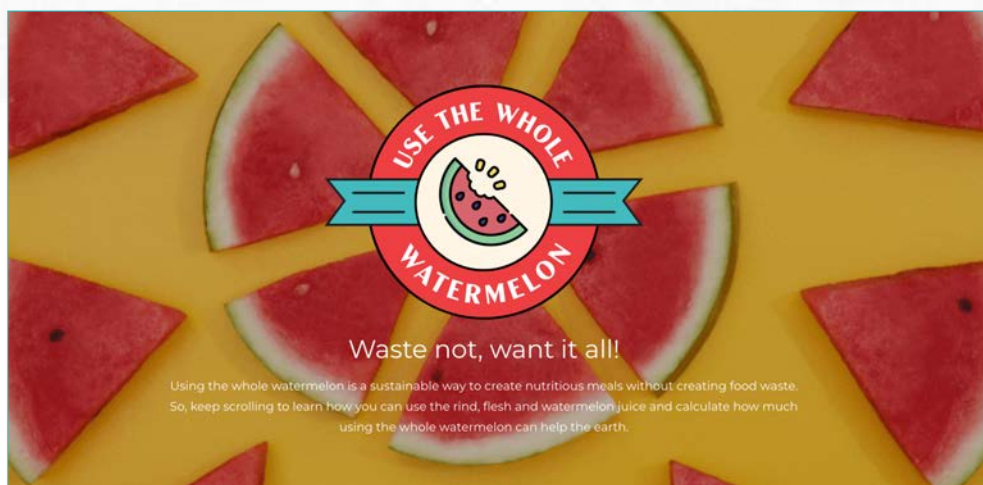




Watermelon Update

NATIONAL WATERMELON PROMOTION BOARD



Use the Whole Watermelon Campaign Launches to Encourage Consumers to Eat More (Watermelon), Waste Less

This month, Communications at NWPB has launched its largest consumer-focused campaign of the year, *Use the Whole Watermelon*, aimed at showing the taste, health, economic and sustainable benefits of the full watermelon, inside and out. According to our own consumer research^[1], only 18% of consumers use the whole watermelon, and less than 40% of respondents know the rind is edible. As we all know, watermelon is 100% edible, flesh, juice and rind (even the green skin!).

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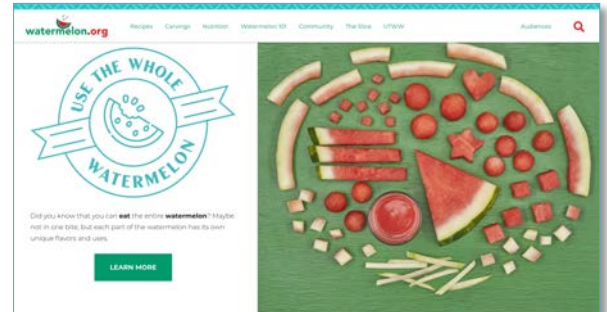
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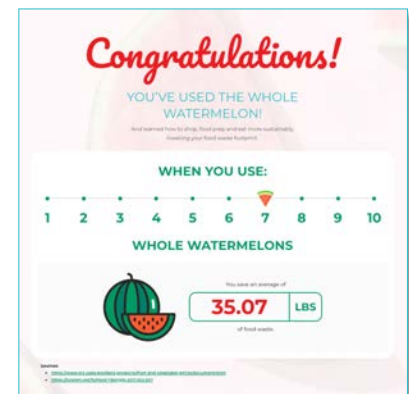
Campaign Continued

So to get the message out that **watermelon is not only a healthy and wallet-friendly choice at only \$0.16 per serving^[2], but also a sustainable one**, multiple activations will bring the *Use the Whole Watermelon* program to life, including a new digital hub, social media promotions, “How To” Live/Premiere videos, ad streaming, influencer partner shares, and content syndication. In addition, a suite of new creative assets will support the campaign, including recipe and selection photography and video. Retail components include a full-page advertorial and custom e-newsletter with QR code.



All campaign elements will point to the newly imagined *Use the Whole Watermelon* landing page on Watermelon.org, accessible through UseTheWholeWatermelon.com. The interactive microsite is a **one-stop resource** for everything about using the whole watermelon and includes:

- An interactive watermelon “butchery” tutorial, with videos like “how to cut and use the rind,” “how to juice” and “how to use a melon baller”
- Curated recipes that share refreshing and delicious inspiration for all parts of the watermelon
- Tips and tricks for food prep
- Gamification of **food waste footprint tracker** allowing users to calculate how much food waste they can save by using the entire watermelon
- A call for consumers to pledge to Use the Whole Watermelon and enter the summer sweepstakes*



Throughout the campaign, we will encourage watermelon fans to pledge to *Use the Whole Watermelon* because it is a sustainable choice that reduces food waste – **minimizing the negative impacts on our environment**. Those that pledge and share why will have access to download branded digital “I Pledged” stickers and will be entered for a chance to win weekly watermelon prizes. Those consumer entries will be captured and designed into special social posts quoting the best of the best Pledges to be shared across social channels, amplifying and inspiring audiences to use the whole watermelon.

Leveraging user generated content and stories is just one way that NWPB can amplify our messaging, and also cultivate a community of consumers who love watermelon in all shapes and forms. Strategically, we’re insisting that this summer, Using the Whole Watermelon is the solution to some common consumer issues. Need to eat healthy? Use the Whole Watermelon! Need a wallet-friendly produce option? Use the Whole Watermelon! Want to help to minimize food waste? Use the Whole Watermelon. It’s a Win-Win-Win for Watermelon!

In addition to promoting the campaign on all of our own social channels, we are **working with influencer partners**, both new and longstanding, whose activations include TikToks, long form



blog posts, Facebook and Instagram posts, stories and reels, Pinterest posts and media appearances. Each month this summer we will focus on one part of the watermelon to inspire – June – Flesh, July – Juice, August – Rind, with a special celebration on August 3 for National Watermelon Day.

The *Use the Whole Watermelon* campaign will run through September 2. Visit www.UseTheWholeWatermelon.com now to check it out!

[1] Summer Consumer Research Findings Aimpoint Research September 2021

[2] IR FreshLook POS, Total US MULO, Latest 52 Weeks Ending 11-11-2020



CEO Commodity Roundtable Meeting

On May 5 NWPB Executive Director Mark Arney participated in a CEO Commodity Roundtable meeting (CRCEO). The Commodity Roundtable is an **informal group of Chief Executive Officers and Executive Directors** of mostly agriculture promotion groups who share information to help their organizations **achieve efficient and effective program implementation**. The group comes together periodically to discuss best practices in the areas of finance, administration, marketing and research.

Beside Watermelon, there was a wide array of commodities/organizations represented including Popcorn, Chilean Avocados, Blueberries, Cotton, Hass Avocados, Tart Cherries, Sweet Potatoes, Beef, Sorghum, Eggs, Pork, Maine Lobsters, Peanuts, Honey, Sorghum, Mangos, Concrete, Pecans, Cranberries, Soybeans, Cotton and Paper/Packaging.

USDA-AMS Administrator Bruce Summers participated in part of the meeting sharing with the group issues of common interest including board appointments, USDA oversight, and other USDA program developments pertinent to the group.

NEW Foodservice Recipes Showcase Global Flavor Trends



Each year the Board invests in new recipes to **inspire foodservice decision-makers**. Although not yet published on the website, the Board created and photographed the following recipes for use with foodservice media and at events:

- Fresh Watermelon Granita Punch – non-alc beverages are very trendy at the moment
- Watermelon Paloma – a refreshing cocktail with a watermelon twist
- Watermelon Negroni – classic cocktails are experiencing a renaissance (*pictured, far right*)
- Frickled Watermelon Rinds – anything pickled is currently on trend but add watermelon BBQ sauce and lessening food waste for a menu win (*pictured, left middle*)
- Watermelon Pibil with Tortilla Verdes – this plant forward spin on a regional Mexican dish highlights watermelons' versatility
- Watermelon Chirashi Don – in this dish watermelon replaces tuna in another plant forward application (*pictured, right middle*)
- Indian Watermelon Rind Stir Fry – watermelon rind has the ability to take on flavors and still deliver a crunchy satisfying texture (*pictured, far left*)



Brandstorm

NWPB's Juliemar Rosado attended the International Fresh Produce Association's BrandStorm conference held May 16-18 in San Diego. The conference's focus is for the **produce marketing community** to attend engaging keynote speakers, breakout sessions and networking events. Topics covered during the conference included the **latest trends in consumer purchasing behavior**, branding, sustainability, and the retail panels that discussed current marketing tactics, just to name a few.



Tasty Inspiration for Foodservice Media

On May 23rd the International Foodservice Editorial Council (IFEC) hosted the Bubble Party as a part of the National Restaurant Show in Chicago. The first Bubble Party since 2019 had record sponsorship and attendance with **nearly every publication in attendance the Board targets each year**. Editors were able to sample the Charred Watermelon Salad and **Watermelon Tiki Punch**. The Charred Watermelon Salad created by Chef Bryan Weaver of Redheaded Stranger in Nashville is a great example of **how watermelon can handle heat and the dimension it brings to watermelon's flavor**. It is also a great elevated example of the classic watermelon and feta pairing. The Watermelon Tiki Punch is an on-trend low ABV cocktail. This event is a **great opportunity for an in-person connection** in addition to the annual conference in the fall. To expand networking and relationship building opportunities, Megan McKenna, senior director of marketing and foodservice for the Board, also serves on the IFEC Board which met earlier in the day on the 23rd. Look for more watermelon foodservice editorial coverage in the coming months!



Retail Merchandising Contest

Have your retailers **show their merchandising talents**, both those in store and in print/digital spaces! All entries should **showcase watermelon's benefits including health, value and versatility**. 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.

The contest will **start on July 8 and run throughout the month of August**. Visit the Retailers section of watermelon.org for more information.

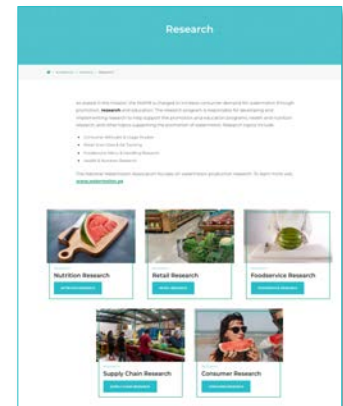


Research Tools & Research Available at Watermelon.org

Previously found under Industry, the Research section of the website has been brought forward to make it **easier to find the watermelon research resources available**. Watermelon.org/research provides:

- Consumer Research dating back multiple years.
- Retail Research includes scan data, ad tracking, price responsiveness and more.
- Foodservice research includes watermelon menu trends as well as consumer and operator sentiment towards watermelon at foodservice.
- Supply Chain Research offers the Weekly Market Report and the supporting excels highlighting watermelon's movement and price.
- Nutrition Research offers a nutrition research database with many watermelon nutrition studies, some funded by the NWPB.

All of these resources are **available for industry** use so please visit watermelon.org/research for more.



St. Augustine Food & Wine Festival



In early May, to usher in the beginning of watermelon's popularity in late spring, NWPB **partnered with the Florida Watermelon Association and Fresh From Florida** on a consumer tasting event called the St. Augustine Food & Wine Festival. **Over 4,000 attendees** enjoyed fresh cut watermelon slices and also a Chilled Watermelon and Gulf Shrimp with Smoky Chimichurri Sauce and Queso Fresco sample that was demonstrated live on the Southern Living stage. Guests also visited with the Florida and National Watermelon Queens and were **educated about watermelon's health, value and versatility benefits**. It was a terrific event with **national media exposure** through Southern Living media and Taste of the South magazine.


Google Web Stories – New Tool

People love watching stories unfold. That’s why tappable story experiences are so popular. Many platforms exist to create these tappable stories and **now Google has their own version**, called Google Web Stories. The ability to post them on our own site is what makes them different from other story experiences, such as Instagram or Facebook stories.


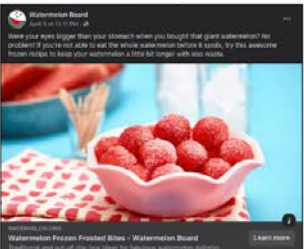

Using individual story panels with videos, graphics, and other features, the Watermelon Board can **share campaign narratives** that users can click through, or tap through on mobile, to experience the story we tell. In addition to viewing them on our website, people can also experience Google Web Stories in a Google search, in Google images, or through the Google Discover app, available on Apple and Android devices. Check out <https://www.watermelon.org/web-stories> to see these tappable experiences.






Top Social Posts – April 2022

 **NWPB TOP SOCIAL POSTS** Apr 1, 2022 - Apr 30, 2022




FACEBOOK

- Watermelon Board: "Make your eyes bigger than your stomach when you bought that giant watermelon? No problem! If you're not able to eat the whole watermelon before it spoils, try this awesome frozen recipe to keep your watermelon a little bit longer with extra meals." 
- Watermelon Board: "Watermelon season now loading... Who else is excited?" 
- Watermelon Board: "Get us over here dreaming about summer." 

INSTAGRAM


- Watermelon Board: "Watermelon season now loading... Who else is excited?" 
- Watermelon Board: "Get us over here dreaming about summer." 
- Watermelon Board: "Watermelon Rind Kimchi" 

PINTEREST

- Watermelon Board: "Watermelon Rind Kimchi" 
- Watermelon Board: "Baby Carriage - Watermelon Board" 
- Watermelon Board: "How to Carve a Watermelon Cactus" 

IFIC 2022 Food & Health Survey

The following is pulled from recent communication from International Food Information Council (IFIC). Each year NWPB finds this **information helpful to highlight consumer behaviors**:

Major changes in Americans' food attitudes and behaviors are emerging in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the [2022 Food & Health Survey](#)  conducted by the International Food Information Council (IFIC).

The 17th annual survey of U.S. consumers has revealed a substantial impact of stress on the way we eat, significant increases in the adoption of specific diets and eating patterns, concerns over food and beverage prices, and the food priorities and buying power of Gen Z.

“Even more so than in past years, the 2022 Food & Health Survey is showing sharp changes, over a relatively short period, in many of our beliefs and behaviors when it comes to the foods we purchase and consume,” said IFIC CEO Joseph Clayton. “Some of these changes are clearly attributable to the lasting scars of the pandemic, while others bear all the hallmarks of significant generational shifts,” he added.

The 2022 Survey involved 1,005 adults ages 18–80, and for the first time it also included an oversample of adult Gen Z consumers, ages 18-24.

Executive Summary

Key Findings

The importance of environmental sustainability has increased in 2022

Four in ten Americans (39%) say environmental sustainability has an impact on their decision to buy certain foods and beverages. Although sustainability still ranks below other purchase drivers, like taste and price, its importance has increased substantially from 27% in 2019.

More than half of Americans (52%) believe their food and beverage purchases have an impact on the environment, a significant increase from 2021 (42%). Millennials, those with young children, those with a college degree, and those with higher income are more likely to believe their food and beverage choices impact the environment.


Nearly six in ten Americans (59%) agree that their generation has greater concern about the environmental impact of food choices than other generations. Gen Z (73%) and Millennials (71%) are most likely to believe this applies to their cohort. Interestingly, the attention paid to sustainability appears unchanged vs. a decade ago, but younger consumers are now much more likely to consider sustainability and older consumers are significantly less likely.

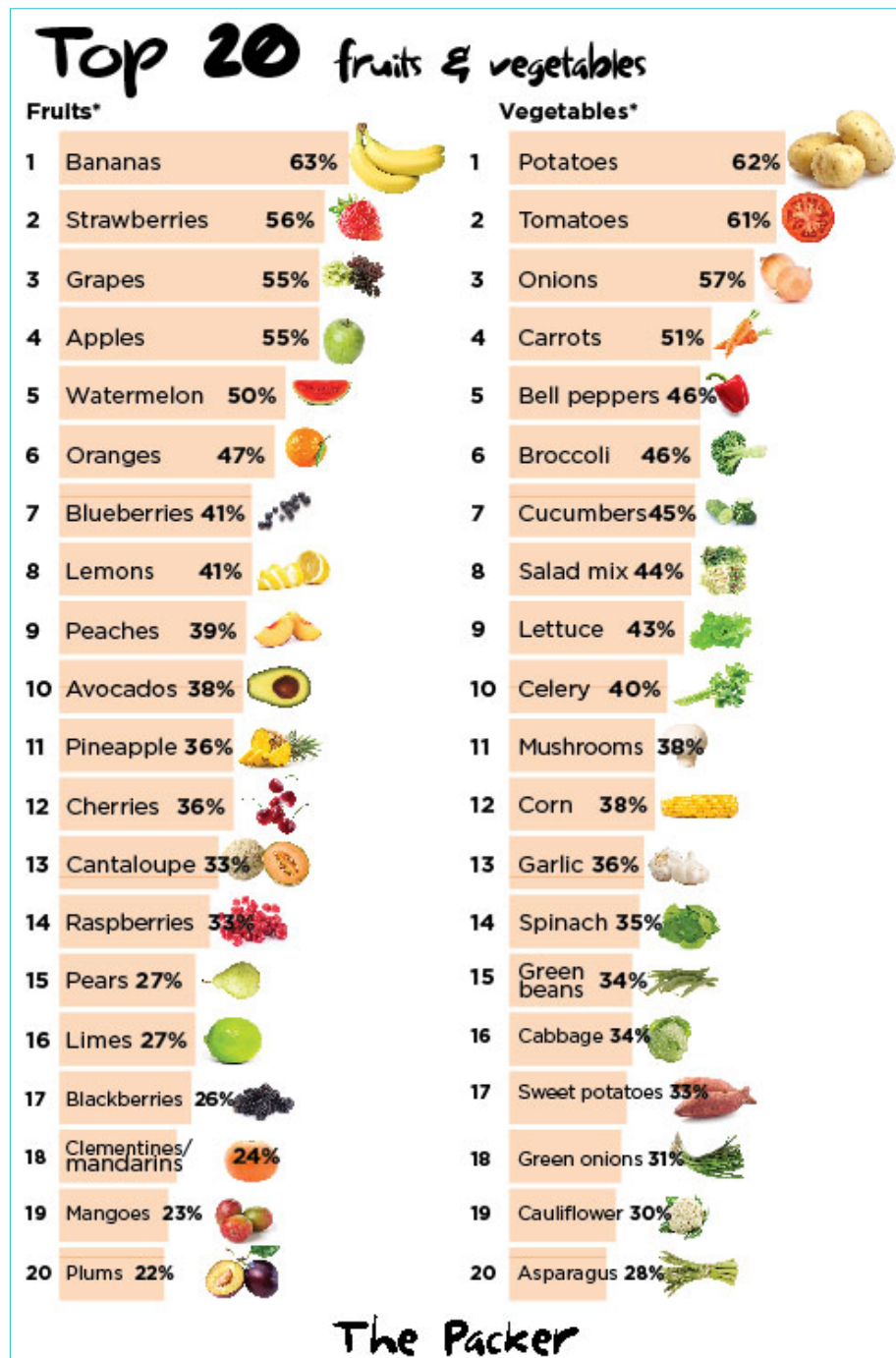
Most Americans are concerned about food waste

Nearly six in ten Americans (57%) are concerned about food waste. Among those who are concerned, the top reasons are because it is a waste of money (53%) and there are people in need of food (51%). Older consumers are more likely to be concerned because it is a waste of money and they were taught not to waste food, while younger consumers are more concerned about the impact on the environment.

The top actions taken to reduce food waste include eating leftovers and unused food items (44%) and planning meals before shopping (42%). Actions aimed at preventing spoilage are also common, including trying to better store items (38%), paying more attention to expiration dates (37%), and making an effort to freeze unused foods (35%).

Fresh Trends Report by *The Packer*

Based on a survey of more than 1,000 consumers conducted last fall, this annual report by The Packer shines a light on the latest consumer buying trends in fresh. Watermelon has risen in popularity to the #5 of the Top 20 most popular fruits and vegetables list. [Read the full report here.](#) 



Watermelon on the Menu



Chef-owned and operated Katie's Pizza & Pasta Osteria in Rock Hill, MO is currently serving "Rolando's Watermelon Salad" (pictured, left) with watercress, watermelon, Baetje Farms feta, kalamata olives, pine nuts, lime and aged balsamic. Additionally, the Italian seasonal menu features a "Merry Christmas" cocktail (pictured, right) featuring watermelon, Pinckney Bend vodka, lemon or prosecco and fresh watermelon slice.



NWPB Connections

USAEDC July Attaché Seminar - July 13-14 -
McLean, VA

Watermelon StarChefs Discovery Week - June
16-30 - Various Cities

Center for the Advancement of Foodservice
Educators Annual Conference - June 22-24 -
Portland, ME

Adventure Aquarium - July 9-10 - Camden,
New Jersey

