

America's Elevated Sweet Tooth: New Consumer Packaged Goods Insights Shows 9% Increase In Household Spending On All Things Sweet

NCSolutions CPG Insights Tracker Shows Sustained Consumer Interest in Confections, Baked Goods and Baking Supplies, Led by 38% Higher Sales of Baking Mixes

NEW YORK, Oct. 21, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- Since the start of the pandemic, American consumers have indulged their sweet tooth. Household spending on confections, baked goods and baking supplies was 9% higher from February 24, the first notable day of increased purchasing of consumer packaged goods, through September 30 when compared to the same period in 2019. These findings are part of new data released by [NCSolutions \(NCS\)](#), the leading company for improving advertising effectiveness for the consumer packaged goods ecosystem.

The confections and baked goods and supplies category includes bakery desserts, baking mixes, chocolate and non-chocolate candy, cookies, frozen baked goods, ice cream, marshmallows, pie crusts and mixes, pie fillings, puddings and gelatins, snack cakes and sugar.

Though Americans joked about needing even more chocolate as COVID-19 upended routines, the data support the lighthearted commentary. NCS has defined [distinct periods of COVID-19 buying](#) based on consumer spending behavior. During the Extreme-Buying phase between March 11 and March 21, consumers spent 26% more specifically on chocolate candy, and over the entire pandemic period (ending September 30), household spending on this item continues to be 4% higher than 2019.

"Traditionally, spending on sweets during this time of year rises. Sweets such as chocolate, cakes and pies are a significant element of holiday celebrations, starting with Halloween and continuing through New Year's Day," said Linda Dupree, CEO, NCSolutions. "This annual trend, coupled with the pandemic-driven sustained interest in cooking and baking, indicates that consumer enthusiasm for the category will remain strong. Over Easter and Mother's Day this year, spending on sweets peaked higher than it did last year, which is further indication of what is to come this holiday season for sweets and confectionary brands."

Household spending on other sweet and dessert items have sustained elevated levels throughout the pandemic, especially products used for baking. Americans turned to baking their own cakes and cookies, and sales of baking mixes and sugar surged early in the pandemic. Sales of baking mixes are 38% higher than 2019, after spiking 159% during the Extreme-Buying stage. Likewise, sales of sugar are 26% higher than the same period last year, after they jumped 118% during Extreme Buying. Pie ingredients are also higher. Since the start of the pandemic, household spending on pie filling is up 35% and spending on pie crusts and mixes is 23% higher.

Prepared food items have also seen a rise in popularity. Americans purchased more frozen baked goods (up 25% over the pandemic period as compared to 2019), desserts (19%), ice cream (16%) and cookies (9%).

"Throughout the pandemic, we've noticed a tidal wave of nostalgia sweep over the nation, as consumers buy more comfort foods and seek the sweet treats they need for their pandemic sweet tooth," Dupree said. "Sweets — both homemade and store-bought — will continue to be part of the comfort food mix. Consumer insights based on buying behavior are the most reliable tool CPG advertisers have for understanding how to reach their loyal shoppers and the new brand explorers as American consumers shop and plan for the coming winter months."

NCSolutions Consumer Packaged Goods Monthly Tracker for September 2020

The [Home-Confined Buying](#) stage, which started on March 22, continues. Through the end of September, sales of consumer packaged goods were 22% higher than the pre-COVID period (February 1 - February 23, 2020). Average daily sales are up 18% in September compared to the same period last year.

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NCSolutions (NCS) makes advertising work better. Our unrivaled data resources powered by leading providers combine with scientific rigor and leading-edge technology to empower the CPG ecosystem to create and deliver more effective advertising. With NCS's proven approach, brands are achieving continuous optimization everywhere ads appear, through purchase-based audience targeting and sales measurement solutions that have impacted over \$25 billion in media spend for our customers. NCS has offices in NYC, Chicago, Tampa, and Cincinnati. Visit us at [ncsolutions.com](#) or to learn more.

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