ELEVATING INSIGHTS. CULINARY. INNOVATION.

bakeology
Table of Contents

Introduction | 04
A message from Luc Mongeau

Foods Trends | 07
The rapidly changing relationship with food

Bakeology | 12
Understanding bakery dynamics

What’s NXT | 21
The future of bakery and innovation
This study was conducted using an online survey, fielded over three waves in both the United States and Canada. All qualifying respondents were aged 25 to 64 years old – and had to be primary or shared grocery shoppers for their household and have shopped the in-store bakery department of a grocery store within the past three months. 70% of respondents were female and 30% were male.

Sample sizes and fieldwork dates were as follows:

USA
- WAVE 1: n=1,029 Americans from April 29 to May 1, 2020
- WAVE 2: n=1,005 Americans from July 14 to July 17, 2020
- WAVE 3: n=1,016 Americans from January 11 to January 18, 2021

CANADA
- WAVE 1: n=1,008 Canadians from April 29 to May 1, 2020
- WAVE 2: n=1,006 Canadians from July 14 to July 17, 2020
- WAVE 3: n=1,013 Canadians from January 11 to January 18, 2021

Sampling quotas were imposed to ensure comparable sample profiles from wave to wave. These surveys were not based on probability sampling; therefore, an estimate of sampling error cannot be calculated.

Research was conducted by DIG Insights Inc. on behalf of Weston Foods.
The state of the world is changing. We are forced to find ourselves looking for new ways to connect and feel good. In the search for tangible, sensory experiences, many people are turning to food – one of the great connections we all share.

At Weston Foods, bakery is our passion. We’re committed to setting the example for top quality and high-value baked goods in North America.

We stay ahead of the pulse when it comes to food trends by understanding consumers’ rapidly evolving needs. Doing so is critical to our role as a leading force in bakery. Only by knowing what consumers want can we start to shape our strategies and innovation agenda to satisfy their cravings.

As you’ll see in this report, throughout our current reality, bakery continues to play a highly relevant role for consumers – elevating everyday moments and bringing joy to special occasions. It’s a great time to be in bakery!

Luc Mongeau
President, Weston Foods
We are Weston Foods, a leading North American bakery company providing high quality fresh and frozen baked products across Canada and the U.S.

Our reach and potential is extensive. We have locations throughout North America with more than 6,000 employees spread across our bakeries, distribution centres and corporate offices.

We have a clear ambition – to become the premier North American bakery – and our teams rally around our purpose: Elevating Everyday Moments. Each day we all strive to create moments that matter for our colleagues, consumers and customers.

And so, we’ve made it our business to elevate these special moments. To research taste, analyze appetite and create irresistible flavours. Behind the comforting smell of fresh bread and mouth-watering sweet goods is a network of bakery-obsessed individuals like us.

Because the thing that brings a smile to our face is knowing we’ve put a smile on theirs.
Executive Summary

Our relationship with food is CHANGING, for the BETTER
The pandemic triggered a re-evaluation of food choices and as time passes, people are feeling even more positive about their new habits. There is a higher engagement with meals made at home – 88% are cooking from scratch (up 43% since the pandemic). 86% are taking the time to re-discover some of their old favourites they have not made in some time (up 37% since the pandemic) and 85% are experimenting with new foods or recipes (up 42%). Food is a great unifier, creating moments of connection as more families are spending time together during mealtime (spending more time eating dinner together up 25%).

Bakery is a source of COMFORT and JOY throughout the pandemic
North Americans love baked goods! Their cultural significance lies in their ability to elevate everyday moments while also uniting people through life’s special occasions. Baked goods provide emotional satisfaction, warmth and comfort, while also delivering a pleasurable sensorial experience as 85% of people LOVE the smell of baked goods. Baking at home has been on the rise since the pandemic started, as it has been a source of enjoyment and entertainment, especially for families with kids.

Evolving consumer demand and foods trends will continue to SHAPE INNOVATION IN BAKERY
Given the rapid pace of change, it is critical to stay ahead of the food trends that will shape future bakery consumption to win in today’s marketplace. Consumers are demanding products with “better for you” benefits, while also delivering on great taste. Ultimately, food choices are all about balance – while consumers strive to eat healthier, they are still indulging in their favourite baked treats, but they better be worth the splurge. With the growth in at home baking, there is a growing appreciation for the craft of artisan baking – this is expected to continue to spark demand in elevated breads, especially as life gets back to normal.
Food Trends: The Rapidly Changing Relationship with Food
Food Feels Good

Over the course of the pandemic, food has continued to be a source of positivity.

% Consumers feeling better about their food choices during the pandemic

- **MAY 2020**: 24%
- **SEPT 2020**: 27%
- **JAN 2021**: 30%

47% of parents are feeling good about their food choices January 2021
Food is A Source of Discovery

Consumers are taking the time to make meals from scratch and re-engage with their favourite recipes, especially younger demographics.

Food Behaviours During the Pandemic
% doing more: January 2021

- 43% Cooking from scratch
- 42% Experimenting with different foods/recipes
- 37% Rediscovering foods I have not had in awhile

25–34 year olds:
- 48%
- 49%
- 44%
Food Connects Us

People are spending more time eating, enjoying and savouring their meals together during the pandemic.

- Eating LONGER DINNERS: 25%
- Eating LONGER LUNCHES: 21%
- Eating more meals with the WHOLE FAMILY: 26%
- Eating more FULL MEALS: 26%
Food choices are about Balancing Comfort And Health

While there is a desire to eat healthier, eating more indulgent treats, snacks and desserts is offering consumers joy and comfort during these uncertain times.

- 33% are snacking more between meals
- 29% are eating more desserts
- 35% are eating more nutritious foods
North Americans Love Bakery

Breaking bread and indulging in sweet goods are key moments of enjoyment and connection for consumers. They are playing an especially important role throughout the pandemic as families are at home spending more time together.

- 74% agree that everyone in their families loves bakery items
- 77% really enjoy eating bread
- 72% really enjoy eating sweet bakery treats
- 59% agree that bakery products bring their family together
Baked Goods Play An Important Role in Everyday Moments

Bakery plays an important role in my everyday life

54%
North American consumers

69%
Families with kids in the household
Sweet Goods Are a Focal Point During Special Occasions

Special moments are much sweeter with baked goods

7 in 10 Special occasions are not the same without baked goods

58% A holiday meal is not the same without pie

7 in 10 Cannot imagine a birthday without cake or cupcakes
Baking Is on The Rise

At home baking sparks joy and is a source of entertainment

Baking MORE bread at HOME
23% Households with kids 41%

Baking MORE sweet goods at HOME
38% Households with kids 54%

Top Reasons For Baking More at Home

53% love the SMELL of baking
42% to relieve BOREDOM at home
37% find JOY in baking
34% find baking to be a CALMING activity
The Aroma of Bakery Stimulates the Senses

Aromas evoke a positive emotional response, often reminiscent of childhood.

85% of consumers LOVE the smell of fresh baked goods

DID YOU KNOW? Breads with long fermentation – such as sourdoughs – deliver a strong aroma
Eating Their Favourite Baked Goods Makes People Happy

There is a strong sense of positive gratification when people consume their favourite baked goods.
Understanding Consumer Preferences is Key to a Great Bakery Offering

Americans skew sweet while Canadians prefer savory.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CANADA</th>
<th>Bread</th>
<th>Croissants</th>
<th>Cake</th>
<th>Bagels</th>
<th>Muffins</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Bread</td>
<td>Donuts</td>
<td>Cake</td>
<td>Cupcakes</td>
<td>Pies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
Baguettes and croissants are more beloved in Canada, influenced by the province of Quebec.
What Makes Great Baked Goods?

BAKERY KEY DRIVERS:
Freshness
Homemade Taste
Quality Ingredients
What’s NXT: The Future of Bakery & Innovation
Our Recipe for Success

By identifying consumers' cravings, we invent and bake flavours that make taste buds sing across the continent.

**Our ambition is to be North America’s premier bakery.** And we get there by committing to excellence in everything we do.

From culinary research to proven and diverse expertise, our strength is understanding the customer in order to ultimately make the most delicious baked goods. With the latest insights and trends in our apron pocket, we are here to help you deliver on what your customers want.

Let's get baking!

**Recipe**

**Ingredients:**
- **Insights Driven:** Unearthing consumers’ unmet bakery needs
- **Culinary Excellence:** Leveraging leading edge food trends
- **Master Baker Expertise:** Deep rooted passion for baking
Better for You: Without Compromise

Insights Driven
“We cultivate a culture of curiosity to understand the human connection to bakery, both culturally and emotionally, allowing us to create products that will meet consumers’ needs today and in the future.

NXT: Future Trend
Consumers are demanding bakery products that are made with better ingredients while also being better for the planet, and delivering great taste and experience.”

Emerging Consumer Demands in ‘Better for You’ Bakery
- 33% all natural
- 26% non-GMO
- 30% high in fibre & protein
- 24% artisan-style
- 25% made sustainably

Claims that will positively impact bakery purchase decisions (% more likely to buy)

WATCH IRENE’S SPOTLIGHT VIDEO!

IRENE STATHAKOS
VP, INSIGHTS, DIGITAL & DESIGN, WESTON FOODS
Indulgence: Make It Worth It

NXT: Future Trend

“Indulging in a craving was once just a guilty pleasure. Today, baked goods are in constant demand, consumer expectations are high, and the market is saturated. The eye appeal, freshness, flavour and textures are more important than ever before. Some people may be adventurous in their snacking, seeking out exotic flavours; others may be looking for nostalgic comfort in their treats.

WATCH WAYNE’S SPOTLIGHT VIDEO!

WAYNE BLYTHE
DIRECTOR R&D & CULINARY, WESTON FOODS

Culinary Excellence

In either case, consumers are willing to spend their calories when you deliver on what they want and make it amazing. At Weston Foods we rely on the culinary and sensory experience to create the taste consumers crave with data to support it. That’s how we ensure the food we make is always worth it.”

67% I enjoy eating baked goods that are reminiscent of my childhood

33% Eating more indulgent meals and treats
Artisan Baking: Appreciation for the Craft

**NXT**: Future Trend

We have seen that people are baking more at home – using sourdough starters and attempting new bread recipes. There has been explosive growth on internet searches for these types of recipes.

Why is this great news? Having tried it themselves, consumers now have a greater appreciation for what it takes to make amazing breads.

**WATCH MARCUS’ SPOTLIGHT VIDEO!**

---

**MASTER BAKER EXPERTISE**

They bake with passion, and so do we. Our bakers also use simple, quality ingredients. We take the time to ferment the dough so that it develops complex flavours. To us, the rise is a work of art. We watch it patiently until it is perfectly proofed and ready to go into our stone-deck ovens.

We are bakers, first and foremost. Though we have many divisions working behind the scenes to create great flavours, baking is our passion. We take pride in crafting our breads with care to ensure they deliver the best taste and texture.

---

Marcus Mariathas  
Master Baker, Vice President, R&D

---

55% are baking bread at home  
+23% during the pandemic
Baking Manifesto

Bakery doesn’t just please our taste buds. It nourishes our soul. It calls us to the table and compels us to be present, with ourselves and each other.

It gives us a moment to pause, connect, savour and celebrate.

And so, we’ve made it our business to elevate these special moments.

To research taste, analyze appetite and create irresistible flavours.

Behind the comforting smell of fresh bread and mouth-watering pastries is a network of bakery-obsessed individuals like us.

We create. We test. We taste. We learn. We adapt. We bake.

We are driven to deliver delicious baked goods to millions of people.

Because the thing that brings a smile to our face is knowing we’ve put a smile on theirs.
We value long-lasting partnerships

You want to make your customers happy. So do we.

From in-depth research and insights to close collaboration and best-in-class baking, we deliver excellence at every step – so you can deliver a delicious experience for years to come.

Our oven is preheated. Let’s start baking!

Contact us today at westonfoods.com
We create
We test
We taste
We learn
We adapt
We bake