

**CONSUMER INSIGHT SURVEY**

**As More Americans Savor Ethnic Flavor, Chinese and Mexican Frozen Foods in Favor**

Kahiki Foods hails study's findings as vindication of its products and marketing strategy.

In a recent consumer insight study conducted by Mintel Research, a growing trend spotted points toward a potential shift towards some ethnic segments – especially Chinese – in how America is enjoying frozen foods at home.

The study looked at the behaviors, attitudes and motivations of consumers and determined that while many ethnic categories were declining, demand for Chinese, Italian and Mexican categories continues to grow. The sale of Chinese frozen cuisine is currently expected to outperform even traditional American frozen food categories.

The study, commissioned by Kahiki Foods of Gahanna, Ohio, was based on the responses provided by 1,500 adults, age 18 and over, who have purchased frozen meals in the past 12 months. It showed that nearly half of all consumers want more Chinese cuisine in their grocer's freezer case, but that nearly half don't eat ethnic foods beyond Italian, Mexican and Chinese. Indian, Spanish, Greek, Thai and French food is rarely purchased at conventional supermarkets.

While many of the ethnic food categories showed a decline in this study, companies like Kahiki can benefit from knowing about the rise in demand for Chinese cuisine. Of those surveyed, nearly 45% of respondents chose Chinese cuisine when asked what types of frozen foods they would like to see more of.

"This demand is being spurred by demographic diversity in the US, with Hispanic and Asian populations at the top," said the Mintel report. "People are willing to pay more for products with better ingredients, more sophisticated flavors, or more authentic ethnic dishes. This is especially true of smaller, more affluent adult-only households."



Kahiki Foods microwave egg rolls, said to be the first of their kind, are ready to eat in just two and a half minutes. They are distributed in 276-gram packages.

While consumers still prefer to get their Asian meals from restaurants, convenience and value rated highest among consumers. In fact, 75% of those polled ranked convenience as their top priority, whereas taste and cost ranked next highest. The two areas of least concern were the product brand and calorie content.

"Listening to shoppers is the most important thing that we can do," said Tim Tsao, vice president of sales and marketing for Kahiki. "Through this study, we are better able to understand the importance consumers place on enjoying restaurant quality Asian cuisine, but in the convenience of their home. We're excited about bringing more of these convenience and flavor factors to consumers."

Kahiki is known for a range of Chinese frozen dinners, including Beef & Broccoli with steamed rice, and General Tso's Chicken, also with steamed rice. Broccoli and carrots; Chicken Fried Rice with chicken meat and vegetables; and Chicken Potstickers in sweet and sour

sauce. But its latest introductions are in the egg roll category.

First, there is a line of microwaveable egg rolls that deliver authentic oven-baked quality in just minutes. They are offered in three flavors – Chicken, Vegetable, and Pork & Shrimp – and are prepared in a microwave oven in just two and a half minutes, versus the typical 20 minutes it takes to oven bake an egg roll.

Each egg roll is packaged in Kahiki's EasyCrisp™ pouches, so on-the-go consumers can now conveniently enjoy egg roll snacks at work, school or home. All varieties contain zero grams of trans-fat, no MSG or artificial additives, and start at just 70 calories per serving. The egg rolls come complete with signature sweet and sour sauce packets for dipping.

"We are bringing to market the first-ever egg roll that's designed to be microwaved. This is a value-added proposition for consumers. They get the crunch of an oven-baked product, with the portability and convenience of a microwaved

product," said Tsao. "This category has been lacking innovation for over six years and now this cutting-edge cooking technology is going to help lift category sales for retailers."

Now come chicken and vegetable egg roll offerings in flaxseed wrappers. They too can be microwaved in two and a half minutes, straight from EasyCrisp packages. Both varieties contain zero grams of trans-fat, no MSG or artificial additives, and start at just 120 calories per serving. In addition, the flaxseed wrapper provides a good source of ALA Omega 3.

"The wheat and flaxseed wrapper, combined with our all-natural ingredients, make the new egg rolls a healthy alternative to traditional oven baked egg rolls," Tsao commented.

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