

MARKETING UPDATE

OVER 70,000 SHOPPERS ENGAGED DURING IN-STORE SAMPLING PROGRAM

The Mushroom In-Store Sampling Program (MU21503) has reached over 70,000 shoppers in supermarkets across the nation. Conducted throughout 2022, the strategy has delivered important insights into consumer attitudes, which will help inform future marketing activities.

The program, funded by Hort Innovation through the mushroom marketing levy, aimed at increasing the domestic demand for Australian mushrooms. With close to 50,000 samples consumed during the campaign period, and more than 70,000 shoppers exposed at 617 stores across the nation, the data provides reliable information into current drivers and barriers to purchase.

Taste (58 per cent) and versatility (31 per cent) are the dominant factors that made mushrooms appealing to customers. Texture (seven per cent) and price (three per cent) were other factors influencing purchase of mushrooms.

Conversely, price (40 per cent) and a dislike for mushrooms (21 per cent) were the main factors deterring mushroom purchase and consumption among those customers who were questioned.

Twenty per cent of customers questioned during the campaign, which ran from August to December 2022, indicated that they were not deterred from purchasing mushrooms by any factors.

The Mushroom In-Store Sampling Program was endorsed by the Mushroom SIAP to drive category growth with point of purchase conversion by inspiring shoppers with delicious and easy mushroom recipes to taste while in store.

KEY POINTS

- 48,700 samples were consumed during the campaign period at 617 stores
- Taste (58%) and versatility (31%) were the dominant **appealing** factors
- Price (40%) and dislike for mushrooms were the dominant deterring factors
- 20% indicated that they were not **deterred** from purchasing mushrooms by any factors
- The campaign took place in Coles and Woolworths stores across all states and the ACT
- 68 per cent of engaged shoppers tried a sample, and 52 per cent of customers intended to buy the product after consuming a sample

“How do we inspire consumers to consider and use mushrooms more often?”

With 49 per cent of Australian households deciding on their dinner menu last minute (an all-time high), the campaign took the opportunity to remind shoppers that mushrooms would make a great dinner idea. The campaign took place on the busiest retailer days of the week and timeframes for greatest impact.

Promoting an inspiring recipe - together with other messages around versatility - was recognised as key to maximising benefits from impulse purchases.

The campaign aimed to:

- Increase awareness of versatility of mushrooms by promoting healthy eating without the hassle
- Encourage trial purchase of Aussie Mushrooms
- Communicate versatility, 'blendability', usage scenarios and hand out recipe leaflets
- Communicate key selling messages
- Highlight where the products can be located in-store
- Encourage customers to buy directly from the promotional table
- Leave customers with a positive brand experience.

The campaign involved static in-store sampling through which shoppers were invited to taste two mushroom recipes - vegetarian meatballs and mushroom mini-toast - which were prepared and sampled in-store by Australian mushroom brand ambassadors.

Vegetarian meatballs were chosen as a popular family meal that taps into the growing trend for people to reduce the amount of meat in their diets. The mushrooms on toast recipe aligns with the AMGA-run Café Culture foodservice campaign, #mymushroomtoast.

A total of 68% of shoppers interacted with were converted into trying a sample, with 52% indicating that they intended to buy the product after consuming a sample.

More than 12,000 manually counted units of pre-packaged mushroom products were sold during this period, in addition to 5624 kilograms of loose mushrooms.

Northbridge (NSW), Marrickville (NSW), Gordon (NSW) and Springwood (Qld) were among the highest sampled stores.

Jamison (ACT), Blacktown (NSW) and Dapto (NSW) recorded the highest pre-packed sales. Dickson (ACT), Heidelberg (Vic) and Dee Why (NSW) recorded the highest loose sales.



MUSHROOMS

Brand ambassador cooking up a treat and engaging customers in the supermarket fresh food section. Photo credit: Glow Photography

For more MIGHTY MUSHIE recipes scan here

ORGANIC - PRODUCE - BROWN BAGS

ADD THE MIGHTY MUSHIE

Australian MUSHROOMS

Other topline insights from the campaign included:

- 75% of customers thought about the product prior to trial
- Consumers were very receptive to sampling the products and the majority of customers spoke favourably of mushrooms as a vegetarian option at mealtimes
- The aroma of garlic and mushrooms throughout the store encouraged sampling
- Promotional materials with a QR code link to the recipes provided a significant talking point and caught the attention of many samplers
- Brand ambassadors reported that some samplers shared that they would be buying all ingredients to make the meatballs or mini toast for themselves and/or their family
- In terms of negative feedback, the most common barriers to sampling were customers who did not like mushrooms or those allergic to mushrooms.

Due to the success of the 2022 program, the Mushroom SIAP has endorsed another round of sampling in the second half of FY23, starting in March.



Mini toasts for tasting and scannable QR codes for more inspiration. - Glow Photography



This project has been funded by Hort Innovation using the mushroom research and development levy and funds from the Australian Government. For more information on the fund and strategic levy investment visit horticulture.com.au

Anecdotal feedback from shoppers

Really good, I'm always looking for vegetarian options -
male 31-40 years

Wow that thyme really works! I know what I'm doing with my mushies tomorrow morning! -
female 41-50

Love this recipe. Didn't realise how healthy mushrooms were for you -
female 21-30

Wow that's beautiful, can you give me the recipe! -
female 41-50

Delicious. This has inspired me to get some mushrooms -
female 51-60

Love this meatball recipe, I'm going to make it for my kids! -
female 21-30

So simple but so tasty! -
male 21-30

Mushrooms are a little expensive at the moment -
female 41-50

I am not a fan of the texture mushrooms have -
male 31-40

I prefer mushrooms raw -
male 21-30

I can't eat mushrooms -
female 41-50