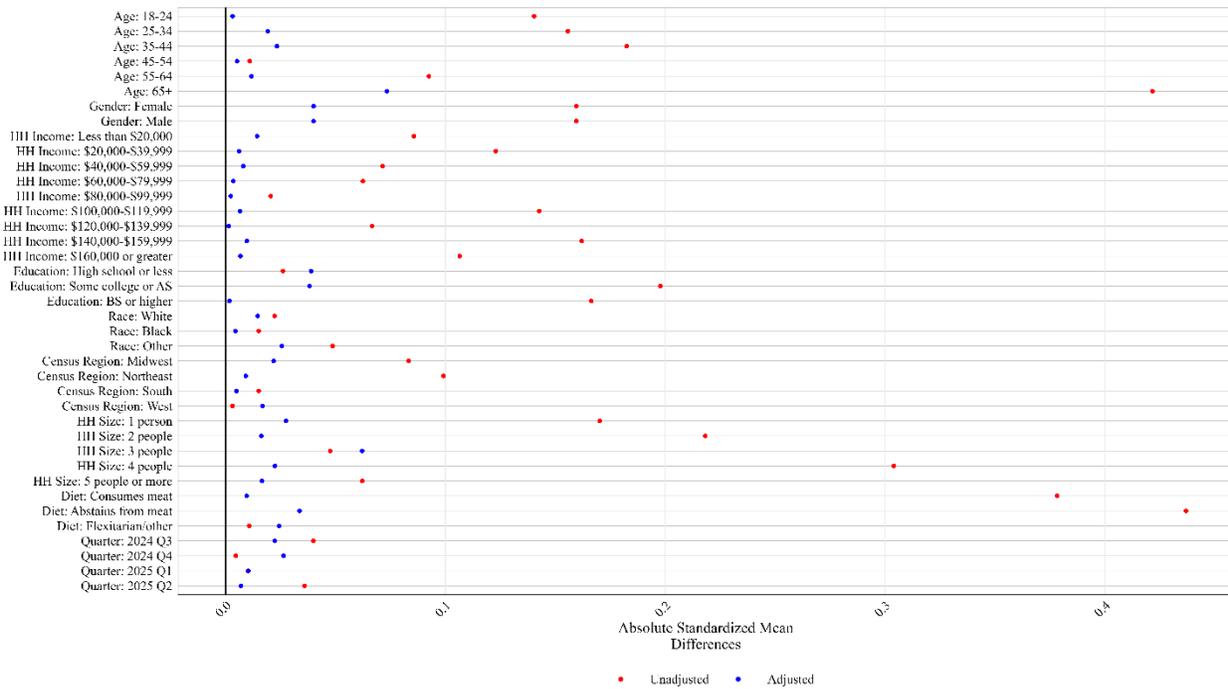
827 Appendix

828 Figure A1. Study 1 1:1 Nearest Neighbors Matching Covariate Balance—Retail DCE



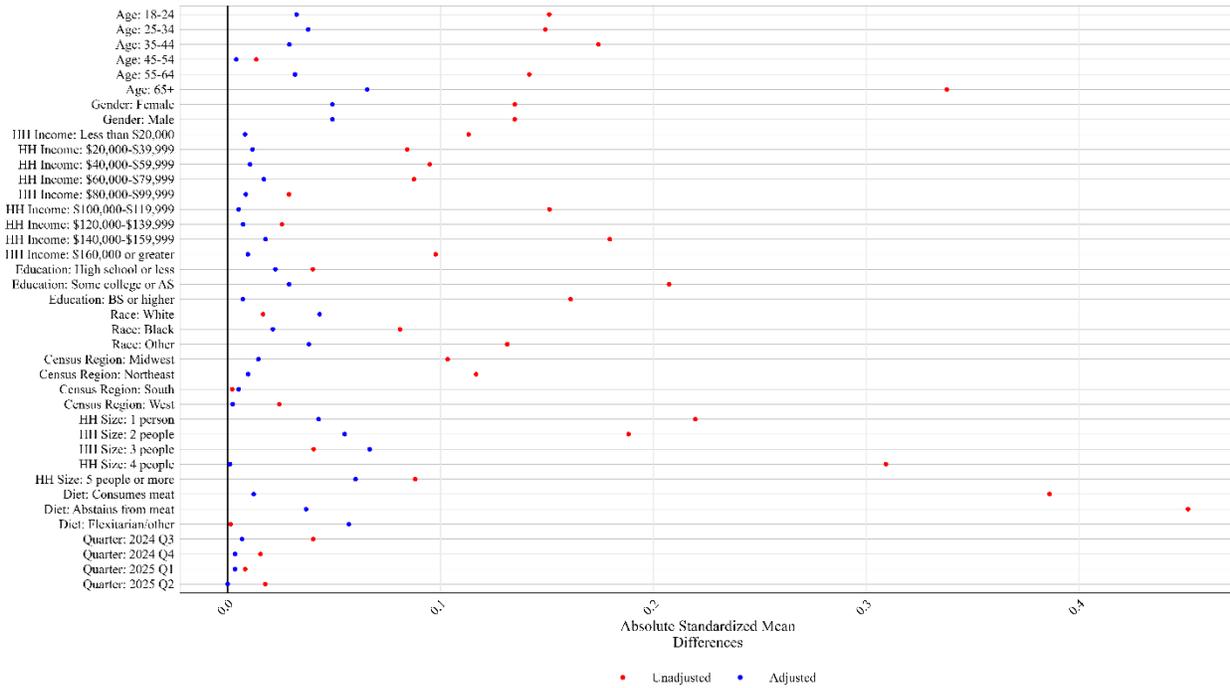
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830 Figure A2. Study 1 Generalized Full Matching Covariate Balance—Retail DCE



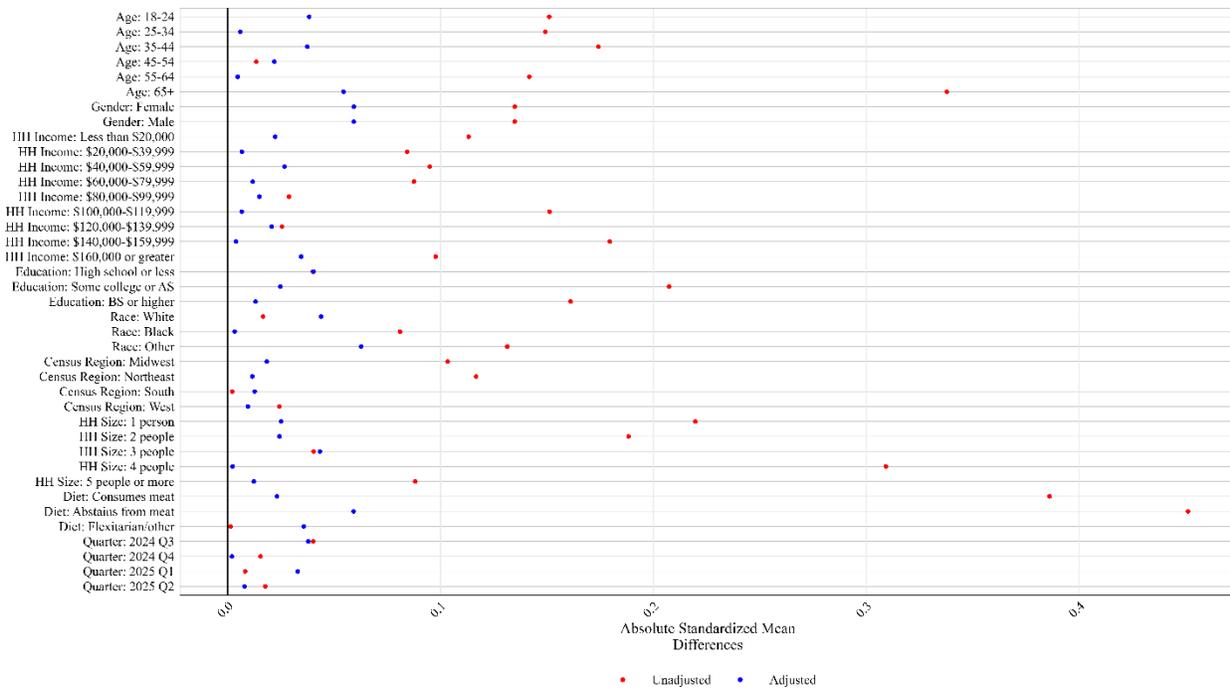
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832 **Figure A3. Study 1 1:1 Nearest Neighbors Matching Covariate Balance—Foodservice DCE**



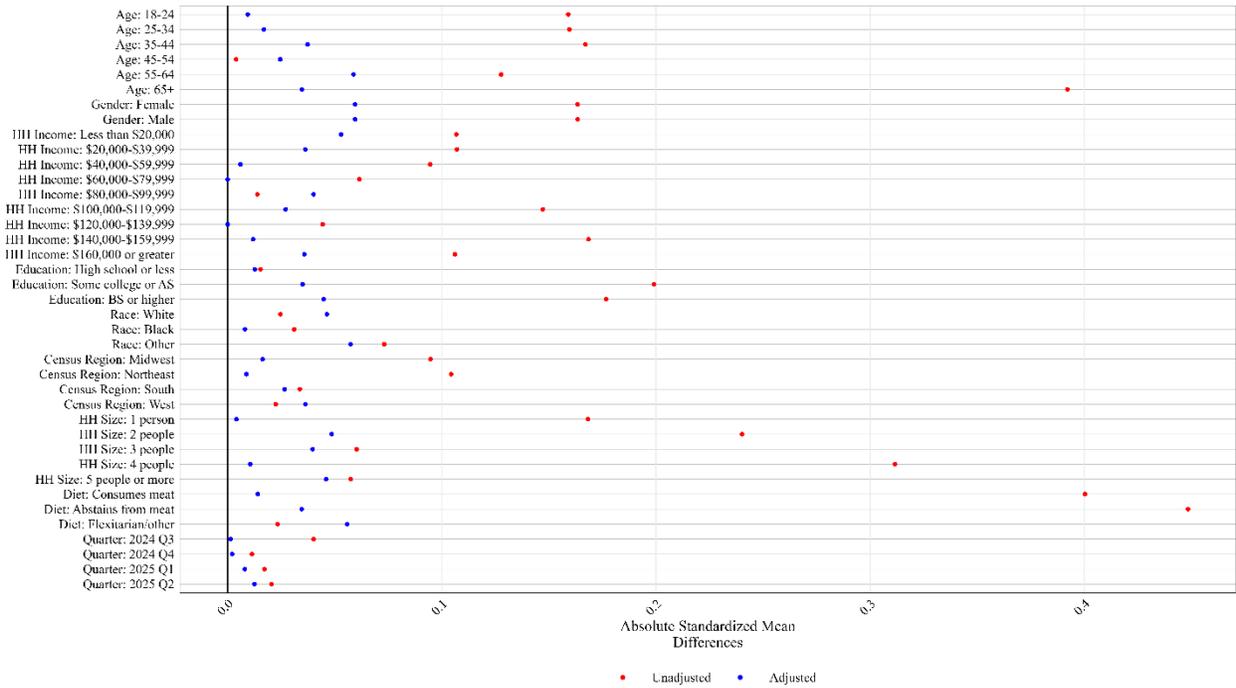
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834 **Figure A4. Study 1 Generalized Full Matching Covariate Balance—Foodservice DCE**



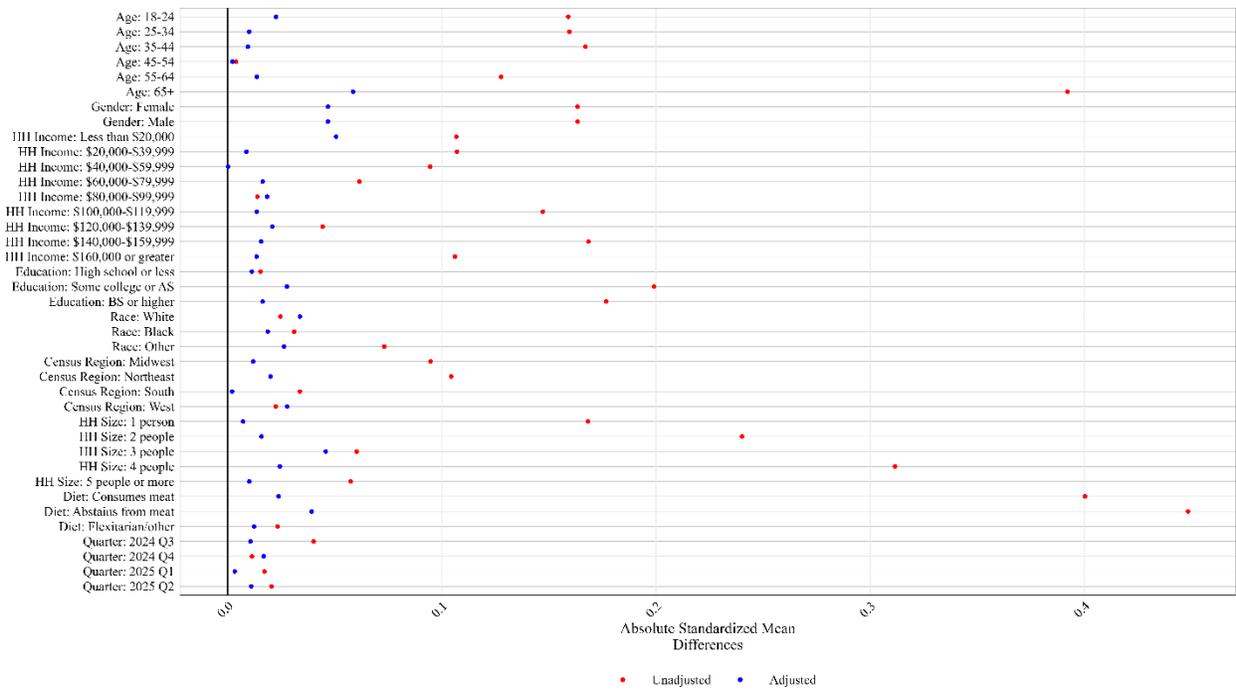
835

836 **Figure A5. Study 2 1:1 Nearest Neighbors Matching Covariate Balance**



837

838 **Figure A6. Study 2 Generalized Full Matching Covariate Balance**



839

840 **Table A1. Discrete Choice Experiment Alternatives and Price Levels**

|               | <u>Retail DCE (\$/lb)</u> |                |              |       |                   |                      |        |                 |
|---------------|---------------------------|----------------|--------------|-------|-------------------|----------------------|--------|-----------------|
|               | Ribeye<br>Steak           | Ground<br>Beef | Pork<br>Chop | Bacon | Chicken<br>Breast | Plant-Based<br>Patty | Shrimp | Beans<br>& Rice |
| Price level 1 | 14.49                     | 1.99           | 2.49         | 2.99  | 1.49              | 9.49                 | 8.49   | 0.49            |
| Price level 2 | 16.99                     | 4.49           | 4.99         | 5.49  | 3.99              | 11.99                | 10.99  | 2.99            |
| Price level 3 | 19.49                     | 6.99           | 7.49         | 7.99  | 6.49              | 14.49                | 13.49  | 5.49            |

|               | <u>Foodservice DCE (\$/meal)</u> |           |              |                   |                   |                      |        |        |
|---------------|----------------------------------|-----------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------|--------|
|               | Ribeye<br>Steak                  | Hamburger | Pork<br>Chop | Baby<br>Back Ribs | Chicken<br>Breast | Plant-Based<br>Patty | Shrimp | Salmon |
| Price level 1 | 18.99                            | 9.49      | 14.49        | 12.99             | 10.49             | 12.49                | 10.99  | 14.49  |
| Price level 2 | 21.49                            | 11.99     | 16.99        | 15.49             | 12.99             | 14.99                | 13.49  | 16.99  |
| Price level 3 | 23.99                            | 14.49     | 19.49        | 17.99             | 15.49             | 17.49                | 15.99  | 19.49  |

841

842 **Table A2. Parameter Estimates from Retail MNL Models**

| Variable                                    | Full<br>Sample | Coarsened<br>Exact<br>Matching | 1:1 Nearest<br>Neighbors<br>Matching | Generalized<br>Full<br>Matching |
|---|----------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Linear price effect ( $\alpha$ )            | -0.38*         | -0.37*                         | -0.29*                               | -0.30*                          |
| GLP-1 use price effect ( $\omega$ )         | 0.20*          | 0.05*                          | 0.10*                                | 0.11*                           |
| GLP-1 use preference parameters ( $\pi_j$ ) |                |                                |                                      |                                 |
| $\pi_{\text{ribeye steak}}$                 | -2.33*         | -0.17                          | -0.60*                               | -0.93*                          |
| $\pi_{\text{ground beef}}$                  | -0.23*         | 0.06                           | 0.23*                                | 0.16                            |
| $\pi_{\text{pork chop}}$                    | -0.18*         | -0.04                          | 0.23*                                | 0.21*                           |
| $\pi_{\text{bacon}}$                        | -0.31*         | 0.07                           | 0.18                                 | 0.11                            |
| $\pi_{\text{chicken breast}}$               | -0.44*         | 0.03                           | -0.04                                | -0.10                           |
| $\pi_{\text{plant-based patty}}$            | -1.65*         | 0.16                           | -0.53*                               | -0.72*                          |
| $\pi_{\text{shrimp}}$                       | -1.45*         | -0.19                          | -0.39*                               | -0.57*                          |
| $\pi_{\text{beans and rice}}$               | -0.36*         | -0.15                          | -0.15                                | -0.23*                          |
| Number of individuals                       | 17,944         | 2,238                          | 4,208                                | 17,896                          |
| Total choice tasks completed                | 161,496        | 20,142                         | 37,872                               | 161,064                         |
| Log-likelihood                              | -278,393       | -34,105                        | -70,091                              | -292,786                        |
| AIC   | 557,303        | 68,726                         | 140,698                              | 586,087                         |
| BIC   | 559,881        | 70,767                         | 142,902                              | 588,665                         |

843 Note: Asterisks (\*) denote statistical significance at the five percent level using robust standard  
 844 errors. Untreated individuals with generalized full matching weights greater than 20.0 are trimmed  
 845 before MNL estimation to ensure convergence.

846

847 **Table A3. Parameter Estimates from Foodservice MNL Models**

| Variable                                    | Full Sample | Coarsened Exact Matching | 1:1 Nearest Neighbors Matching | Generalized Full Matching |
|---|-------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Linear price effect ( $\alpha$ )            | -0.23*      | -0.23*                   | -0.17*                         | -0.18*                    |
| GLP-1 use price effect ( $\omega$ )         | 0.12*       | 0.05*                    | 0.05*                          | 0.07*                     |
| GLP-1 use preference parameters ( $\pi_j$ ) |             |                          |                                |                           |
| $\pi_{\text{ribeye steak}}$                 | -1.60*      | -0.59                    | -0.31                          | -0.61*                    |
| $\pi_{\text{hamburger}}$                    | -0.72*      | -0.29                    | -0.03                          | -0.17                     |
| $\pi_{\text{pork chop}}$                    | -0.95*      | -0.39                    | -0.05                          | -0.33*                    |
| $\pi_{\text{baby back ribs}}$               | -1.05*      | -0.37                    | -0.16                          | -0.38*                    |
| $\pi_{\text{chicken breast}}$               | -1.01*      | -0.33                    | -0.23                          | -0.43*                    |
| $\pi_{\text{plant-based patty}}$            | -1.69*      | -0.61*                   | -0.79*                         | -1.00*                    |
| $\pi_{\text{shrimp}}$                       | -0.93*      | -0.34                    | -0.18                          | -0.34*                    |
| $\pi_{\text{salmon}}$                       | -1.43*      | -0.72*                   | -0.48*                         | -0.69*                    |
| Number of individuals                       | 18,043      | 1,974                    | 3,996                          | 17,999                    |
| Total choice tasks completed                | 162,387     | 17,766                   | 35,964                         | 161,991                   |
| Log-likelihood                              | -309,337    | -33,626                  | -70,000                        | -313,582                  |
| AIC   | 619,190     | 67,769                   | 140,515                        | 627,680                   |
| BIC   | 621,769     | 69,777                   | 142,706                        | 630,259                   |

848 Note: Asterisks (\*) denote statistical significance at the five percent level using robust standard  
 849 errors. Untreated individuals with generalized full matching weights greater than 20.0 are trimmed  
 850 before MNL estimation to ensure convergence.

851

852 **Table A4. Sensitivity Analysis of GLP-1 Effects on Willingness-to-Pay**

| Product           | Retail Doubly Robust Average Treatment Effects on the Treated      |                  |                  |                  |
|-------------------|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|                   | (1)  | (2)              | (3)              | (4)              |
| Ribeye steak      | 2.30* [ $>100$ ]   | 2.28* [ $>100$ ] | 2.01* [ $>100$ ] | 2.24* [ $>100$ ] |
| Ground beef       | 1.69* [ $>100$ ]   | 1.22* [ $>100$ ] | 0.80* [ $>100$ ] | 1.63* [ $>100$ ] |
| Pork chop         | 1.19* [ $>100$ ]   | 1.06* [ $>100$ ] | 0.52* [ $>100$ ] | 1.17* [ $>100$ ] |
| Bacon             | 1.30* [ $>100$ ]   | 0.89* [ $>100$ ] | 0.89* [ $>100$ ] | 1.27* [ $>100$ ] |
| Chicken breast    | 1.52* [ $>100$ ]   | 1.15* [ $>100$ ] | 0.66* [ $>100$ ] | 1.47* [ $>100$ ] |
| Plant-based patty | 1.55* [ $>100$ ]   | 0.87* [19.6]     | 2.12* [ $>100$ ] | 1.48* [ $>100$ ] |
| Shrimp            | 1.06* [ $>100$ ]   | 1.32* [ $>100$ ] | 0.99* [ $>100$ ] | 0.98* [ $>100$ ] |
| Beans and rice    | 0.14 [ $<2.0$ ]  | 0.48* [52.9]     | -0.13 [ $<2.0$ ] | 0.14 [ $<2.0$ ]  |
| Product           | Foodservice Doubly Robust Average Treatment Effects on the Treated |                  |                  |                  |
|                   | (1)  | (2)              | (3)              | (4)              |
| Ribeye steak      | 3.87* [ $>100$ ]   | 2.86* [ $>100$ ] | 2.01* [ $>100$ ] | 3.67* [ $>100$ ] |
| Hamburger         | 3.73* [ $>100$ ]   | 2.17* [ $>100$ ] | 1.32* [ $>100$ ] | 3.57* [ $>100$ ] |
| Pork chop         | 2.34* [86.2]   | 1.81* [ $>100$ ] | 1.90* [ $>100$ ] | 2.18* [64.3]     |

|                   |              |              |              |              |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Baby back ribs    | 3.07* [>100] | 2.06* [>100] | 1.68* [>100] | 2.95* [>100] |
| Chicken breast    | 3.22* [>100] | 2.05* [>100] | 1.32* [>100] | 3.02* [>100] |
| Plant-based patty | -0.23 [<2.0] | 1.20* [>100] | 0.36 [>100]  | -0.29 [<2.0] |
| Shrimp            | 3.20* [>100] | 2.06* [>100] | 1.35* [>100] | 3.20* [>100] |
| Salmon            | 1.42* [11.8] | 2.14* [>100] | 0.33 [>100]  | 1.23* [7.3]  |

853 Note: Asterisks (\*) denote statistical significance using Krinsky and Robb (1986) 95 percent  
854 confidence intervals. We use 10,000 draws in the Krinsky and Robb (1986) resampling procedure.  
855 Values in brackets are critical  $T$  values from Rosenbaum bounds sensitivity testing. Column (1)  
856 reflects the primary effect estimates derived using coarsened exact matching (CEM); column (2)  
857 reflects CEM-derived estimates when GLP-1 use is omitted from preference parameters; column  
858 (3) reflects CEM-derived estimates when GLP-1 use is omitted from price responsiveness; and  
859 column (4) reflects CEM-derived estimates when we relax the restriction on primary grocery  
860 shopper status.

861

862 **Table A5. Open-Ended Choice Experiment Price Ranges (\$/lb)**

|                   | Minimum | Maximum |
|-------------------|---------|---------|
| Ribeye steak      | 14.49   | 19.49   |
| Ground beef       | 1.99    | 6.99    |
| Pork chop         | 2.49    | 7.49    |
| Bacon             | 2.99    | 7.99    |
| Chicken breast    | 1.49    | 6.49    |
| Plant-based patty | 9.49    | 14.49   |
| Shrimp            | 8.49    | 13.49   |
| Beans and rice    | 0.49    | 5.49    |

863

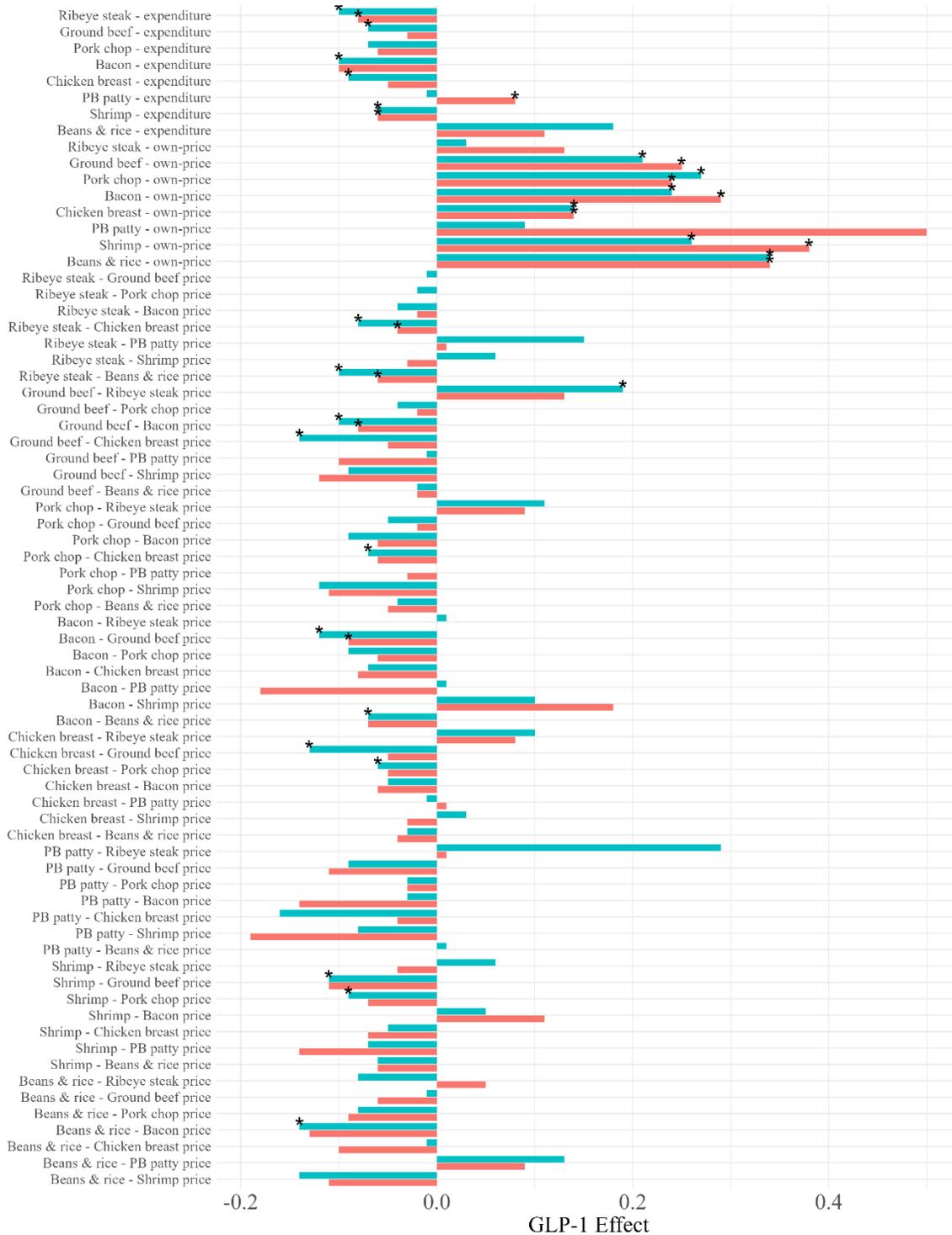
864 **Table A6. Expectation Maximization Estimates of AIDS Parameters—Full Sample**

| Parameter                  | Share Equation  |                |              |         |                   |                      |        |                 |
|----------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|---------|-------------------|----------------------|--------|-----------------|
|                            | Ribeye<br>Steak | Ground<br>Beef | Pork<br>Chop | Bacon   | Chicken<br>Breast | Plant-Based<br>Patty | Shrimp | Beans &<br>Rice |
|                            | <u>Users</u>    |                |              |         |                   |                      |        |                 |
| $\beta_j$                  | 0.080*          | -0.034*        | -0.014*      | -0.018* | -0.048*           | 0.034*               | 0.022* | -0.022*         |
| Price effects              |                 |                |              |         |                   |                      |        |                 |
| Ribeye steak (\$/lb.)      | 0.014           |                |              |         |                   |                      |        |                 |
| Ground beef (\$/lb.)       | 0.016*          | 0.029*         |              |         |                   |                      |        |                 |
| Pork chop (\$/lb.)         | 0.014*          | -0.008*        | 0.039*       |         |                   |                      |        |                 |
| Bacon (\$/lb.)             | 0.000           | -0.008*        | -0.010*      | 0.030*  |                   |                      |        |                 |
| Chicken breast (\$/lb.)    | 0.002           | -0.010*        | -0.009*      | -0.004* | 0.031*            |                      |        |                 |
| Plant-based patty (\$/lb.) | -0.028*         | -0.009*        | -0.009*      | -0.006  | -0.005            | 0.087*               |        |                 |
| Shrimp (\$/lb.)            | -0.033*         | 0.000          | -0.011*      | 0.004   | 0.005             | -0.035*              | 0.067* |                 |
| Beans & rice (\$/lb.)      | 0.016*          | -0.009*        | -0.006*      | -0.006* | -0.010*           | 0.005                | 0.002  | 0.009*          |
| Number of observations     | 3,185           |                |              |         |                   |                      |        |                 |

| Parameter                  | Share Equation   |                |              |         |                   |                      |        |                 |
|----------------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------|---------|-------------------|----------------------|--------|-----------------|
|                            | Ribeye<br>Steak  | Ground<br>Beef | Pork<br>Chop | Bacon   | Chicken<br>Breast | Plant-Based<br>Patty | Shrimp | Beans &<br>Rice |
| Mean share                 | 0.23             | 0.10           | 0.10         | 0.11    | 0.10              | 0.14                 | 0.17   | 0.05            |
| Adj. R-squared             | 0.42             | 0.39           | 0.19         | 0.16    | 0.47              | 0.48                 | 0.09   |                 |
| Log-likelihood             | -32,776          |                |              |         |                   |                      |        |                 |
|                            | <u>Non-Users</u> |                |              |         |                   |                      |        |                 |
| $\beta_j$                  | 0.086*           | -0.041*        | -0.015*      | -0.014* | -0.064*           | 0.039*               | 0.034* | -0.026*         |
| Price effects              |                  |                |              |         |                   |                      |        |                 |
| Ribeye steak (\$/lb.)      | -0.051*          |                |              |         |                   |                      |        |                 |
| Ground beef (\$/lb.)       | 0.008*           | -0.006*        |              |         |                   |                      |        |                 |
| Pork chop (\$/lb.)         | 0.010*           | -0.005*        | -0.005*      |         |                   |                      |        |                 |
| Bacon (\$/lb.)             | 0.025*           | -0.001         | -0.001       | -0.024* |                   |                      |        |                 |
| Chicken breast (\$/lb.)    | 0.000            | -0.002         | -0.003*      | -0.002  | 0.014*            |                      |        |                 |
| Plant-based patty (\$/lb.) | -0.022*          | 0.008*         | 0.007*       | 0.006*  | 0.000             | 0.014*               |        |                 |
| Shrimp (\$/lb.)            | 0.005            | 0.005*         | 0.001        | -0.001  | 0.001             | -0.018*              | 0.000  |                 |
| Beans & rice (\$/lb.)      | 0.024*           | -0.007*        | -0.005*      | -0.003* | -0.009*           | 0.004*               | 0.007* | -0.012*         |
| Number of observations     | 22,859           |                |              |         |                   |                      |        |                 |
| Mean share                 | 0.18             | 0.13           | 0.11         | 0.11    | 0.15              | 0.09                 | 0.17   | 0.05            |
| Adj. R-squared             | 0.51             | 0.28           | 0.09         | 0.08    | 0.41              | 0.42                 | 0.16   |                 |
| Log-likelihood             | -197,525         |                |              |         |                   |                      |        |                 |

865 Note: Asterisks (\*) denote statistical significance using 95 percent bootstrap confidence intervals.  
866 We use 500 bootstrap samples.

867 **Figure A7. GLP-1 Effects on Expenditure and Compensated Price Elasticities—1:1 NNM**  
 868 **and GFM**



869  
 870 Note: Asterisks (\*) denote GLP-1 effects that are statistically significant. Significance is  
 871 assessed using 500 bootstrap samples and Poe et al. (2005) 95 percent confidence intervals.