



Produce Marketing Association

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NEWSFLASH

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PMA Research Finds Taste Ranks First in Consumers' Produce Purchasing Decisions

Newark, Del. -- Findings from a national omnibus survey of U.S. consumers have discovered that, when it comes to purchasing produce, consumers' primary influencer is how flavorful the fruits and vegetables are. When asked "what is most important to you in deciding what types of fruits and vegetables to buy," 22% of respondents said that taste is most important to them. Both "appearance" and "health benefits" earned 19% of consumer responses, while 12% said "price" and 8% said "freshness" were most important. Other important reasons included "habit/buy every week," "what I like/need," "what's on sale," and "what's in season." Interestingly, only 1% said "where it's grown" was the most important determining purchase factor.

The survey, conducted by Opinion Dynamics Corporation in late 2003, was sponsored by the Produce Marketing Association as part of the association's ongoing research and consumption programs. The survey had a 95% confidence level with a margin of error of +/-3%. PMA will be sponsoring additional consumer surveys periodically throughout 2004.

"PMA members have told us they want to know more about consumer issues and have identified this area as critical to their businesses," said PMA President Bryan Silbermann. "Through our partnership with ODC, PMA will be able to compile insights into what consumers are thinking about fruits and vegetables. We want to provide our members with valuable insights and trends that will help drive consumption," he added. Other highlights from the survey were:

- Consumers ages 60 and older are more likely to buy produce for health benefits
- Consumers with incomes between \$25,000 and \$50,000 are also more likely to buy produce for health benefits

- Apples are purchased more often by consumers aged 18 to 45 (45%) and those who have children (46%)
- Grapes are purchased more often by African Americans (29%) than Caucasians (17%)
- More than one-third of consumers purchase apples (38%) and bananas (33%) regularly
- Other frequently purchased produce items include lettuce (20%), tomatoes (20%), grapes (18%), peaches (15%), and oranges (12%)

The Produce Marketing Association (PMA), founded in 1949 and based in Newark, Delaware, is a not-for-profit global trade association serving over 2,400 members who market fresh fruits, vegetables, and related products worldwide. Its members are involved in the production, distribution, retail, and foodservice sectors of the industry. PMA's core purpose is to sustain and enhance an environment that advances the marketing of produce and related products and services.

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