

# GET TO KNOW YOUR WATERMELON CUSTOMER

## WATERMELON PURCHASE BEHAVIOR STUDY OF U.S. CONSUMERS

Knowledge is power. And knowing who your watermelon purchasers are, what form they buy, and what could motivate them to buy more, gives you the power to ramp up your watermelon sales.

In 2002, The National Watermelon Promotion Board worked with Booth Research Services to survey over 2800 U.S. consumers via telephone. Interviews were conducted with the primary grocery shopper in the household. Watermelon purchasers participated in an in-depth survey, while non-purchasers completed a shorter survey.

We've learned that there is room for improvement and growth in just about every step of the supply chain, from seed companies to growers, to shippers and brokers to the retailers. So dig in and take control of your watermelon sales. The first step is getting to know your watermelon customer.



### Regional Results

We've used the eight IRI regions to profile the unique survey results from different parts of the country. The following is a breakdown of the regions and which states they include:

#### California Region

California

Hawaii

#### Great Lakes Region

Illinois

Indiana

Michigan

Ohio

Wisconsin

#### Mid-South Region

Kentucky

Maryland

North Carolina

Tennessee

Virginia

West Virginia

#### Northeast Region

Connecticut

Delaware

Maine

Massachusetts

New Hampshire

New Jersey

New York

Pennsylvania

Rhode Island

Vermont

#### Plains Region

Iowa

Kansas

Minnesota

Missouri

Nebraska

North Dakota

South Dakota

#### South Central Region

Arkansas

Louisiana

Oklahoma

Texas

#### Southeast Region

Alabama

Florida

Georgia

Mississippi

South Carolina

#### West Region

Alaska

Arizona

Colorado

Idaho

Montana

Nevada

New Mexico

Oregon

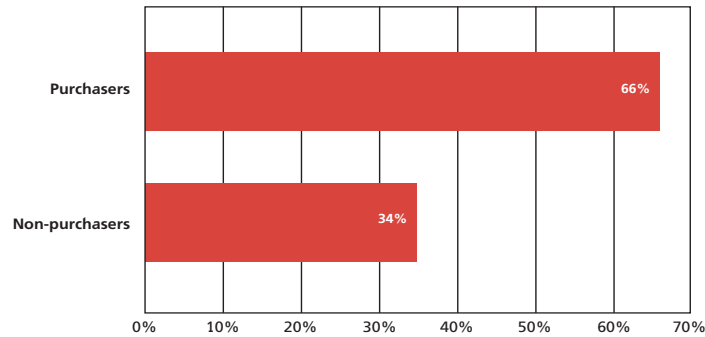
Utah

Washington

Wyoming



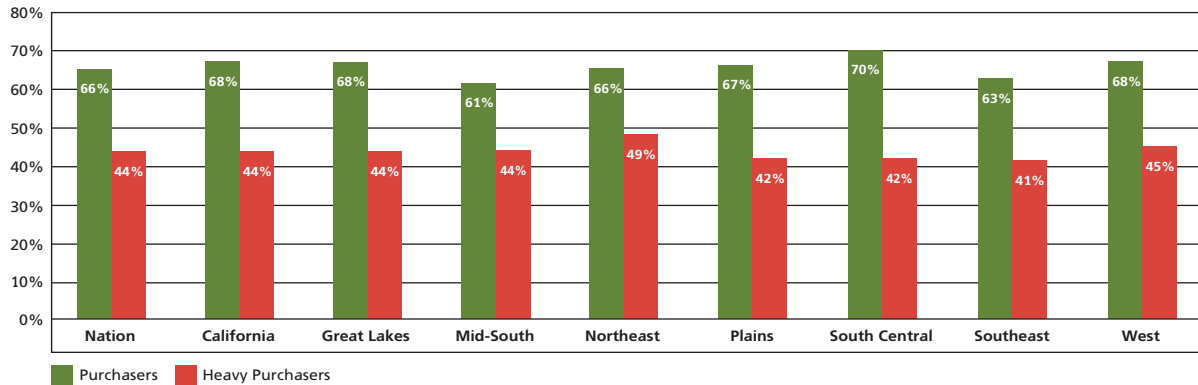
## HAS YOUR HOUSEHOLD PURCHASED WATERMELON IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS?



Roughly two-thirds of U.S. households have purchased watermelon in the past year. Taste, family and fun are important reasons why people buy watermelon. 94% bought because watermelon tastes good, 71% bought because their family likes it and 51% bought because watermelon is fun to eat.

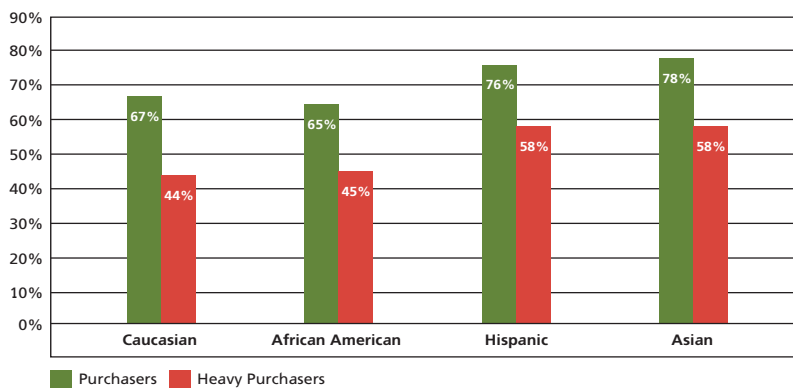
Meanwhile health and value are also noted as reasons for buying watermelon with 66% of watermelon purchasers saying they bought because it's a healthy snack, and 50% saying they bought watermelon because it's a good value.

## PURCHASE LEVEL BY REGION\*



Purchase levels are fairly consistent throughout the U.S. The South Central region has the highest level of watermelon purchasers, while the Northeast region has the highest level of heavy watermelon purchasers. The Mid-South region has the lowest level of purchasers, while the Southeast region has the lowest level of heavy purchasers.

## PURCHASE LEVEL BY ETHNICITY\*

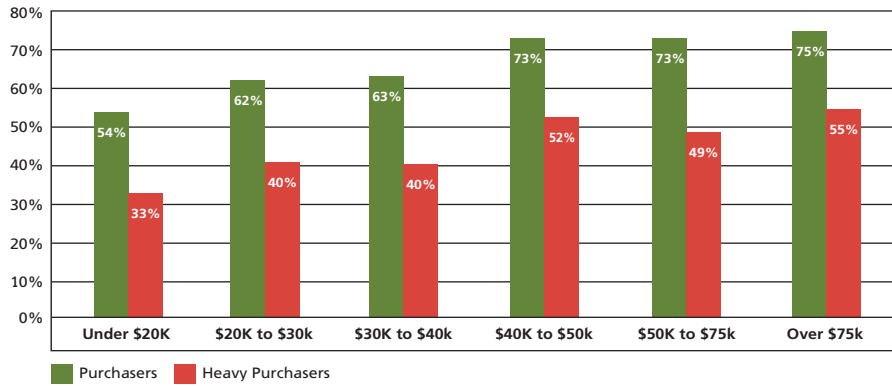


Asian and Hispanic ethnic groups tend to have the highest levels of both purchasers and heavy purchasers. Meanwhile, Caucasians and African Americans tend to have lower levels of purchasers and heavy purchasers.

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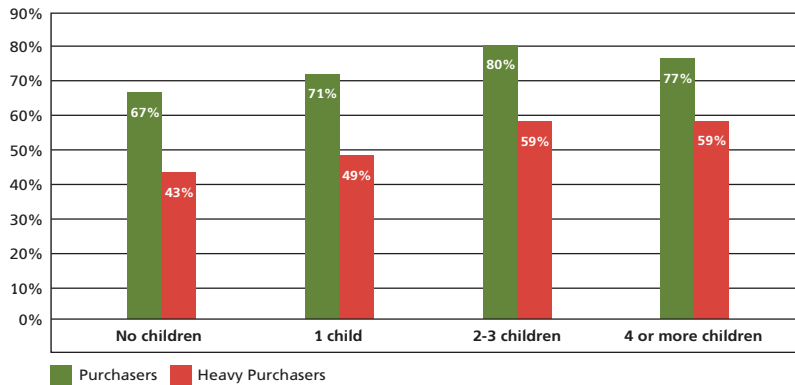
\* A heavy purchaser bought watermelon 2-3 times per month or more in any season, in any form.  
A purchaser is anyone who bought watermelon in the previous 12 months.

## PURCHASE LEVEL BY INCOME\*



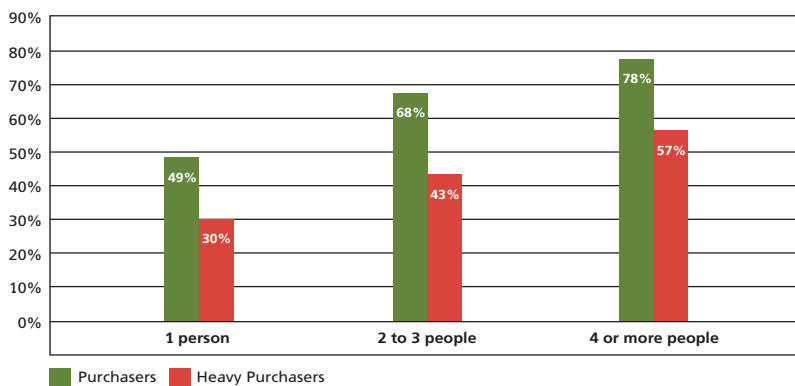
The percentage of watermelon purchasers tends to rise or fall with income level, peaking at a 75% purchase level for the \$75K+ per year income bracket and bottoming out at 54% for the under \$20k per year group. The same holds true for heavy purchasers, where those with lower incomes were least likely to be a heavy purchaser and those with the highest incomes were most likely to be a heavy purchaser.

## PURCHASE LEVEL BY NUMBER OF CHILDREN LIVING AT HOME\*



The presence of children in the household clearly has an impact on the decision to buy watermelon. Families with two or more children are more likely to be purchasers or heavy purchasers of watermelon. Those with no children had the lowest percentage of purchasers amongst their ranks.

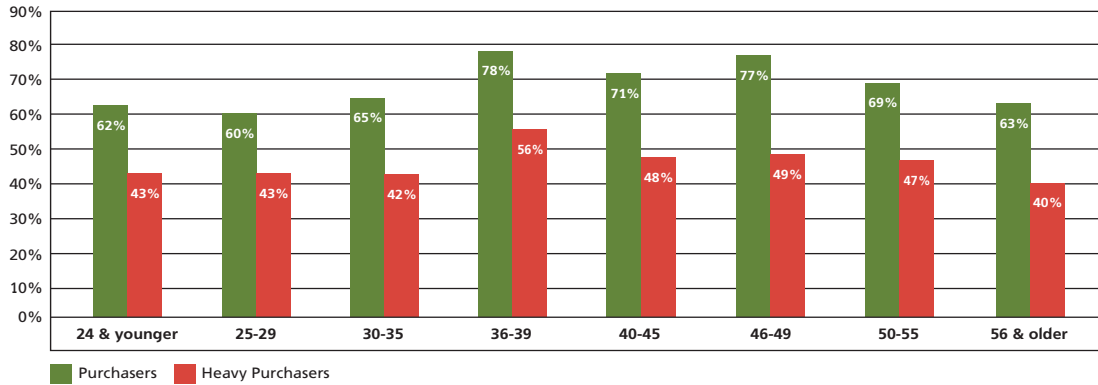
## PURCHASE LEVEL BY NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN HOUSEHOLD\*



The more people that live in the household, the more likely it is that watermelon will be in the grocery cart. Households with 4 or more people have the strongest tendency to be heavy watermelon purchasers, while single person households are the least likely to purchase watermelon.

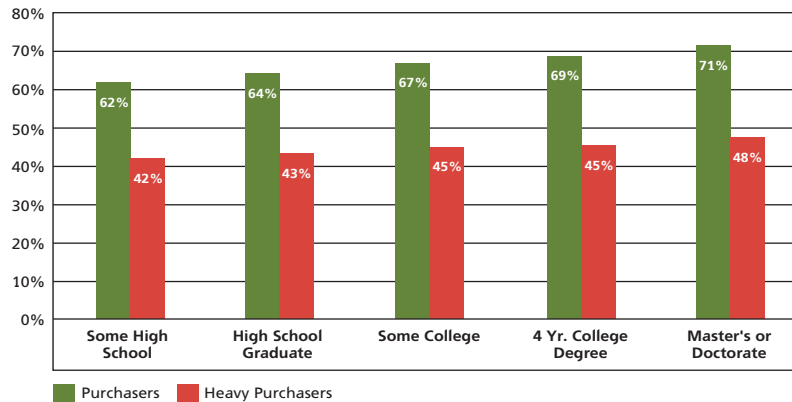
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## PURCHASE LEVEL BY AGE\*



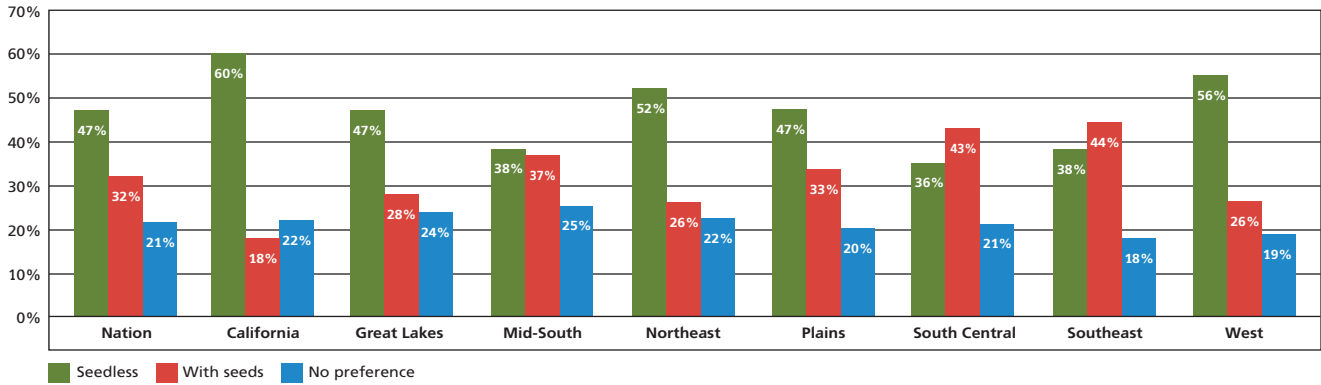
Those between 36 and 49 years old are the most likely to be heavy purchasers of watermelon. This is consistent with the impact of children in the home as this peak age for watermelon purchases is also a core child-raising period in most families.

## PURCHASE LEVEL BY EDUCATION LEVEL\*



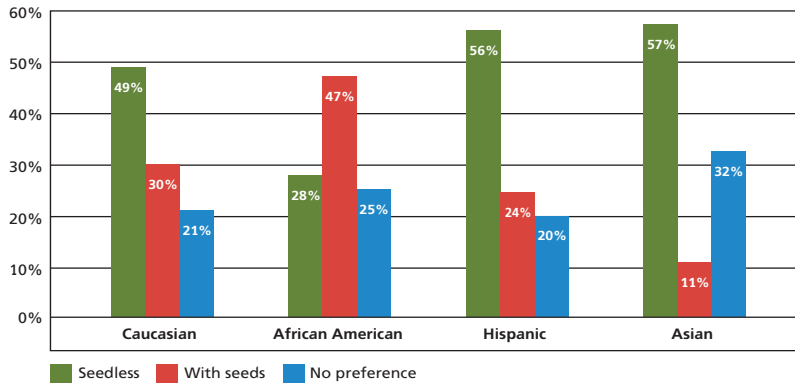
As consumers become more educated, they are also more likely to become heavy purchasers of watermelon. Those with the lowest levels of education are the least likely to be heavy watermelon purchasers. This trend is consistent with our findings on income levels which show that those with the highest incomes would be most likely to be heavy watermelon purchasers. It stands to reason that those with more education would also have higher income levels and that both factors would have an impact on the frequency of watermelon purchase.

## PREFERENCE FOR SEEDLESS OR SEEDED WATERMELON BY REGION



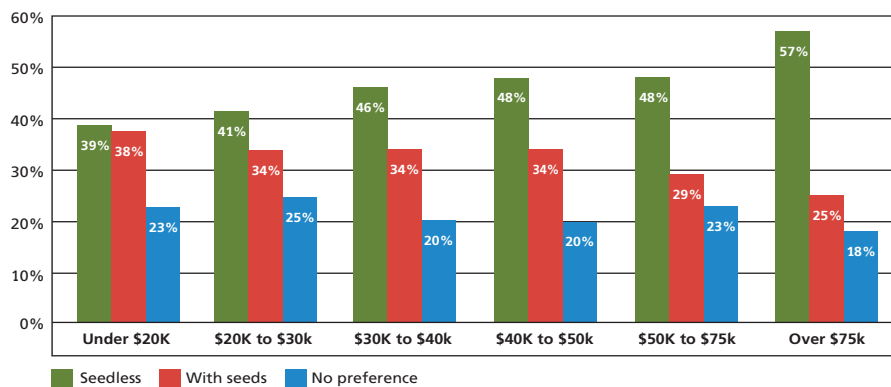
Preference for seeded or seedless watermelon varies across the nation and by demographics. Those from California show the strongest preference for seedless, while the Southeast and South Central regions show a slight preference for seeded watermelon.

## PREFERENCE FOR SEEDLESS OR SEEDED WATERMELON BY ETHNICITY



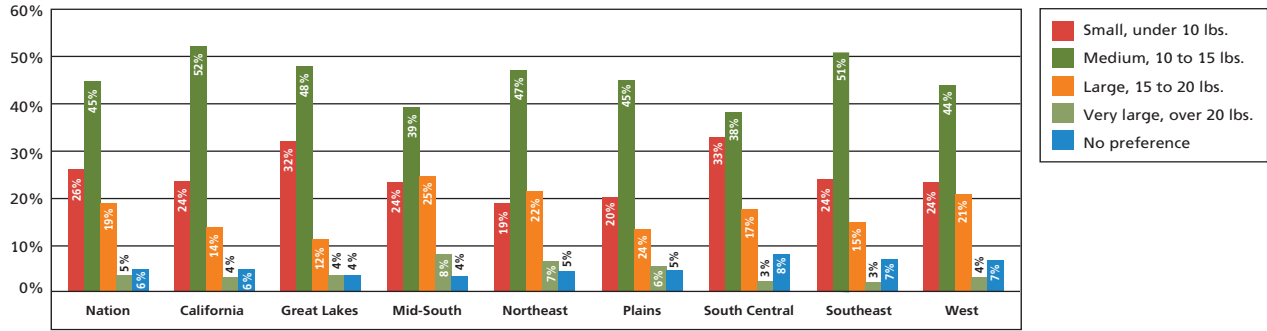
Among ethnic groups, Asians and Hispanics have a strong preference for seedless. Meanwhile, African Americans are the only group to show a preference for the more traditional seeded watermelon.

## PREFERENCE FOR SEEDLESS OR SEEDED WATERMELON BY INCOME LEVEL



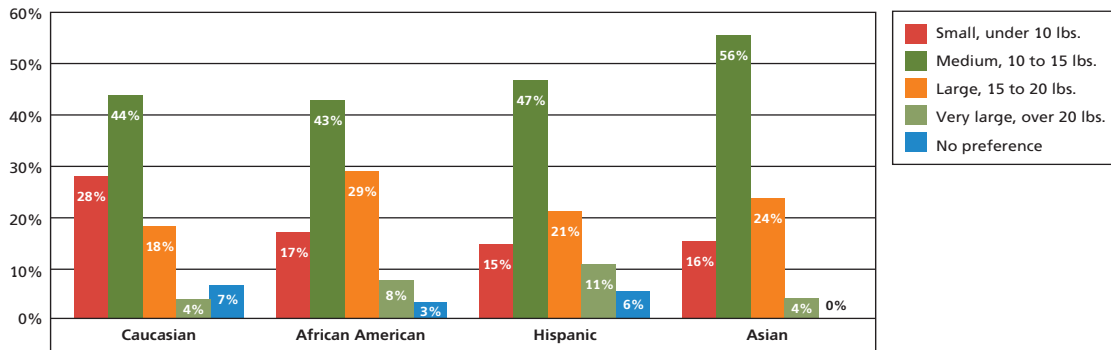
Across all income levels, there was at least a slight preference for seedless watermelon over seeded. This preference grows and becomes more pronounced at the highest income levels, with 57% of those earning over \$75k preferring seedless watermelon.

## PREFERENCE FOR WATERMELON SIZE BY REGION



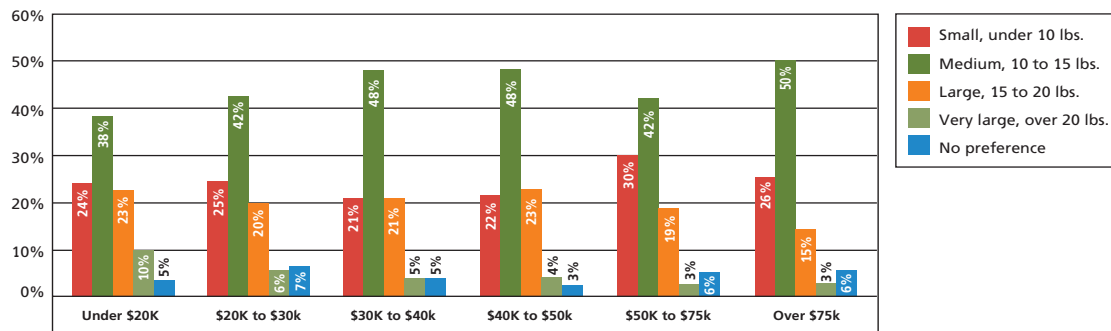
Across the nation, a medium watermelon is preferred more than any other size offered. This preference is strongest in California and the Southeast. Small watermelon made a good showing in the Great Lakes and South Central regions. Preference for large watermelon is above the national average in the Mid-South, Northeast, Plains, and West regions.

## PREFERENCE FOR WATERMELON SIZE BY ETHNICITY



Among ethnic groups, preference for size of watermelon didn't vary greatly. A medium watermelon was preferred by all groups, with Asians showing the strongest desire for a medium watermelon, Caucasians displaying an above average preference for small watermelon and African-Americans having the strongest preference for large watermelons.

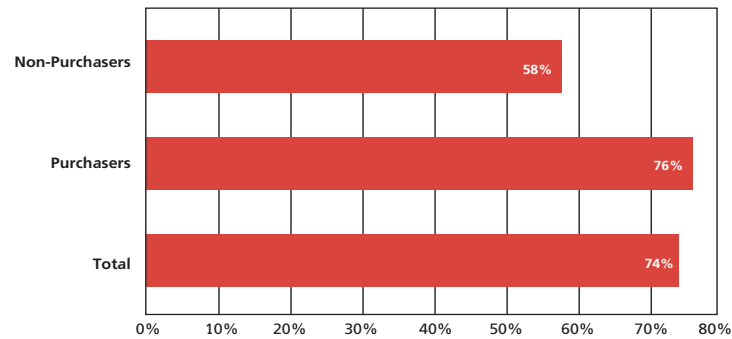
## PREFERENCE FOR WATERMELON SIZE BY INCOME LEVEL



Trends for watermelon size preference based on income levels did not bear out any significant findings. For each income bracket, the preferences hovered fairly close to the national averages and any movement from those averages did not appear to correlate to changes in income.

## HEALTH AWARENESS AS A MOTIVATOR TO PURCHASE

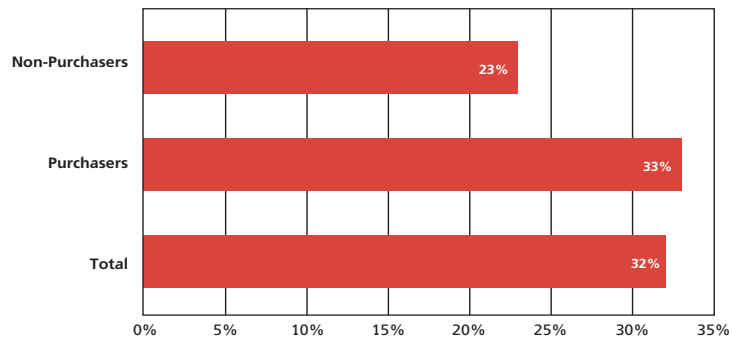
% OF CONSUMERS WHO WOULD BE INFLUENCED TO BUY MORE WATERMELON IN THE FUTURE IF THEY KNEW IT WAS HEALTHY AND GOOD FOR THEM



Consumers tell us that communicating health messages works. 76% of watermelon purchasers say they would be more likely to purchase watermelon in the future after learning about its health benefits. Even more exciting is that over half (58%) of the non-purchasers would be motivated by this knowledge.

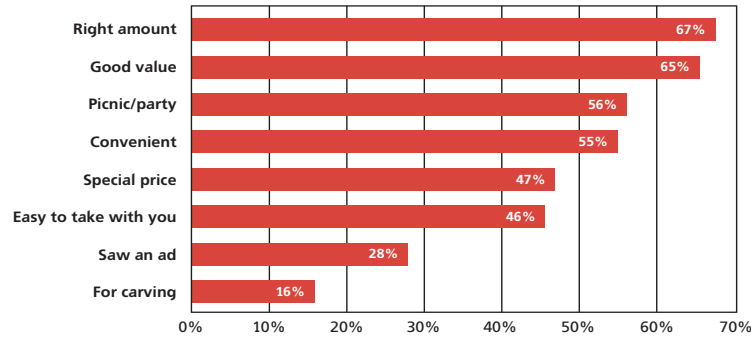
## RECIPE/USAGE IDEAS AS A MOTIVATOR TO PURCHASE

% OF CONSUMERS WHO WOULD BE INFLUENCED TO BUY MORE WATERMELON IN THE FUTURE IF NEW RECIPE AND USAGE IDEAS WERE MADE AVAILABLE TO THEM

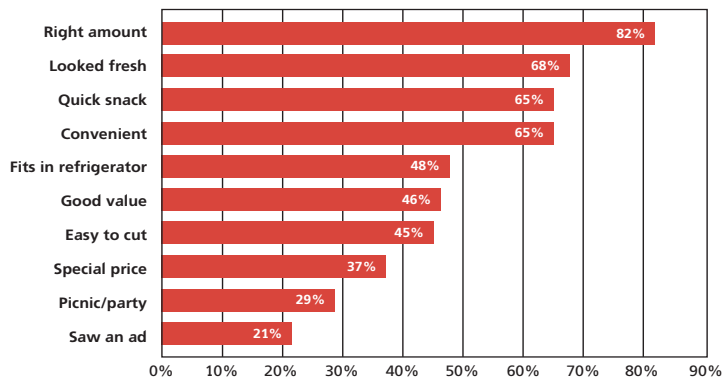


Watermelon offers so many ways to serve up a smile! And consumers are hungry for new ideas about how to prepare and use watermelon in their everyday menus. 33% of watermelon purchasers and 23% of non-purchasers would be motivated to buy more watermelon if they received new recipe and usage ideas. Send them to our web site at [www.watermelon.org](http://www.watermelon.org) for hundreds of great ways to use watermelon.

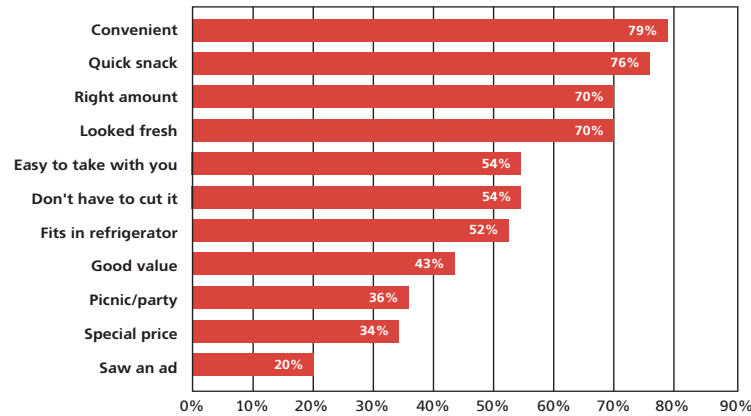
## REASONS FOR PURCHASING WHOLE WATERMELON



## REASONS FOR PURCHASING WATERMELON SECTIONS OR SLICES



## REASONS FOR PURCHASING WATERMELON CUBES



For all three forms of watermelon, whole, sections or cubes, consumers consistently give some of the same answers when asked why they chose to purchase that form. “It’s a good value”, “It’s the right amount”, and “It’s convenient” show up in the top eight reasons for all three forms. In fact, “It’s the right amount” is either the number one or number three answer across the board.

It’s important to note that many of these consumers had purchased more than one form throughout the season. This illustrates that consumers decide what’s convenient, what’s the right amount and what’s a good value based on their current needs.



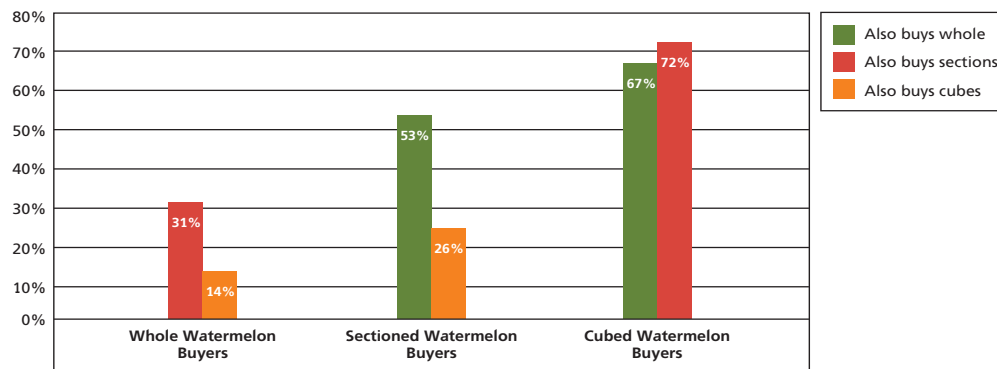
## Whole watermelon buyers are flexible.

- 22% of the summertime whole watermelon buyers, also bought cut watermelon (sections or cubes) sometime during the summer.
- 17% of the people who bought whole watermelon at least twice per month in the summer, also bought cut watermelon (sections or cubes) sometime during the summer.

## Cut watermelon buyers are even more flexible!

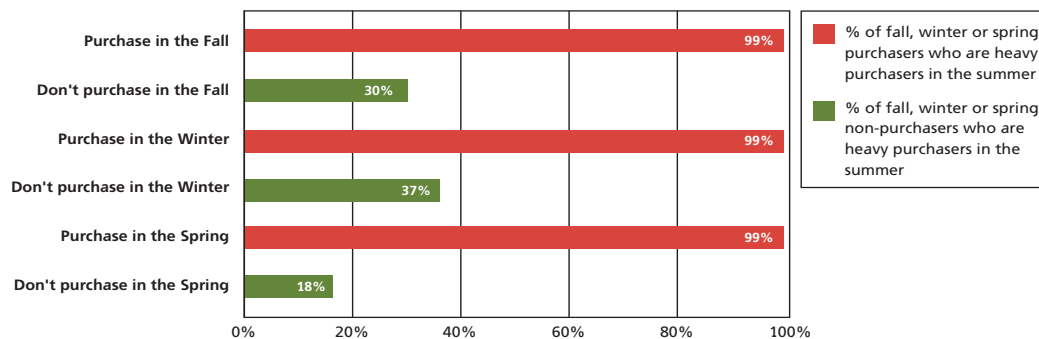
- 46% of the summertime cut watermelon buyers (sections or cubes) also bought whole watermelon sometime during the summer.
- 47% of the people who bought cut watermelon (sections or cubes) at least twice per month in the summer, also bought whole watermelon sometime during the summer.
- 39% of consumers who bought cut watermelon (sections or cubes) at least twice per month in the summer, also bought whole watermelon at least once per month in the summer.

### FLEXIBILITY OF BUYERS BY FORM % OF BUYERS OF EACH FORM THAT HAVE PURCHASED OTHER FORMS



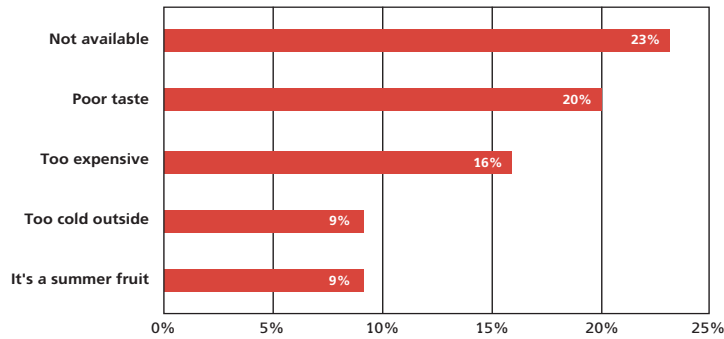
Buyers of cubed watermelon are far more likely to purchase other forms of watermelon than are whole or sectioned watermelon buyers.

### LIKELIHOOD OF BEING A HEAVY SUMMER PURCHASER BASED ON PURCHASE HABITS DURING OTHER SEASONS

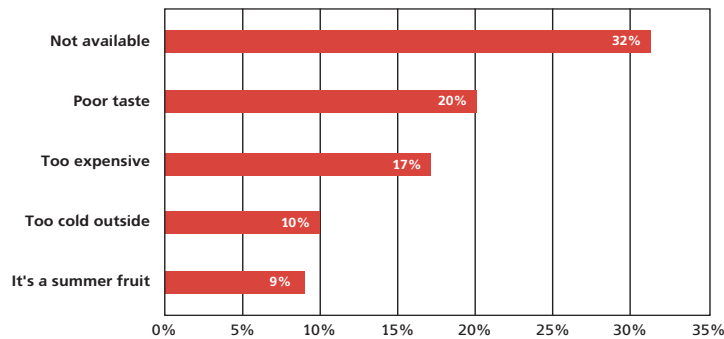


Those who purchase watermelon, in any form, once or more during the fall, winter or spring seasons have a 99% chance of being a heavy summer purchaser (buying 2 times per month or more during the summer). Those who do not purchase during the fall, winter or spring, are far less likely to become heavy purchasers in the summer.

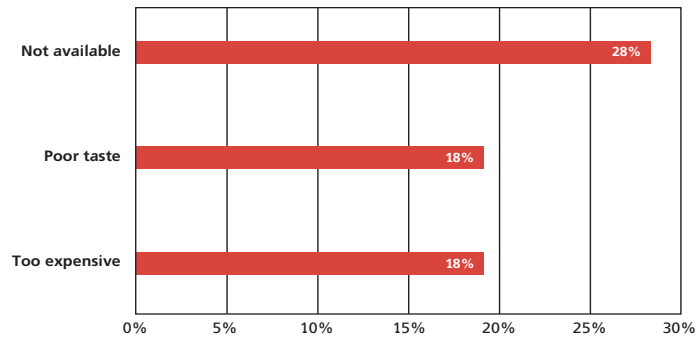
## REASONS FOR NOT PURCHASING WATERMELON IN THE FALL



## REASONS FOR NOT PURCHASING WATERMELON IN THE WINTER



## REASONS FOR NOT PURCHASING WATERMELON IN THE SPRING



During the fall, winter and spring, the number one reason consumers don't buy watermelon is because it's not available. Now, this may just be their perception. Most retailers across the country are offering watermelon in some form all year long. So, why aren't consumers more aware?

Through education and promotion, we can teach consumers that good quality watermelon is available all year long. And with an emphasis on watermelon's health benefits, we can give them a reason to buy it year-round. What can you do to make it easier for consumers to keep watermelon on their weekly grocery list throughout the year?

The number three reason why consumers don't buy watermelon during the fall, winter and spring seasons is because it's too expensive. Sometimes communicating watermelon's value, relative to other produce items, can help consumers look past the higher ring of a winter watermelon. We suggest using the headline "Fewer cents per smile."