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2019 Research Study Finds Watermelon Among Fastest Growing Fruits on Foodservice Menus
Featured on 13% of menus nationwide

WINTER SPRINGS, FL – May 16, 2019 – Watermelon on menus has grown by 54% in the past four years, according to a recent MenuTrends Research study commissioned by the National Watermelon Promotion Board (NWPB) and conducted by Datassential. The Board commissions menu trend research every other year in order to understand the opportunity watermelon has in foodservice and benchmark watermelon’s presence year-over year.

Now in its fifth year, the Board’s Foodservice program, spearheaded by Director Megan McKenna, is seeing a record number of operators interested in assistance with ideation, usage ideas, education and promotion support.

In addition to current menu usage, the study reveals emerging trends that originate in foodservice, as well as opportunities for growth. McKenna can point to this data – such as popular flavor pairings or unique usage – when helping regional and national chains, independents, “groceraunts,” sporting venues, hospitality and education sectors with new and innovative offerings.

“Using the Datassential research to highlight watermelon’s unique flavor profile really resonates with operators,” said McKenna. “Now that watermelon is squarely in ‘Proliferation’ in the usage-menu adoption cycle, more Chefs than ever before are open to watermelon’s year-round versatility.”

According to the study, between 2017 and 2018 watermelon limited time offers (LTOs) launched in all months of the year but one. Historically watermelon LTOs have taken place in the summer months illustrating its move to a year-round product.

Additional findings of note include the following:

- Watermelon is found more often on casual and fine dining menus but has seen growth across all segments.
- National chains are featuring and expanding the use of watermelon more often and at a faster pace than regional chains and independents.
- Watermelon ranks 22nd among most popular fruits and 3rd among greatest four-year growth.
- One in ten restaurants serving alcoholic beverages feature a drink with watermelon, more than doubling in the last ten years.

For more information or to request the full report, please contact Megan McKenna at mmckenna@watermelon.org.

About National Watermelon Promotion Board

The National Watermelon Promotion Board (NWPB), based in Winter Springs, Florida, was established in 1989 as an agricultural promotion group to promote watermelon in the United States and in various markets abroad. Funded through a self-mandated industry assessment paid by more than 1,500 watermelon producers, handlers and importers, NWPB mission is to increase consumer demand for watermelon through promotion, research and education programs.

Watermelon packs a nutritious punch, with each serving providing an excellent source of Vitamin C, a good source of Vitamin B6, and a delicious way to stay hydrated, with only 80 calories. Watermelon consumption per capita in the United States was an estimated 15.8 pounds in 2018. Watermelon consumption in the United States was approximately 5.2 billion pounds in 2018. The United States exported an additional 325.4 million pounds of watermelon. For additional information, visit www.watermelon.org.

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