



Watermelon Update

NATIONAL WATERMELON PROMOTION BOARD



Inspiring with Watermelon Flavor Pairings at FoodOvation

Events are back! The Board participated in FoodOvation (in-person!) in Bluffton, SC, the end of March. FoodOvation is a quality over quantity event, with 80 foodservice professionals in attendance. The Board met with 15 operators representing more than 5,000 restaurants across the United States. During the 45-minute meetings, operators were walked through Watermelon Flavor Pairings, as well as four recipes and two beverage samples. From juice to rind pickles and bacon jam to chimichurri, the inspiration was broad but catered to the individual operators, as needed. Examples of operators include Walk On's Sports Bistreaux, Tropical Smoothie and Fat Brands.

Inside this issue:

2

FoodOvation Continued and Southern Exposure

3

Influencer Marketing Program: Calibration Audit and Ibotta Shopping App – March Results

4

FLMH End of Year Results

FoodOvation Continued

Follow-up is ongoing but **discussions include menu tests and promotions this summer, as well as on-site ideation sessions for future menu items extending into 2023.** Although a long term investment, foodservice helps to move product and reach consumers.




Watermelon Ideation

WATERMELON

- Juice, fresh _____
- Moroccan Rind Pickle _____
- Fresh _____

PAIRINGS

- Bacon Jam _____
- Basil Pesto _____
- Black Pepper BellaVitano _____
- Bulgogi _____
- Chimichurri Seasoning _____
- Dill Mustard _____
- Furikake _____
- Ginger Apple Granola _____
- Honey _____
- Watermelon Guajillo Chili Salsa _____

Watermelon Recipes

- Watermelon Sumac Salad _____
- Watermelon Rind Coleslaw _____
- Grilled Watermelon Mexican Caesar Salad _____
- Watermelon Whiskey BBQ Slider with Dill Rind Pickle _____
- Smoky Watermelon Mezcal Margarita _____

For more flavor inspiration visit watermelon.org.



Southern Exposure

NWPB once again participated in the Southeast Produce Council’s annual “Southern Exposure” expo April 7th and 8th in Lake Buena Vista, FL. This year, along with retail and foodservice workshops, NWPB’s Juliemar Rosado and Megan McKenna provided retail and foodservice attendees with information on **how to keep watermelon top of mind on menus and in grocery stores.** Every year, the expo sets records for overall attendance as well as for participation by the retail and foodservice sectors of the fresh produce industry.



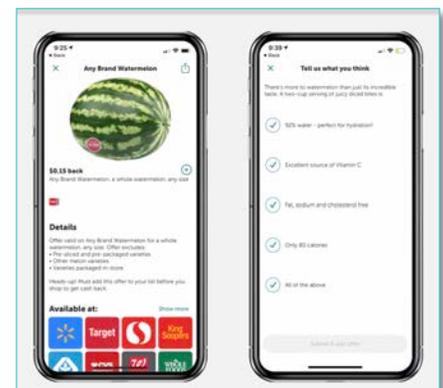
Influencer Marketing Program: Calibration Audit

Watermelon has partnered with bloggers, dietitians, recipe creators, athletes and chefs across a variety of social media efforts for more than 10 years. It was time to audit and evaluate our partner program to strategically integrate NWPB's digital marketing goals with watermelon partners to help raise awareness and demand across their earned audiences. Who have been our most valuable partners? Who are they reaching and what does success look like? Working with Kitchen Play, the research is halfway done. The relationships we have built with our influencers, our *Watermelon Friends*, are unique and special, more than just a promotional arm to a specific activity. While we await the digital landscape assessment and strategic roadmap, we are incorporating some initial changes, such as our tracking and reporting procedures. We are also empowering partners with more watermelon messaging and education so that they can serve as advocates beyond their sponsored posts. This way, when their followers have watermelon questions, they are seen as the watermelon experts and can engage in their community and answer questions accordingly.



Ibotta Shopping App – March Results

The Ibotta redemption program completed over 3 weeks from March 4 to March 21 resulted in approximately 55,000 redemptions, which equates to actual product sold nationally that was incentivized by the offers. The offer was split between new redeemers and past redeemers. Of the 55,000 redemptions, most were new redeemers. The offer resulted in a reach of **over 21 million impressions**.



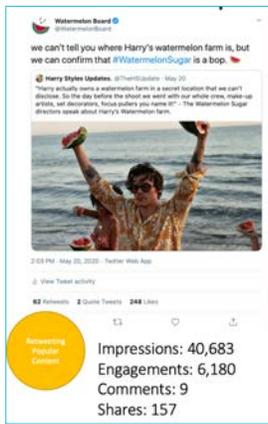
FLMH End of Year Results

Communications works with the agency FLMHarvest on several programs throughout the year, mainly focusing on social media management and media monitoring. The end of year report is in! From April 2020 through March 2021, watermelon made a huge splash! (*Pun intended!)

- Facebook: Nearly 14 million impressions, **357,333 post engagements**, and 102,474 post link clicks
- Instagram: Over 11 million impressions, 52,258 post engagements and 1,661 profile clicks. **These impressions were helped by the recipe contest over the summer.**
- Pinterest: **The main driver to the Watermelon.org website** with 7.3 million impressions, 306,369 engagements, and 34,511 outbound clicks
- Twitter: 619,856 impressions, **25,681 tweet engagements fueled by specific Twitter-humor and trendy content** that grows organic posts that out-perform paid boosts
- Media Monitoring: Total tracked impressions of watermelon inclusion in stories in traditional and online newspapers, magazines and websites: **6,519,784,963**

Social Media Goals

ONLINE ASSETS	Apr 2019 – Mar 2020	Apr 2020 – Mar 2021	Increase Goal	Actual Increase
Facebook Fans	197,043	243,096	+5%	+23%
Twitter Followers	8,448	8,955	+5%	+6%
Instagram Followers	7,910	12,997	+5%	+64%
Pinterest Followers	5,785	6,475	+5%	+12%
Social Engagements	365,296	435,272	+5%	+19%
Website Sessions	378,630	402,187	+5%	+6%



we can't tell you where Harry's watermelon farm is, but we can confirm that #WatermelonSugar is a bop.

Harry Shakes Shakes. @TheWatermelonBoard

Harry actually owns a watermelon farm in a secret location that we can't disclose. So the day before the shoot we went with our whole crew, made up a plot, set decorations, hired actors you name it. The Watermelon Sugar directors speak about Harry's Watermelon farm.

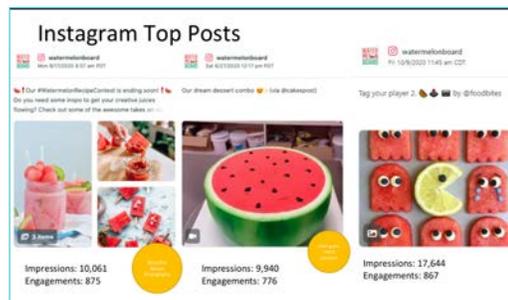
2:03 PM · May 20, 2020 · Twitter Web App

92 Retweets · 6 Quote Tweets · 348 Likes

Recovering Popular Content

Impressions: 40,683
Engagements: 6,180
Comments: 9
Shares: 157

Instagram Top Posts



1. Impressions: 10,061 Engagements: 875

2. Impressions: 9,940 Engagements: 776

3. Impressions: 17,644 Engagements: 867

Facebook Top Posts



1. Impressions: 43,465 Engagements: 3,822 Comments: 160 Shares: 875

2. Impressions: 30,567 Engagements: 2,900 Comments: 129

3. Impressions: 18,324 Likes: 2,594 Comments: 361 Shares: 144

You Can Only Choose One... Seeded Seedless



Watermelon Recipe Challenge

Drink Your Watermelon | Breakfast Recipes | Lunch Recipes | Dinner Recipes

NEW Yield Tool: Working with Watermelon

The Watermelon Board strives to educate and inspire foodservice to use more watermelon on menus. Although operator research told us watermelon is viewed as easy to prep, there was an information gap on how to plan for different size watermelon throughout the year. The Board worked with a home economist to help understand the yield from key watermelon sizes in cubes, wedges, juice, etc. as well as yield information on the rind. This new resource will live on the [website](#) and be used with culinary schools, operators at on-site presentations and shared with the foodservice media. The more confident operators feel using watermelon and getting the most yield, the more watermelon will be used on menus, year-round.

Working with Watermelon

Take the guesswork out of switching between seedless watermelon sizes

Watermelon is grouped into many sizes, but there are six key sizes that vary throughout the year. This tool illustrates the yield for the top six sizes and how it is often handled for use on menus. Although Mother Nature offers many variables each year, this tool can be a guide highlighting average yield.




	Seedless			Mini		
Size	36	45	60	7	8	9
Total weight in pounds	20.44	15.87	11.25	6.37	5.37	5.06
Total weight in ounces	327	254	180	102	86	81
Flesh weight in pounds	13.62	10.68	6.75	3.93	3.68	3.12
Flesh weight in ounces	218	171	108	63	59	50
Number of wedges	124	98	62	50	47	40
Cups in cups	39	32	20	12	11	9
Puree in cups	26	22	13	8	7	6
Puree in fluid ounces	210	175	104	61	58	49
Juice in cups	22	17	11	6	6	5
Juice in fluid ounces	180	135	84	47	45	42



Watermelon yield is generally between 60 and 70% depending on size, variety and other variables.

The wedges are approximately 1/4-inch thick and 3x3 1/2-inches, with no rind and peel.

Each cup has approximately 7 1/2-inch cubes.

To puree, place cut watermelon in a blender and blend until smooth without any chunks.

To juice, strain the puree once through a fine mesh strainer. Consider upcycling the pulp in muffins or bread and sauces.




Rind

1 pound of rind = roughly 11 1/2 ounces of peeled rind

1 cup of thick julienne strips of rind (3"x1/4") = 4 1/2 ounces

1 cup of 1/2" cubes of rind = 4 1/2 ounces

1 cup of 1/4-3/8" cubes of rind = 4 ounces



Viva Fresh Expo



NWPB was on-hand as exhibitors at Viva Fresh expo in Grapevine, Texas from March 26 – 27. This event is hosted by the Texas International Produce Association (TIPA) and highlights the “Gateway to the Americas,” showcasing produce grown in the southwestern U.S. and Mexico. The event hosted over **214 retail-foodservice buyers, 150 exhibitors and attracted more than 1,200 attendees**. National Watermelon Queen Paige Huntington and Promotions Coordinator Kerri Wiggins attended the event on behalf of the Board. The expo included educational seminars and the expo hall provided the ability to meet with high profile buyers, retailers and foodservice industry professionals that were in attendance throughout the weekend. The show was a success for exhibitors and attendees, as it was the first in-person produce show post-pandemic and will return to Grapevine in 2022.

Watermelon is Messy and Fun

The Board plans targeted media relations to promote the results of nutrition research studies, but due to the unknowns around studies and published work last year, the Board executed a

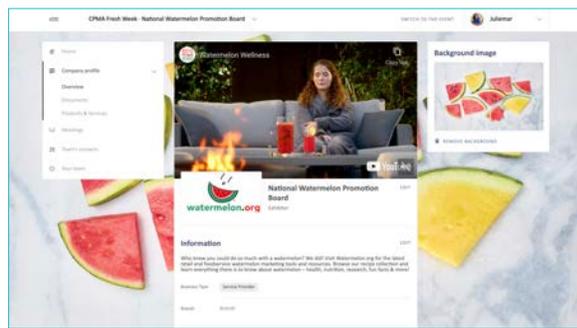
80 <small>PIECES OF COVERAGE</small>	5.4B <small>ONLINE READERSHIP</small>	8.49M <small>ESTIMATED COVERAGE VIEWS</small>
18 <small>SOCIAL SHARES</small>	4 <small>LINKS FROM COVERAGE</small>	72 <small>AVERAGE DOMAIN AUTHORITY</small>
67.8K <small>LOCAL BROADCAST VIEWERSHIP</small>	3.33K <small>LOCAL BROADCAST PUBLICITY VALUE</small>	61 <small>EXCELLENT COVERAGE (50+DA)</small>

NewsMaker Survey polling parents with the story angle on all the unexpected and silly ways kids make a mess. This story is relatable and engaging for parents, especially with kids spending more time at home than ever. How many parents are struggling to ensure their child is getting the proper nutrients in quarantine and not starting a dinner table fight with their siblings? Putting a spin on a purchase barrier, watermelon can be seen as a messy food, however, it is a fun food that children actually want to eat. The survey and subsequent release lead to **80 pieces of coverage with 5.4 billion in online readership**.



CPMA Fresh Week

NWPB's Juliemar Rosado and retail account manager Brad Brownsey attended and exhibited at the Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA)'s first virtual version of its Fresh Week trade show and conference on April 12 - 16. There were almost **2,900 virtual attendees from 42 countries** that participated in the many keynotes and educational seminars.



Individuals with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations and or alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, LEP, etc.) should contact: Juliemar Rosado at jrosado@watermelon.org within three days of event. The National Watermelon Promotion Board is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

HOW MUCH CLEAN-UP are PARENTS doing with their KIDS at HOME during the PANDEMIC?

The average parent has cleaned up **222** messes since the pandemic started. That's **6** a week.

69% said their kid can get so messy they don't even know what substance is on them.

2 in 3 admitted it's a struggle to get their kids to eat healthy instead of playing with their food.

63% are struggling to make sure their kids are getting enough water and nutrients at home.

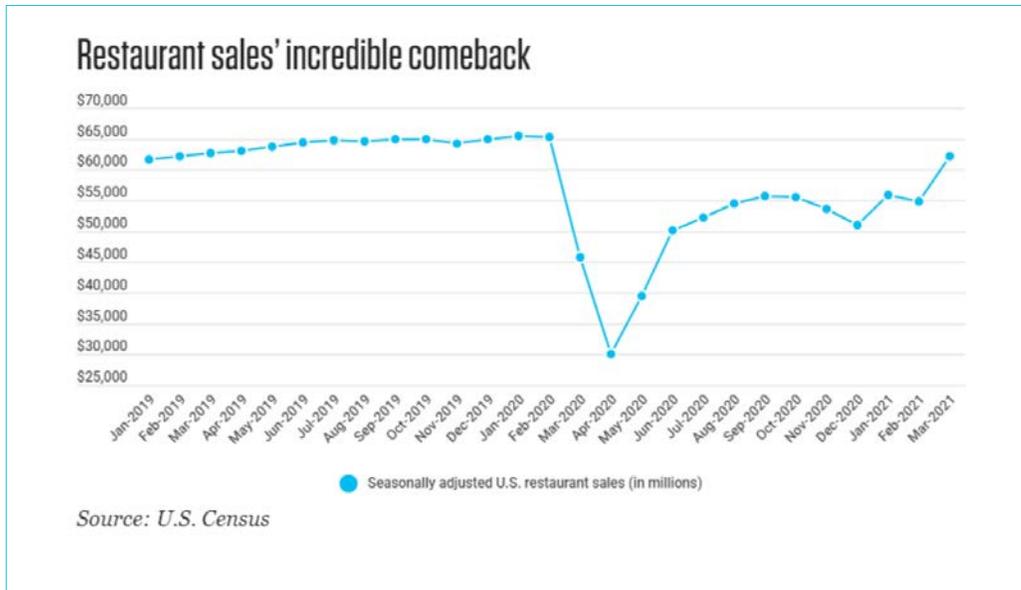
Some of children's favorite fruits are:

- Grapes
- Pineapples
- Bananas
- Watermelon

watermelon.org



Foodservice is Recovering – And We’re Ready!



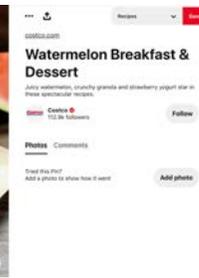
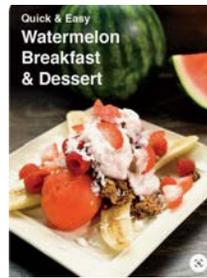
Although 2020 was a year like no other for the foodservice industry, 2021 is already looking like a very different reality. As this graph shows, foodservice sales in March 2021 are closing in on pre-COVID levels. Although we still see closures and bankruptcies, restaurant openings are taking over the news and the future is optimistic. The Board is working with foodservice operators to **make watermelon a part of those re-opening menus**. If you know of operators looking for help menuing watermelon, please direct them to Megan McKenna (mmckenna@watermelon.org), senior director of marketing and foodservice for the NWPB.



March Website Analytics Overview

- Besides the homepage, the most viewed page during this time period was the "Educators" page. This is due to the **advertising of the Educators page** through TheMailbox.com February and March distributions.
- Many pages such as the Facts & FAQs page, and the Where Does Seedless Watermelon Come From page had extremely high time on page, 4:41, and 5:05 respectively. This shows that users who visit these pages **are engaged with the content**, reading, browsing and interacting with the information that is there.
- Many metrics for the website such as sessions, users, and pages per sessions increased when compared to the previous time period. Specifically, **social traffic increased by over 47%**, showing that social advertising is working and continuing to drive traffic.
- The majority of users came from Google Organic traffic, or they directly typed in the URL. The 3rd highest source of users, however, came from referrals from Pinterest.
- The bulk of sessions came from users in California, Texas and Florida, in line with the growing states for Watermelon

Quick and Easy Videos – The Costco Way



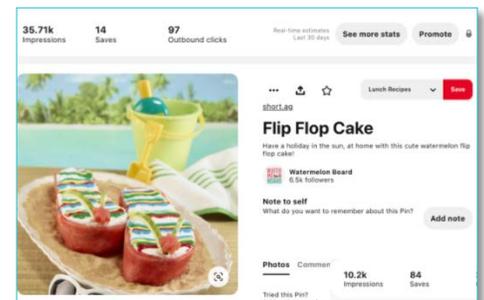
Watermelon Breakfast & Dessert
Juicy watermelon, crunchy granola and strawberry yogurt star in these spectacular recipes. [Watermelon Breakfast & Dessert Recipe](#)

NWPB had the opportunity to participate in another *Quick & Easy* video by retailer Costco Wholesale. The 90 second video – titled “Watermelon for Breakfast and Dessert” – educated Costco members and viewers on **how to cut and prepare two watermelon recipes using Costco products**. The video, which featured the watermelon breakfast parfait and the watermelon banana split, was posted to a variety of social media platforms including Costco.com and Costco’s Facebook and Pinterest channels. In total, the video reached **more than one million people and had over 16,000 post clicks and 4,351 likes, comments and shares**.



Social Media Overview: March

- **Pinterest drove 1,006 total sessions, higher than any other channel.** The flip flop cake recipe leading to a majority of March’s Pinterest clicks.
- **Instagram led users to view 3.77 pages per session, the highest of all social channels.** The average session duration was also the highest with 1:29 minutes.
- Influencer and user generated content were among the top posts for the month.
- **Facebook noted significant page growth increases** and in new sessions on the website but fell short in engagements and impressions. The budget did focus more on page growth than engagement, when the month prior it was opposite. Due to that shift in allocation, the engagement numbers are expected.
- On Facebook, the green detox smoothie video led to a great spike in engagement on March 17th.
- Twitter and Pinterest saw increases across the board. The pop culture content resonated tremendously well on the channel and made up a majority of the reach and engagements. More budget was allocated to Pinterest and we continued to see the audience engage.
- On YouTube, views and shares increased. **How to Use a Melon Baller and How to Cut Quick Watermelon Cubes** led to the highest number of views. Both outperformed the rest. Florida and California were the most engaged locations.



Help Buyers Find Watermelon!

Be a part of the more than 65 companies present - **opt in to the Supplier Database!** Each year the Board reaches retail and foodservice buyers through marketing programs and the new opt-in only Supplier Database is the resource for retail and foodservice buyers looking for watermelon. In addition to growers and shippers, the Supplier Database is an opportunity for transportation, seed, and bin/carton partners. Visit the Supplier Database at watermelon.org/supplierdatabase and submit the Database entry form, email supplierdatabase@watermelon.org or call 407- 657-0261 for more.



Watermelon on the Menu



On April 5, Cowboy Chicken, a Texas-based quick casual restaurant started serving refreshing watermelon tea and sweet, fresh-cut watermelon slices as part of their Spring menu. In past years the watermelon tea and slices were only available as part of the limited time offer through the end of June. New in 2021, both the tea and slices will be available until October 3 - **more than 3 months longer!**



NWPB Connections

Coffee with CAFE (Center for the Advancement of Foodservice Educators) - May 14th (virtual)

Today's Dietitian Spring Symposium - May 15th - 19th (virtual)

StarChefs Workshop: Chef Ford Fry with The National Watermelon Board - May 18th (virtual)

West Coast Produce Expo - May 18-19th Las Vegas, NV

International Foodservice Editorial Council Board Meeting - May 24th (virtual)

Facebook Premiere - Watermelon 101: Brush Up on the Basics - May 24th

International Foodservice Editorial Council Watermelon Lunch & Learn - May 26th

