Consumer Trends: Consumers Have Healthy Appetite For Breakfast

CHICAGO (PRNewswire) — Breakfast is the most important meal of the day, the old adage says, and it looks like US consumers are growing more conscious of the importance of a healthy start to the day. According to latest research from Mintel on the breakfast food market [1] in the US, the majority (69%) of respondents who eat any breakfast foods during the week consider Low Cholesterol or Heart Healthy claims important when selecting food they typically eat for breakfast. Additionally, around the same number (65%) think Low-Fat and High-Fiber are significant health-related attributes when selecting breakfast foods.

The majority (57%) of respondents who eat any breakfast foods during the week would be willing to spend more on better quality prepackaged breakfast foods, shows Mintel's consumer research. Furthermore, 41% would like to see more organic prepackaged breakfast products.

Overall, the breakfast foods category has experienced solid growth during the recession, with a 20% increase in dollar sales from 2007-11, going from $10 billion in 2007 to $12 billion in 2011. Furthermore the market is forecast to continue to grow by nearly 26% from 2012-17 to reach a predicted $15.7 billion.

Carla Dobre-Chastain, food analyst at Mintel, said:

"Eating at home to save money and the convenience of many products in the breakfast category likely aided in its impressive sales growth. While price will continue to play an important role when it comes to breakfast foods, Mintel's research shows that consumers are willing to pay more for higher-quality breakfast products. Therefore, manufacturers and retailers need to strike a balance between price and quality in order to stay at the top of the market."

What's more, despite 45% of respondents enjoying pancakes for breakfast, 40% frozen waffles and 33% packaged sausages, it is in this traditional breakfast food category where consumer demand for healthy claims is higher. Indeed, 52% of respondents to Mintel's consumer research would like to see more healthy variants of waffles on the shelves, 48% more healthy variants of pancake mix and 37% healthier sausages.

While the majority (87%) of respondents eat breakfast at home during a typical week, significantly more (30%) consumers eat breakfast at a restaurant during the weekend, compared to at home (11%). Moreover, 53% of respondents believe that breakfast foods served at restaurants taste better compared to what is available in a grocery store. Additionally, close to half (48%) of consumers indicate they would like to see more restaurant-style options in their grocery store's aisles.

"While a frugal mindset is keeping many people from regularly eating out, aggressive breakfast offerings at restaurants have been attracting many customers; therefore, restaurants continue to remain a threat to breakfast food manufacturers and retailers," Carla concludes.

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[1] http://store.mintel.com/breakfast-foods-us-september-2012