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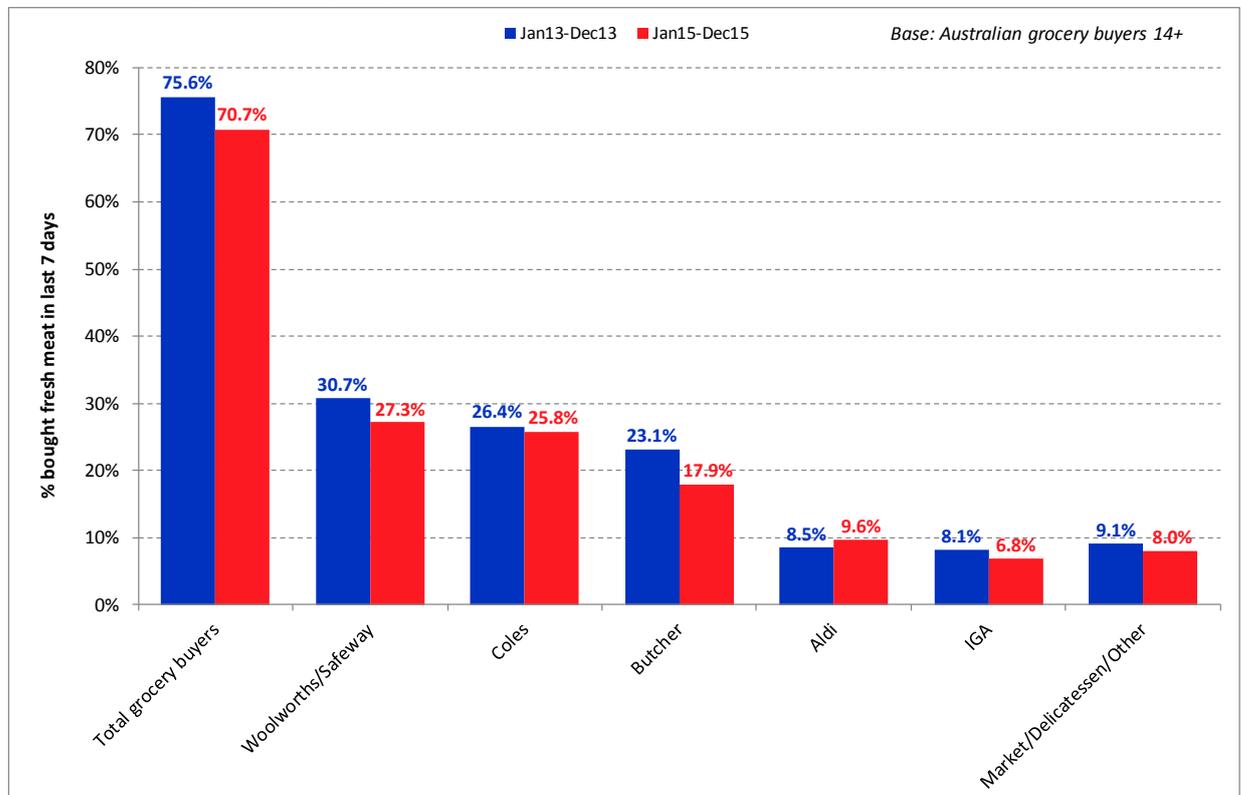
On a knife's edge: the decline of the butcher

Are the days of the traditional butcher numbered? Between January 2013 and December 2015, the proportion of Australian grocery buyers purchasing their fresh meat at the butcher's in any seven-day period fell from 23.1% to 17.9%. Or is this decline simply due to a larger move away from buying fresh meat in general? After all, as the latest findings from Roy Morgan Research reveal, the overall proportion of grocery buyers buying fresh meat anywhere has also fallen, from 75.6% in 2013 to 70.7% in 2015.

ALDI is the only major supermarket to have made any real gains in fresh meat sales over the last few years, with 9.6% of grocery buyers 14+ purchasing their meat there in an average seven days, up from 8.5% in 2013 (an additional 265,000 meat-shoppers each week). Coles remained relatively stable, but Woolworths/Safeway (30.7% to 27.3%) and IGA (8.1% to 6.8%) experienced declines; as did markets/delicatessens (9.1% to 8.0%).

There is no denying, however, that butchers have seen the most significant decrease in purchase incidence. And, unlike supermarkets or markets/delis, the buck stops with meat for butchers: they do not have the scope to adapt to changing grocery-buying habits with alternative products.

Where Aussie grocery buyers purchase their fresh meat



Source: Roy Morgan Single Source (Australia), January-December 2013 (n=18,576) and January-December 2015 (n=15,367).

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Despite the decline, butchers still hold a 23.5% share of the total fresh-meat market, due to the amount their shoppers spend in an average seven days (\$37). This is just ahead of the average fresh-meat spend for those grocery buyers who make their purchase at markets/delicatessens (\$34).

While Woolworth/Safeway accounts for a larger slice of the market (27.3%), their fresh-meat customers spend substantially less (a weekly average of \$27 per shopper); as do those who buy their meat at Coles (\$25/23.2% market share) and IGA/Foodland (\$22/5.4% market share)

Place of fresh-meat purchase by average weekly customer spend and market share

Place of purchase	Average customer spend	Market share (%)
Butcher	\$37	23.5%
Market/Delicatessens/Other	\$34	9.4%
Woolworths/Safeway	\$27	26.4%
Coles	\$25	23.2%
ALDI	\$22	7.6%
IGA	\$22	5.4%

Source: Roy Morgan Single Source (Australia), January-December 2015 (n=15,367). **Base:** Australian grocery buyers 14+

With its customers spending a weekly average of \$22, ALDI's dollar share of the fresh-meat market is currently 7.6%.

Andrew Price, General Manager – Consumer Products, Roy Morgan Research, says:

“Australian grocery buyers appear to be gradually moving away from purchasing fresh meat, and butchers are the most visible casualty. At the moment, despite their shrinking customer base, butchers are retaining a decent share of the overall fresh-meat market due to the above-average amount spent by those grocery buyers who continue to shop with them. But unless they can stem (or reverse) the decline in shoppers, it seems inevitable that butchers’ market share will erode.

“The supermarket situation is a little different. The proportion of grocery buyers purchasing fresh meat is decreasing at a slower rate and the customer volume is much higher. Whereas buying from a traditional butcher involves making a special trip, purchasing one’s meat at the same time as the rest of one’s groceries is much simpler.

“The news that Woolworths is changing the role of its staff butchers, bringing them to the front of store to sell pre-packaged meat and interact with customers rather than plying their trade out the back, indicates that the supermarket chain is endeavouring to pre-empt further declines.

“But with the number of Australians who are ‘eating less red meat these days’ now surpassing 10.2 million people (increasing by 293,000 people since 2013), and the number of those pursuing a totally or almost vegetarian diet also rising over the same period, butchers and other players in the fresh meat market are facing challenging times. Knowing exactly who still buys fresh meat – from their demographics and

attitudes to their shopping habits – is a good starting point, ensuring marketing communications are tailored to resonate with the right people.”

For comments or more information about Roy Morgan Research’s consumer products and supermarket data, please contact:

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Related research findings

View our range of Fresh Meat Purchase Place profiles, including the [ALDI fresh meat buyer](#), [Butcher fresh meat buyer profile](#), and [Woolworths/Safeway fresh meat buyer profile](#).

Compiled with data from Roy Morgan’s Single Source survey (the largest of its kind in the world, with 50,000 respondents p.a), these ready-made profiles provide a broad understanding of the target audience, in terms of demographics, attitudes, activities and media usage in Australia.

About Roy Morgan Research

Roy Morgan Research is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in Indonesia, the United States and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan Research has over 70 years’ experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
5,000	±1.4	±1.2	±0.8	±0.6
7,500	±1.1	±1.0	±0.7	±0.5
10,000	±1.0	±0.9	±0.6	±0.4
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2

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