Consumer Insights: Understanding the California peach, plum & nectarine consumer.
RESEARCH SHOWS WHAT PROMOTES – AND PREVENTS – FRUIT PURCHASES.
The California PPN Network conducts ongoing consumer research to analyze national eating trends for peaches, plums and nectarines. Our most recent research project – which yielded the findings you’re about to read – had a two-part goal: to identify obstacles that prevent consumers from purchasing peaches, plums and nectarines; and to compare the sales of these fruits with the sales of other fruits and snacks.

REAL PEOPLE. REAL SCENARIOS. REAL WORLD FINDINGS.
Consumers took part in the study in three different ways: some kept daily food diaries in which they tracked their consumption of all snacks and fruits, others completed a detailed online survey about their consumption patterns and preferences, and others were interviewed by researchers who joined them on their grocery shopping trips to analyze their purchasing habits.

OPPORTUNITY IS KNOCKING. ARE YOU LISTENING?
As you’re about to see, our findings reveal a great deal about consumer behavior, and present many opportunities for you to anticipate and capitalize on that behavior. The more carefully you study these findings, the more opportunities you’ll discover – and the more ways you’ll find to enhance the category performance of California peaches, plums and nectarines.

Opportunities Ripe For The Picking.

Ever wonder what your customers are thinking when they enter your produce department? Ever wish you could read their minds, so you could perfectly anticipate their desires and take advantage of the opportunities that come from knowing their purchasing behavior? Well, we can’t give you clairvoyance. But we can give you the next best thing: the benefit of our research into the minds and motivation of America’s fruit consumers.
PPN Network Consumer Education POS Tactic
Key Finding
A range of variation in consumer preferences shows there’s no single perfect peach - or plum or nectarine. A little more than half of consumers describe their ideal peach, plum, or nectarine as flavorful, sweet, firm with a little give and juicy. However, there are significant numbers of consumers who prefer their fruit firmer or softer, sweeter or tangier, juicier or just moist.

Opportunity
Be open to category opportunities that arise during the season based on peach, plum and nectarine variety. Give consumers the choice they’re asking for: a range of ripeness levels for peaches, plums and nectarines. Help consumers understand how to select peaches, plums and nectarines that satisfy their personal preferences.

Key Finding
A range of sizes is acceptable to peach and nectarine consumers. Peaches and nectarines from cue ball to baseball size are most preferred by consumers. Some consumers say they will buy less if the fruit is racquetball size or softball size.

Opportunity
Offer consumers what they want:
A range of sizes when selecting fresh California peaches and nectarines.

Impact on Purchase - Peaches and Size

Impact on Purchase - Nectarines and Size

Key Finding
A range of sizes is acceptable to plum consumers. Plums from racquetball to lacrosse ball size are the most preferred by consumers. Tennis ball and baseball size plums caused 36% and 43% of consumers, respectively, to say they would buy less.

Opportunity
Offer consumers what they want: A range of sizes when selecting fresh California plums.

Impact on Purchase - Plums and Firmness

Key Finding

Peaches and nectarines with splashes of yellow and red are most attractive to consumers. All-red fruit can be perceived as “overripe” by consumers. 52% of consumers said fruit with that appearance would motivate them to buy less.

Opportunity

Use a range of fruit colors to build a varied category display; provide information on how to select fruit to expand consumer knowledge.

Impact on Purchase - Nectarines and Color

[Bar chart showing the impact on purchase for different fruit colors (All Yellow, Mostly Yellow, Mostly Yellow Some Red, Splashes of Yellow and Red, and All Red).]

Key Finding
The majority of consumers look for fruit that is firm or firm with a little give. About two-thirds of consumers say they will buy less fruit if the fruit they find on offer is hard or soft.

Opportunity
Offer consumers assistance in learning how to select fruit that will meet their preferences; employ proper handling methods.

Purchase Considerations - Peaches/Nectarines

Impact on Purchase - Peaches/Nectarines Firmness

Key Finding
Fruit with a range of ripeness is what consumers seek when shopping. Over 80% say that they try to choose some fruit for the next day or so and some for later.

Opportunity
Increase sales and consumer satisfaction by merchandising with an eye to consumer preferences, providing fruit at more than one level of ripeness, and education on how to select it.

Ripeness Level - What Consumers Seek

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Peaches</th>
<th>Plums</th>
<th>Nectarines</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some ripe for eating within the next day, some for later</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ripe for eating within a day of purchase</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>12%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plan to ripen at home</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
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Key Finding
Consumers feel more confident in their ability to select a good peach or nectarine than a plum.

Opportunity
Consumer education about plum variety, flavor and texture will help increase consumer confidence.

PPN Network 2006 Cross Promotions Tactic
Key Finding
Most peaches, plums and nectarines are eaten as is – out of hand or sliced, as a snack.

Opportunity
Provide innovative recipes and usage ideas to build category use as an additive or ingredient.

Percentage of PPN Eaten Whole or Sliced

Key Finding
Peaches, plums and nectarines are most frequently eaten during the mid-afternoon hours or evening hours.

Opportunity
Promote ways to add peaches, plums and nectarines to morning and noontime meal habits; to expand consumer messages to promote peaches, plums and nectarines as a “pick-me up” and indulgent treat.

PPN Network Consumer Education Cross-category promotion
Key Finding

In grocery list making, peaches are on the shopper’s list about half the time – plums and nectarines, which are listed by name about a third of the time they’re purchased, are more likely to be a spontaneous buy.

Opportunity

Cross-promote the category in your advertising, promotions and point-of-sale messaging. Use the PPN Network’s consumer education material at the point-of-sale.

Planned Purchases vs. Spontaneous Purchases

Key Finding
About 60% or more of heavy users of peaches, plums, or nectarines are also heavy users of one or more of the other category fruits.

Opportunity
Provide in-store displays rich in variety; encourage multiple purchases from the category.

Usage Patterns - Heavy Users

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Peach Users</th>
<th>Plum Users</th>
<th>Nectarine Users</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>73%</td>
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<td>57%</td>
<td></td>
<td>74%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>65%</td>
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Connecting you with consumers of
California peaches, plums and nectarines.

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