

What's America Eating?

New Study Shows Despite Exotic Options, Families Crave Convenience & Traditional Favorites

(NAPSA)—Mexican. Japanese. Thai. More than ever before, myriad new food choices are “spicing up” our grocery store shelves and “seasoning” America’s restaurant rows.

Despite these global culinary options, the new Kraft Kitchens Study indicates Americans consistently return to comforting, easy, family-pleasing favorites when preparing meals at home. The study—which has been conducted every five years since 1980 to identify the most universally prevalent ingredients and appliances found in America’s kitchens—reveals the level to which we are opting for convenience and blazing shortcuts to the final dish. Results show that core cooking staples including butter, sugar, milk, and the usage rate of common kitchen appliances such as mixers and blenders, are being shelved in record numbers for ready-made favorites and easy meal solutions such as pizza, pasta and frozen meals. Additional culinary trends uncovered by the survey include:

Gadget Gurus. Americans own multitudes of kitchen gadgets and appliances but rarely use them. Among owners, the usage rate of mixers has decreased 37 percent in the last five years, blenders by 29 percent and toaster ovens by eight percent. Though 26 percent of us own bread machines and 34 percent food processors, the regular usage rate remains constant at four percent for each.

Say cheese! When it comes to comfort food, macaroni and cheese maintains its status as a quick-and-easy national favorite. Fifty-five percent of America’s kitchens contain macaroni and cheese mix,



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an eight percent increase since 1995. Elbow macaroni continues to claim real estate in our pantries with 55 percent of us routinely stocking this item.

Livin' La Vida Loca. Items with a Mexican flair have garnered a 17 to 30 percent increase in our pantries since 1995. Nearly 30 percent of families keep dry taco mix on hand, a 17 percent gain from the last study. Salsa is commonly stocked by 40 percent of households, cheddar cheese shreds by 26 and tortillas by more than 20 percent.

“Kraft closely studies the results of this survey, and other input it receives from families, to create real-world solutions to everyday meal dilemmas,” said Stephanie Williams, director of the Kraft Kitchens.

The Kraft Kitchens Study serves as the foundation for the recently launched *Kraft Connections* program. A comprehensive service network of easily accessible mealtime tools and resources, *Kraft Connections* is designed to provide families with simple, deli-

cious and inspiring mealtime ideas to make the most of time with family and friends. Families can find the various program elements in the grocery store, newspapers, cookbooks, recipe brochures, as well as the Internet. Following are some of the most popular offerings:

www.kraftfoods.com. Kraft’s award-winning Web site provides families with the most valuable features and time-saving functions available via the Internet. The site offers thousands of tempting food ideas, creative seasonal recipes and tips to connect at mealtime.

Dinner On Hand. The *Dinner on Hand* program offers delicious meal solutions using only a few ingredients typically found in the kitchen. Based on research that shows dinner decisions are made the same day and are driven by the availability of ingredients already in the home, *Dinner on Hand* ideas can be found on www.kraftfoods.com, in free leaflets in the meat departments of grocery stores, and on various Kraft dinner products. Families can look for the *Dinner on Hand* “spinning plate” icon and recipes for assurance that family-pleasing ideas are only a fingertip away.

Kraft Connections Publications. Kraft offers a series of publications featuring delicious recipes to help families spend less time cooking and more time connecting. The Food and Family insert, found periodically in Sunday newspapers, offers timely recipes, helpful articles and valuable coupons. Also, look for Kraft’s seasonal cookbooks and free recipe leaflets in grocery stores nationwide.