Ice Cream Sales Still Hot According to Mintel

Contributed by MINTEL
Friday, 11 July 2008
Last Updated Thursday, 01 January 2009

Long-time favorite dessert continues to excite shoppers

Americans really do scream for real ice cream. According to new consumer research from Mintel, nine in ten people (89%) enjoyed a cool, creamy scoop in the past year. In comparison, only three in five (59%) ate novelties such as ice cream sandwiches or bars. Less than two in five ate sherbet or frozen yogurt (37% and 34%, respectively).

â€œIce cream remains one of America's favorite treats,â€• states David Morris, senior analyst at Mintel. â€œSlow churn and su
premium innovations have brought exciting new variety to the taste and texture people know and love.â€•

Ice creamâ€™s familiarity is what drives sales. In 2007, ice cream accounted for nearly 60% of total sales from ice cream, frozen novelties, sherbet and frozen yogurt combined. Frozen novelties made up over a third of sales (36%), while sherbet and frozen yogurt accounted for just 5%.

Behind those figures, however, it seems people may be cooling towards old-fashioned ice cream. Though ice cream sales dominated the market in 2007, they were also 3.9% behind sales levels from 2002. The culprit? Frozen novelties, sales of which grew 7.2% from 2002 to 2007.

â€œConvenience and healthy eating trends drive more people to frozen novelties to satisfy cravings,â€• comments Morris. â€œThese products are portable and portion-controlled. Plus, rapid new product development is giving consumers many new frozen novelty dessert choices."

Morris believes that frozen novelties may be the key to continued success. With todayâ€™s health-conscious consumer looking for a balance between nutrition and indulgence, â€œoptions such as light, portion-controlled ice cream bars or lower calorie frozen yogurt are sure to resonate."

Mintel forecasts the market for ice cream, frozen novelties, sherbet and frozen yogurt through all retail channels to grow 15% from 2008 to 2012.