



Watermelon UPDATE

NATIONAL WATERMELON PROMOTION BOARD

Bubble Party Sponsorship Reaches Foodservice Media

During the National Restaurant Show



The International Foodservice Editorial Council (IFEC) hosted the annual Bubble Party as a part of the National Restaurant Association Show in Chicago. This event is a great place to connect with editors between the annual conference in the fall of each year. This year the NWPB sponsored the event and served Watermelon Rind Bruschetta and the Watermelon Breeze. The Watermelon Breeze is a refreshing libation including fresh watermelon juice, cucumber, fresh mint, and vodka. The Bubble Party continues to grow every year with more than 30 publications represented.

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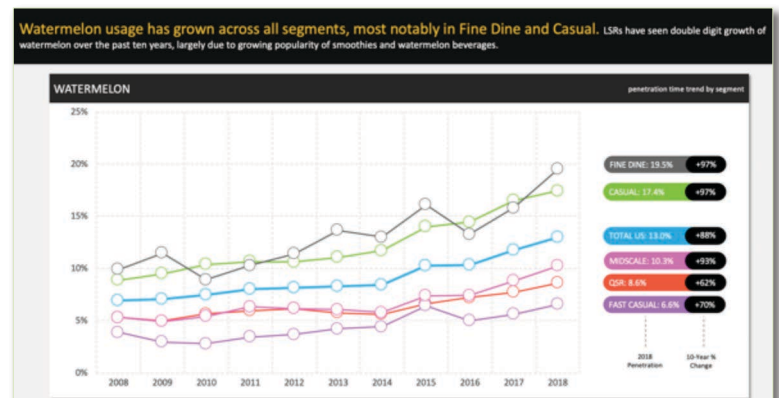
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Watermelon MenuTrends Research Highlights Growth and Expanding Opportunities for Watermelon on Foodservice Menus

The National Watermelon Promotion Board (NWPB) conducts menu trend research to understand the opportunity watermelon has in foodservice and to benchmark watermelon's presence year-over-year. In 2019, the NWPB invested in Datassential MenuTrends Research. This database includes menus from more than 4,800 restaurants including independents, regional chains, and national chains in all restaurant segments. Please note, this research includes all mentions of watermelon, not just fresh usage.

Research Highlights

- Watermelon is featured on 13% of menus and has grown by 54% in the past four years, making it one of the fastest growing fruits.
- Watermelon ranks 22nd among most popular fruits and 3rd among greatest four-year growth.
- In the Menu Adoption Cycle (Inception, Adoption, Proliferation and Ubiquity), Watermelon falls in Proliferation moving from Adoption in the 2017 report.
- Watermelon is found more often on casual and fine dining menus but has seen growth across all segments.
- Watermelon is most often found on all day menus and has seen the largest growth on lunch menus.
- Watermelon is expanding across the menu with entrees experiencing the most rapid growth.
- All regions of the U.S. are experiencing increased use of watermelon, but coastal regions feature watermelon most often.
- National chains are featuring and expanding the use of watermelon more often and at a faster pace than regional chains and independents.
- Historically watermelon limited time offers (LTOs) have taken place in the summer months but between 2017 and 2018, LTOs launched in all months of the year but one (November) illustrating its move to a year-round product.
- Haiku, Datassential's accurate prediction of future menu growth, ranks watermelon in the 98th percentile for future growth – reaching 16% penetration by 2022.
- Watermelon is on 4% of appetizer, entrée, and side dish menus and growing - triple digit growth in casual restaurants but featured on fine dining menus most often.
- Featured on 3.4% of non-alcoholic beverage menus, watermelon has experienced triple digit growth over the past ten years.
- 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 email Megan McKenna, mmckenna@watermelon.org.

New Registered Dietitian Toolkits Launch

Working with Pollock Communications, NWPB recently redeveloped and redesigned the Registered Dietitian toolkit. Known as the *Wide World of Watermelon*, the toolkit focuses on six practice areas for RDs: private practice, sports, culinary, school, retail and foodservice. Primarily a digital resource that will live on watermelon.org, the toolkit will be printed in limited supply to distribute to top-tier dietitians at targeted events.

The toolkit soft-launched at the Child Nutrition Conference in April and was featured as part of the Board's participation at Today's Dietitian Retail Symposium at the end of May. More than 12,000 dietitians were sent the kit in a series of e-blasts distributed throughout the month of May with an average open rate of 35%.



Food & Culinary Professionals
 Welcome RDNs to the Wide World of Watermelon

We know that as an RDN, you're a busy professional with endless areas of practice. Watermelon wants to work for you. The Watermelon Board is excited to put the [Wide World of Watermelon](#) (aka the new [www](#)) at your fingertips. The [WWW](#) makes it easier to find all the health benefits, versatility and wonder of watermelon in an exclusive [RDN toolkit](#) that is:

- Tailored for specific practice areas
- Useful, practical and creative
- Comprehensive from patch to plate
- Downloadable, sharable, printable

Find what works for you:

- Media & Communications
- Sports Dietetics
- Retail & Supermarket
- School Nutrition
- Private Practice
- Food & Culinary

RDNs and the Watermelon Board – The Rhythm and the Rhyme

WATERMELON BOARD
 You are receiving this email as part of a Watermelon Board agreement to support FCP programs and services.

Follow Us on Social Media!

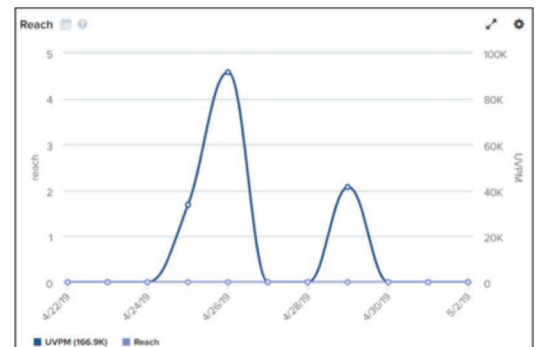
Trade Media Highlights NWPB 2019 Programming

On April 25, a press release was sent to trade publications informing them about National Watermelon Promotion Board's exciting 2019 programs and our underlying research activities. We are very pleased to see industry interest and pick-up of the release.

Many editors were eager to share the news, even customizing article copy and including NWPB assets, such as photography or embedding the NWPB TV Commercial into the coverage.

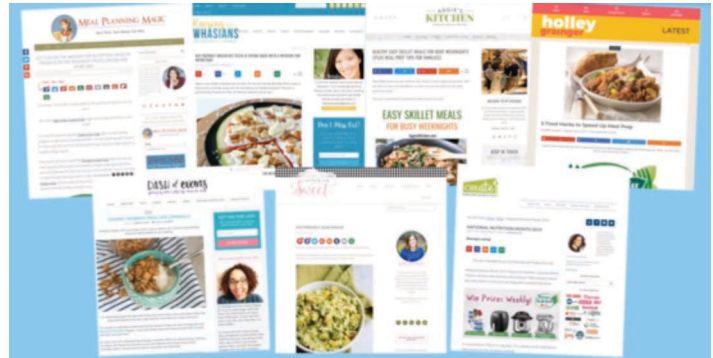
With six trade media outlets publishing the release, the release had a potential reach of more than 166,900 viewers.

- The Packer - Watermelon board doubles down on nutrition research
- Growing Produce - Watermelon Board Ramps up Research to Help Grow Sales
- Perishable News - Watermelon Board Sharpens its Focus With Comprehensive Research
- The Produce News - NWPB sharpens focus with comprehensive research
- Fresh Plaza - Back to Basics: Watermelon Board sharpens its focus with comprehensive research
- AndNowUKnow - The National Watermelon Promotion Board to Invest in Comprehensive Research to Up Watermelon Sales



Mission for Nutrition Campaign a Success!

NWPB was one of nine partners involved in the Produce for Kids' Mission for Nutrition campaign that aligned with National Nutrition Month in March. The online and in-store program focuses on the importance of a healthy family diet and the value of meal planning and prepping while aiming to increase the consumption of fresh produce.



On themissionfornutrition.com, consumers could download a free meal planning eBook featuring a five-day registered dietitian-approved family meal plan, shopping list and meal planning tips. The website received over 30,000 pageviews. The website also hosted weekly giveaways to help families ease into meal planning. Participating brands, retail dietitians and Produce for Kids influencers also interacted with consumers during the #MissionForNutrition Twitter party held on March 14th and resulted in 7 million media impressions. Eight social influencers also participated in the campaign.



A resource kit filled with health-focused items for display was delivered to more than 400 retail dietitians at 50 retailers across the U.S. and Canada. Dietitians were encouraged to create a display with these items or use them at an in-store event.



NWPB provided promotional items in the kits distributed to retail dietitians. In addition, NWPB was included in branded recipes, meal plans, as well as being featured in targeted e-newsletters, Produce for Kids social media channels, influencer outreach and mentions in the "Healthy Bites" portion of The Healthy Family Project by Produce for Kids podcast.

Overall, results were 126.5MM impressions and the branded mini-mag was distributed to 22,000 families across 52 retailers nationwide.

NWPB Sponsor First Annual Global Plant-Forward Culinary Summit

Winning with Watermelon 

PLANT-FORWARD CONCEPTS

Watermelon delivers on health, sustainability and flavor for consumers turning to plant forward or plant based dining. In partnership with the Culinary Institute of America, the Watermelon Board has explored the versatility of the whole watermelon in recipes such as:

 BURMESE WATERMELON SALAD	 WATERMELON & AHI TUNA POKE BOWL
 WATERMELON CARPACCIO WITH FRIED PROSCIUTTO & BASIL OIL	 WATERMELON BINDI MASSAMAN CURRY

Watermelon is also surprising consumers on menus:

- Soy Meatballs with Watermelon Seed Sauce, August 1 Five, San Francisco, CA
- Watermelon Poke Bowl, Avocado Grill, West Palm Beach, FL
- Watermelon Tomato Tofu Salad, Season's Grill Westin, Mission Hills, CA
- Watermelon Ceviche, Glam Vegan, Miami, FL
- Sashimi Pizza, Planta Queen, Toronto, ON, Canada

To learn more, visit watermelon.org.

Plant-forward or plant-based eating is a mega-trend in foodservice that is not going anywhere anytime soon. Most in the produce industry are familiar with blending initiatives, mixing proteins with beans and mushrooms. Additionally, the rise of meat substitutes such as the Impossible Burger and Beyond Meat being used in quick service and fast food such as Burger King, drives home consumers interest. Watermelon also has a place in the plant-forward conversation as we saw last summer with the Watermelon Ham. Although not approachable to most operators there are some uses for watermelon that are, such as halving the tuna with watermelon in a poke bowl or replacing all the tuna with watermelon for a vegetarian option. Watermelon also compliments grains beautifully, adding color, texture and flavor to plant-based protein in salads.

To make sure watermelon is at the front and center of this trend the NWPB sponsored the Culinary Institute of America's (CIA) Global Plant-Forward Culinary Summit. This special edition event inspired by Worlds of Flavor and Menus of Change initiatives mission is to bring together leaders in culinary to explore opportunities around the mega-trend of plant-forward menus. As a part of our sponsorship the CIA created a menu item for the Sponsor Exchange Lunch. The Compressed Watermelon, Pickled Rind, Thai Basil, Peanut Salad with Ginger Vinaigrette was a huge success. The recipe showcased how to use the whole product as well as the depth compressed watermelon can add to a dish. The Board also had plant-forward information available and a watermelon shrub was served during the conference as well. This event was heavily noncommercial with many colleges and universities and healthcare present but good contacts were made with commercial operators such as Dave & Busters.



Today's Dietitian Spring Symposium



From May 20-22, NWPB staff participated in the Today's Dietitian Spring Symposium in Scottsdale, Arizona. This continuing education and networking event for dietitians and nutrition professionals featured a diverse program of sessions and workshops offering continuing education credits, plus a variety of opportunities to interact and network with fellow RDs in attendance. The Watermelon Board sampled Watermelon Juice, Rind Pickles and Feta Skewers in support of the Back to Basics campaign messaging, offering the simple, happy and healthy watermelon flavors that work well with their programs and practices. In partnership with other commodity boards, former NWPB president, Brent Harrison, participated on a grower panel sharing information on how watermelon is grown, sustainability, and nutrition. This event was also the launching place for the new Dietitian Toolkit.

Along with the event participation and sampling, Today's Dietitian outreach program includes dedicated e-blasts to its premier list of nutritionists and dietitians and banner ads on their website throughout the year.

West Coast Produce Expo



The NWPB exhibited at the 5th annual West Coast Produce Expo held in Palm Desert, CA May 9th - 10th. NWPB's Juliemar Rosado attended the event along with NWPB retail account manager Katie Manetti. The two-day event included educational sessions that discussed consumer trends and research, a retail panel, networking receptions, keynote speaker Bill Walton, as well as the full expo. This event is hosted by The Packer and Farm Journal Media, Inc. and connects the produce industry with the West Coast buying community. The event attracted over 1,300 attendees that included more than 350 retail, wholesale and foodservice professionals. The event was a great opportunity to discuss the board's latest foodservice, retail and communications programs.

Retail Display Contest Announcement

The National Watermelon Promotion Board (NWPB), invites all retail chains, independent retailers and commissaries with watermelons of U.S. origin to submit entries to their 11th annual Watermelon Retail Display Contest. Originally established to annually honor National Watermelon Month in July, the contest has expanded in recent years to celebrate National Watermelon Day on August 3rd and will run throughout the month. The contest is used by NWPB to encourage retailers to create displays that showcase the many benefits of watermelon including health, value and versatility.

More than \$10,000 in cash and prizes will be awarded to top entrants, including “Classic” and “Star Spangled” watermelon categories. Winners in both categories will receive \$1,500, \$800 for 2nd place winners, \$600 for 3rd place winners and \$400 for both 4th place winners, respectively. Eight honorable mentions in each category will win \$200 each. An additional incentive will be awarded to the first 25 entries.

Displays should promote watermelon of any kind, including whole, fresh-cut, mini watermelon, yellow and red or any mix thereof. Judges will consider a display’s overall appearance, creativity and shop-ability. Use of point-of-sale materials and/or selection and storage tips are encouraged to help elevate any retail display.

“According to our most recent consumer research *study, nutrition and selection information are the top two topics that drive purchase decisions,” commented Juliemar Rosado, Director of Retail Operations and International Marketing for the NWPB. “Combined with an eye-catching display, it’s a winning combination.”

To enter a display, retailers can submit their entry and photos via email or postal mail entry beginning July 8, 2019. All entries must be submitted/postmarked by midnight EST on September 9, 2019. For more information, including official contest rules and last year’s winning displays, email NWPB at retail@watermelon.org.

Enter to Win the National Watermelon
Retail Display Contest!

Build an
EYE-CATCHING DISPLAY
in JULY or AUGUST

- Promote watermelon of any kind
- Include extras such as watermelon recipes and health benefits
- Share selection and storage tips

More than \$10,000 in cash & prizes will be awarded to retailers for a
Star Spangled OR Classic retail display!

Winners in both categories will receive the following prizes:
1st Place - \$1,500 2nd Place - \$800
3rd Place - \$600 4th Place - \$400
8 Honorable Mentions - \$200 each
First 25 entrants receive a \$15 Amazon gift card*

Email –
retail@watermelon.org
for more details.
Contest open July 8 - September 9

**WATER
MELON
BOARD**

*This survey was conducted online within the United States by Aimpoint on behalf of the NWPB in August of 2018 among 1,100 adults ages 18 or older that were the primary shoppers in the household

Watermelon Wednesdays

The Orange County Library System (OCLS) here in Orlando, Florida reached out to the NWPB offices asking if we would like to participate in the Library's "Cuisine Corner" workshops, by hosting watermelon recipe and carving demonstrations. The free program for attendees is built to show people how fun and easy cooking can be. The first Watermelon Wednesday demo was before Cinco de Mayo, so the Watermelon Cactus was carved and then Watermelon Fire and Ice Salsa was created and served -- all from the one watermelon! The presentations are able to weave in health, value and of course versatility to these small, local audiences. One on one engagement with consumers ensures that people are thinking about watermelon beyond the summer slice.



Watermelon on the Menu

For a limited time throughout the summer, Romano's Macaroni Grill is featuring a Watermelon Arugula Salad on their "Tastes of Sorrento" menu. The salad includes fresh watermelon, arugula and kale and topped with ancient grains, fresh sweet corn, celery, chives, toasted walnuts and a blood orange vinaigrette. The national chain launched the salad, along with other limited time offerings, in April.



**Where
will
NWPB
be next?**

Canada Concepts Meeting – Toronto, Canada – June 4

FoodOvation for Noncommercial Foodservice Operators – Sun Valley, ID – June 9 – 11

United Fresh – Chicago, IL – June 10 – 12

Center for the Advancement of Foodservice Educators – Charlotte, NC – June 20 – 22