

## Dawson Sales Company Is Celebrating 50 years of Business!

# DU NC FOOD TRENDS NC

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### Model Meal Kits



Between 1998 and 2003, the sales growth of meal kits was an impressive 48%. After slowing dramatically in 2002, growth stopped entirely in 2003. Meal kits appear to be passed up by consumer preference of restaurants and heat-and-eat options.

There are three types of shelf-stable meal kits: 1) kits requiring meat 2) kits including meat 3) pizza kits. Meal kits are expected to grow 16% through 2008. All growth is anticipated from meal kits including meat.

The expected growth for kits is supported by the lack of cooking skills among young people and the waning desire of older adults to

spend time fixing large meals. These target groups are among the fastest growing through 2008.

Source: *Prepared Foods*, September 2004

### Ethnic-American Melting Pot



Assimilated immigration creates thick kitchen tradition and culture in our country's cuisine. Americans have put a new face on everything: hot dogs, spaghetti, enchiladas, egg rolls, samosas, satay, etc.

Historically, New World markets could not provide needed traditional ingredients. Instead, new versions of dishes evolved as substitute ingredients were selected.

Ethnic restaurants today "gringoize" foods to meet the tastes of curious, yet cautious, public. For example, goat meat is replaced with beef, fiery salsas are toned down, and orange cheese replaces traditional sauces.

Food professionals feel creative freedom with the dishes. Once the flavor profile is determined, mainstream versions are targeted. Although conservative, Americans are still more experimental than much of Western Europe.

Source: *Food Product Design*, August 2004.

### Sweet vs. Sweet



Low-calorie, artificial sweeteners are more popular than ever before. The current

obesity epidemic and low-Carb Craze are sending food manufacturers scrambling to eliminate sugar in everything possible. Sugar substitutes are selected according to the product conditions such as heat processing (i.e. breads) or acidic ingredients (i.e. yogurt). Artificial sweeteners are low-calorie because our bodies cannot absorb them or because tiny amounts are used.

Remember, real sugar is not toxic. The problem is the large amounts Americans eat. The USDA suggests a limit of ten teaspoons of added sugars per day for people on a 2,000-calorie diet. This amount is approx 40 grams and is found in a 12 oz. soft drink.

Source: *Nutrition Action*, May, 2004.

## Cloudy Coating Question



What is that bluish, cloudy coating on your grapes, blueberries, and plums that won't wash

off? It is a safe, natural part of fruit known as "bloom". The silvery-white substance acts as a protective barrier against insects and bacteria and also helps seal-in moisture. Always rinse or scrub all produce under running water before eating.

Source: *Consumer Reports On Health*, October 2004.

## Get Out Gout!



Gout is the most common inflammatory arthritis in men. Uric acid crystals collect in joints, causing pain, redness, and swelling. Red meat and seafood are linked to a higher risk of gout. Overweight and alcohol also increase risk. To lower risk, consume purine-rich vegetables (i.e. beans, peas, lentils, spinach, mushrooms), poultry, and low-fat dairy products. Gout is uncommon in women, partly because estrogen lowers blood uric acid levels.

Source: *New England Journal of Medicine*, 2004.

## Snack Attack



Eat when you're hungry. Stop when you're comfortable. There's a difference between stuffed and comfortable. Here are suggestions of tasty snacks:

### Popcorn

Look for 98% fat-free versions.

### Fruit & Fruit Smoothies

A complete, healthy, sustainable snack. Cheese & Crackers Select reduced fat cheese and whole grain crackers.

### Cereal

Choose high fiber, low sugar cereals.

### Yogurt (or Frozen)

This is a good source of Calcium!

### Candy bars

Select mini-sized.

### Vegetables

Pair with a tasty light dip.

### Granola Bars

The healthy ones are crunchy. The chewier bars have more sugar and fat.

Source: *Organic Style*, August 2004.

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