



How Food Service Wins

Vision:

To bring industry resources and leadership to increasing bread consumption across the food service channel.

By bringing industry resources and leadership to food service, a Breadbasket Checkoff could facilitate innovation across the channel, help build menus featuring higher margin products, develop menu offerings for greater frequency or dining occasions, and drive volume overall. A checkoff program could also provide a forum for greater dialogue between bakers and food service operators, allowing bakers to give and receive key insights.

Acting as an industry also allows bakers access to research findings that would be greater than those they could fund individually. Industry also brings credibility that a single supplier may not have. When a checkoff engages in a pilot study, for example, the results can be more productive than a chain- or single baker-funded study could. Moreover, checkoff participants could have access to findings before results are released publicly, giving them 12-18 months lead time relative to non-participant competitors.

Our Reconnaissance:

To better understand the challenges and opportunities for an industry checkoff, we conducted a series of interviews. We set out to listen to foodservice customers on the general subject of bread category trends and opportunities, and we sought to gain feedback on various topics of interest.

Food Service Customer Learnings:

From this initial outreach, we learned operators saw a need to introduce more innovation and revive the bakery category. They see significant menu competition for bread in products like chicken nuggets, tortillas, and salads. Operators prioritize taste over other attributes, as most diners suspend health concerns when dining away from home. Operators feel their bread is not good/great and think they need to find more ways to use bread in their menu.

Operators also expressed a willingness to move bread from a side-item to a more prominent role on their menus. There is an interest in having more balanced usage mix throughout the day. They test new items on a regular basis and are willing to test bread products. They also see bread as having a place as a snack and dessert option.



The Three Key Insights From These Interviews Are:

INSIGHT 1:

Operators rate bread as “dull,” “lackluster,” and “full of conflicting views”

Key Quotes

- We are in the sandwich business; the problem is that people think bread makes you gain weight.
- Bread needs to be part of the everyday diet.
- Sandwich-carrier bread is not innovative – same old stuff for hamburgers.
- Hand-held chicken products don't need bread. Tortillas are coming in and taking its place.
- Consumer is very confused and poorly educated about bread...there are lots of marketing buzz words, but still there is confusion.



INSIGHT 2:

Operators want more innovation and more taste.

Key Quotes

- Today people think bread is a non-taste...Bread is just the side-item.
- Taste rules when eating out versus buying in a grocery store to eat at home.
- Consumers feel they are not missing anything if they don't eat the bread.
- No place stands out as having really good bread. Bread is only the vanilla envelope in which to put the good stuff.



INSIGHT 3:

Operators feel more dialogue would help.

Key Quotes

- Regarding deliveries, fresh should mean hours old, not days old.
- Make a better way to handle our bread. 16-year-olds are responsible to slack it out, bake it, and put it on a sandwich.
- If we can improve our bread, we can improve 99% of our sandwiches.



Where does a checkoff bring value relative to these insights?

- A checkoff program could work with restaurant operators on the menu and throughout the restaurant to address bread being the “wallpaper” but not a “main event.”
- Across social media channels and loyalty programs, a checkoff program could work with operators to resolve conflicting perspectives on the value of bread in the American diet – and in their restaurants.
 - For example, a registered dietitian could help amplify campaign messages in a tailor way for the operator.
- A checkoff program could focus development on “dialing up taste” and performance benefits of bread products baked for restaurant customers.
- Collectively, bakers could build the research necessary to provide category insights to operators. Additionally, participants in a checkoff could work with food distributors and large chain R&D departments to create menus including facts on bread attributes.
 - A checkoff could work with and support a baker to present the concept, educate key stakeholders, provide data to use, and sell the concept through to franchisees.
- A checkoff could provide local and regional category data and advise on relevant local consumer preferences to distributors, chain HQ's and independent operators.
- An industry-funded program could develop turnkey sampling programs for new menu items for independent operators and franchisees.
- A checkoff could encourage innovation toward alternative uses/forms of bread: dessert, snacks/bread sticks for dipping, in appetizers, etc.
- The Breadbasket Checkoff could be an independent listening tool identifying rising food service issues, alerting bakers, and working toward solutions.