



Watermelon Update

NATIONAL WATERMELON PROMOTION BOARD



Retail Display Contest

The National Watermelon Promotion Board (NWPB), invites all retail chains, independent retailers and commissaries to submit entries to their 13th annual Watermelon Retail Merchandising Contest. The 2021 contest continues its shift to a watermelon merchandising effort that includes in-store displays but also encourages mixed marketing tactics. The contest will start in July to honor National Watermelon Month and run throughout the month of August and is used by NWPB to encourage and identify retailers who are showcasing watermelon's benefits including health, value and versatility.

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More Retail Display Contest

“Total marketing efforts are more important as consumer habits change and the retail space changes with it,” said Juliemar Rosado, Director of Retail and International Marketing for the NWPB. “It is important to look at overall promotional efforts at retail during the customer’s path-to-purchase as well as inside the store, particularly in this new normal.”

Watermelon of any kind can be included in the promotion, including whole, fresh-cut, mini watermelon, yellow and red or any mix thereof. **Marketing efforts considered in judging will include category visibility, point-of-sale materials, good visual merchandising, messaging nutritional benefits, recipes and/or selection education and use of print, online and/or digital platforms.**

More than \$10,000 in cash and prizes will be awarded to top entrants, including \$5,000 for the grand prize winner. The second place winner will receive \$2,500, third place will receive \$1,000 and three honorable mentions will each receive \$500. An additional incentive of a \$15 gift card will be awarded to the first 25 entries.

To enter a promotion, retailers can submit their entry and photos, links, screenshots, etc. online, via email or postal mail beginning July 7, 2021. All entries must be submitted/postmarked by midnight EST on September 10, 2021. Visit: <http://watermelon.org/Retailers/Retail-Contest> for more information, including official contest rules and entry form, or email NWPB at retail@watermelon.org.



Board President Hosts Foodservice Editors for Virtual Field Tour



On May 26th the Board sponsored the International Foodservice Editorial Council's May Lunch and Learn to reach foodservice editors. The Board's president, Jordan Carter, took attendees on a virtual watermelon field tour to see how watermelon is being cultivated. Jordan walked through a field highlighting watermelon that had been cut, and explained the process of passing them hand to hand into refurbished school buses while the editors watched it happen. She also discussed the important part bees play in the process, some folklore around full moons, what happens at the packing shed and more. Then the group "Zoomed" to Miami where Tony Pererya, of Spirits in Motion, showed the group how to cool off with two delicious watermelon drinks. First, the cooling [Watermelon Blueberry Basil Lemonade](#) followed by the low ABV, [Spicy Watermelon Fizz](#). Editors received a package with all of the shelf-stable ingredients to make the beverages along with Tony and a shopping list for the additional items - including the watermelon! Jordan and Megan McKenna, from the Board staff, made the drinks in the field too and can attest that they were just what was needed in the summer heat. **Of the 22 editor targets, 20 were in attendance.**

This event replaced the annual Bubble Party sponsorship traditionally a part of the National Restaurant Show. Although nothing replaces in-person events, **this opportunity was a great reminder of watermelon's versatility and has already led to more watermelon placements in foodservice media.**



Watermelon Strategic Roadmap for Influencer Marketing Program: Research Results

NWPB’s research report from Kitchen PLAY evaluating the influencer and partner strategy of the Communications Program is complete. The goal of this research was to analyze the Watermelon-related content US consumers are seeking, seeing, and sharing online to create a data-driven influencer selection strategy and research-based campaign messaging specific to Watermelon. In addition, we have conducted an audit of current Watermelon marketing assets and strategies to provide a GO Plan (Gaps & Opportunities) for implementation across Watermelon’s comprehensive consumer marketing strategy.

There are an estimated **200,000 monthly searches** for “watermelon” in the US at this time of year. The majority of these are just of the word “watermelon,” but when consumers are using more specific searches, they are looking for the nutrition facts and benefits of watermelon first, and simple recipes second. How we reach consumers utilizing 3rd party experts, partners and influencers will depend on those people’s earned audience and engagements and how they receive watermelon content that influences them to go out and purchase more watermelon, more frequently.

One of the most interesting takeaways from the research illuminates the difference in consumer behavior online when it comes to watermelon: what they share versus what they search for.

People share the beautiful, inspirational and aspirational. People search for easy and simple facts and recipes. If you’re interested in learning more about the full research findings with regards to “watermelon” online and in social media, please email Stephanie Barlow at sbarlow@watermelon.org.

What are consumers searching?

Watermelon

There are an estimated 200,000 monthly searches for “watermelon” in the US during the summer. The majority of these are just of the word “watermelon.”



Trending Keywords

Top searches are mostly around nutrition/benefits.



- Watermelon...
- Nutrition
- Calories
- Benefits
- Vitamins
- Calories
- Fiber
- Vitamin C

Search Phrasing

What consumers are searching for varies during the year. In off-season months, there are more focused questions about watermelon.



- When is watermelon season?
- Can you freeze watermelon?
- How do I tell if a watermelon is ripe?
- How to choose a watermelon?
- Calories in watermelon?
- “Watermelon slicer knife”
- “Watermelon cover”

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Target Consumers



Break the Boredom

Parents and individuals who like to mix things up with each season. Looking for interesting new pairings or a way to reinvent meal- and snack-time.



Smart Snackers

Athletes and people looking for rehydrating snack and nutrition solutions.



The Entertainer

People who like to try new recipes for holidays and events. Will go to great lengths to try something new if it will bring a fun twist to the party.

Influencers have a higher reach than brands



Lifestyle Influencer

➔

15X potential reach over brand



376K



Sample Wellness Brand

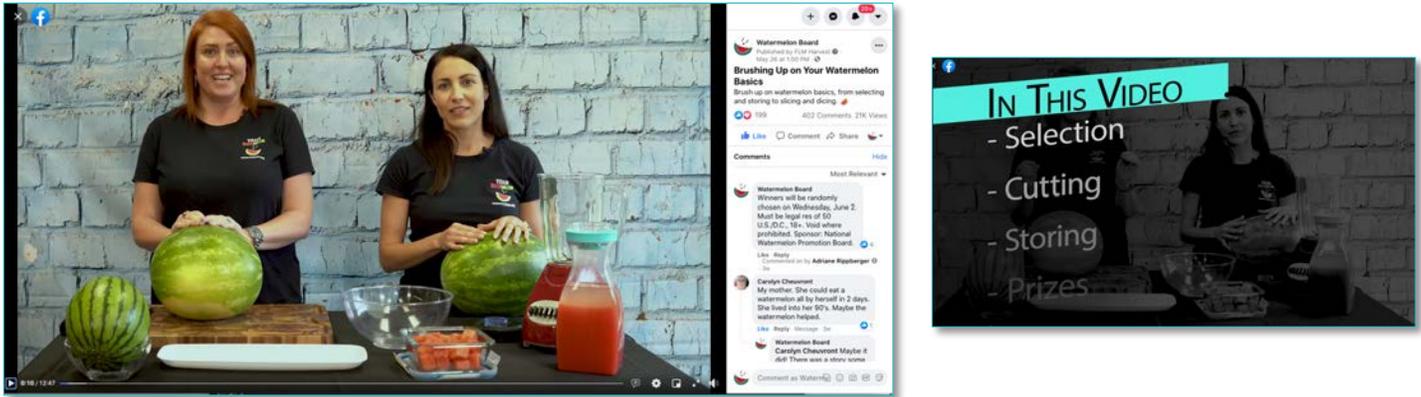
➔

25K



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Facebook Premiere and IGTV: Brushing Up on the Basics Results, Movie Night Watch Party



Just ahead of Memorial Day, Watermelon Board published our first Facebook Premiere video themed **Brushing Up on the Basics!** Facebook Premiere is different than Facebook Live in that the Premiere is pre-recorded and uploaded, but a premiere date and time is still set for a live event that takes place in the comments versus live on screen. It had been some time since NWPB created video content for this type of medium (which is also uploaded to Instagram as an IGTV), but the shoot went terrific and the video earned some impressive results!

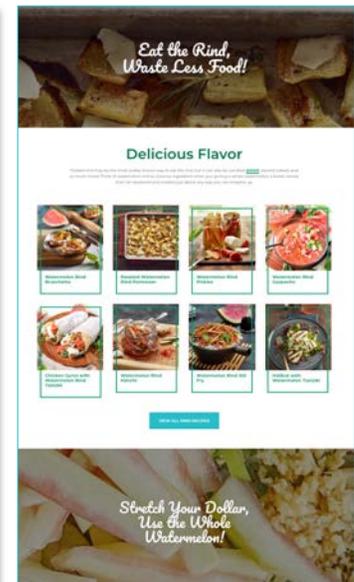
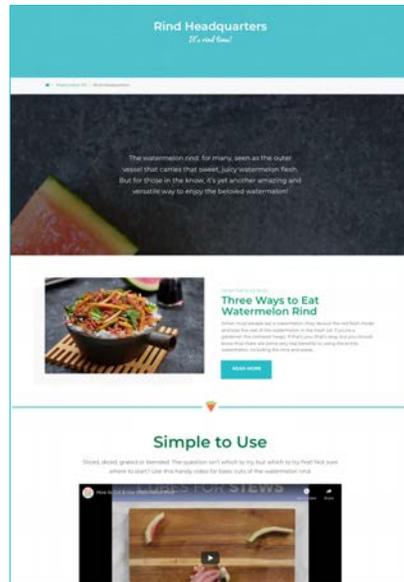
The video has reached over 41K people and received 2,000 engagements with 21K video views! This includes over 400 comments, 102 shares and 194 likes. This video was incentivized with prizes to randomly selected people who answered questions asked as part of the pre-recorded video. The video also gave audiences a chance to ask questions to the Watermelon Experts (Stephanie Barlow and Summer Walker) on screen providing real dialogue and real customer service, as questions were answered days after the video premiered.

Next up is a Facebook Premiere video in celebration of Disney and Pixar’s Luca, themed a Watermelon Movie Watch Party, demonstrating some of the Italian summer-inspired recipes and also promoting the Unforgettable Summer sweepstakes (in which the grand prize winner gets an Ultimate Outdoor Movie Night prize pack). Stay tuned to Watermelon Board’s Facebook page to interact and engage with these videos!

05/26/2021 1:00 PM	 Brush up on watermelon basics, from selecting and storing to slicing			41.5K		1.4K 776
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Rind Headquarters – New Hub Launched

A new webpage dedicated to all things RIND! At www.watermelon.org/rind consumers will now find a hub of watermelon rind information and inspiration that includes everything from videos to recipes, nutrition studies and more! This hub also highlights the Slice blog post titled **“Three Ways to Eat Watermelon Rind”** which was the #2 visited webpage next to the homepage for all of May 2021 with 2,632 visits and an average time on page of 2:07.

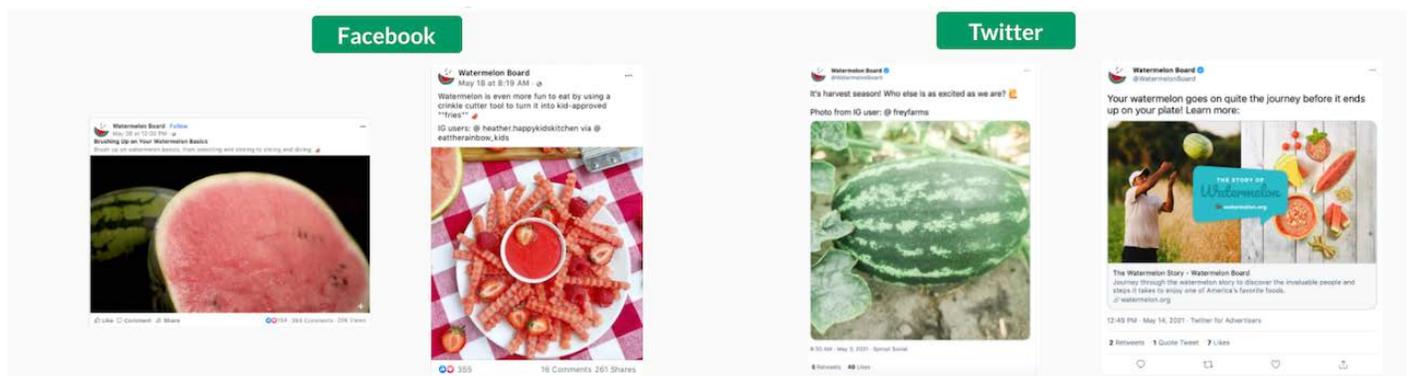


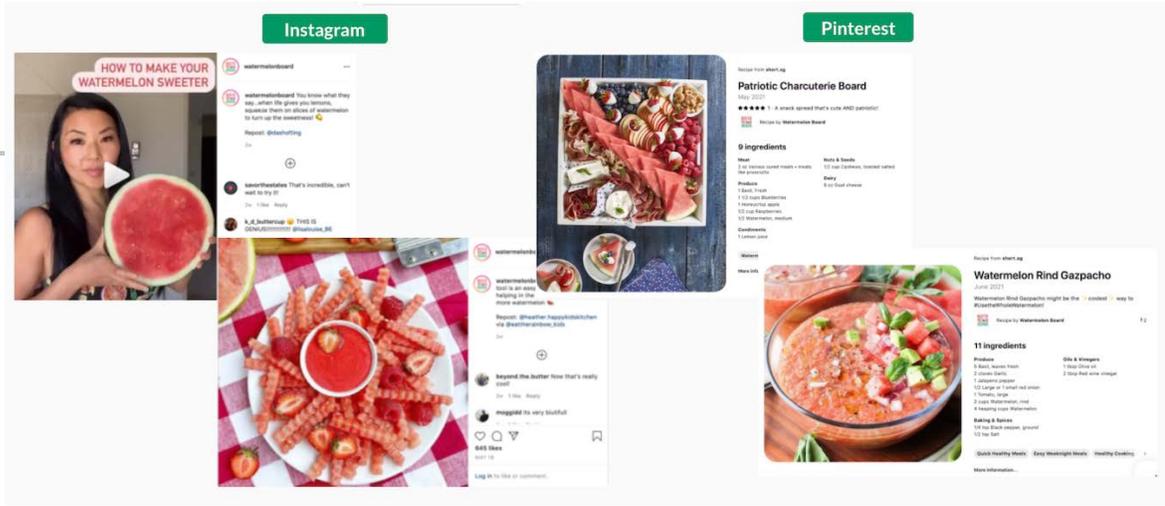
Foodservice Continues to Recover

The following was found in the July issue of *Food & Wine*: “According to OpenTable, 2021 [dining] reservations are up 64% compared to 2019 and are nine times higher than 2020.



May Top Social Posts





Family Features – A Truly Memorable Summer Menu

Launched just 5 weeks ago, this Family Features summer menu “roundup” - including the Watermelon Berry Frozen Pops - has already garnered nearly **1,400 placements** and **4 Million impressions**. This feature was part of a package with Family Features that leveraged our long-standing relationship – it didn’t cost the Board a thing and had a still-growing **ad equivalency of \$424,293!** Look for more Family Features results in upcoming editions of the Watermelon Update!

C4 • WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021 • ALABAMA/AL.COM



A Truly Memorable Summer Menu





Watermelon on the Menu

On May 26, Marketplace Snacks at Disney Springs started serving a Dole Whip Watermelon Float at Marketplace Snacks at Disney Springs. This frozen treat is served in a fresh watermelon wedge or with a side of fresh watermelon in a Mickey cut out through September 6.



NWPB Connections

USAEDC July Attaché Seminar (virtual) - July 7 - 8

PMA Foodservice in Monterey, CA - July 21 - 22