



the mushroom marketplace

Increase Consumer Demand with Quality Product



It's no secret that the key to retail sales begins with having quality product in-stock that can pass the toughest consumer examination. But do you regularly think about the perception your produce aisle sets for the store? Quality mushroom displays create a halo effect over the entire produce department, and retailers can reap the benefits by implementing mushroom best practices, including cold chain management and properly stocked displays.

Practicing proper cold chain management techniques ensures retailers can maximize the shelf life of fresh mushrooms. These involve maintaining a temperature of less than 35 degrees to increase product longevity and removing poor quality produce immediately for first-in, first-out freshness to display the best-looking mushrooms¹. Produce managers can use this mushroom handling chart in their back rooms, which shows that under optimal conditions, whole mushrooms can hold up between 9-15 days and sliced can hold up to 9 days; at 43 degrees the shelf life of sliced mushrooms is reduced to 5-6 days.

Furthermore, research by Richard J. Sexton evaluated mushroom promotions and found that a positive consumer experience at the shelf is essential. His research uncovered that when mushrooms are out-of-stock, overall consumer demand diminishes in the long run because shoppers will not plan meals featuring mushrooms if they're not confident they will find the products they seek at the store where they do their regular shopping².

Following proper cold chain best practices and ensuring that displays are properly stocked are a sure way for retailers to offer a quality product that will meet consumer demand, increase sales and enhance the overall image of the entire store³.

¹ Retail Best Practices for Mushrooms, Encore Associates, 2009

² Richard J. Sexton, Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of California, Davis, 2007

³ Retail Best Practices for Mushrooms, Encore Associates, 2009

Take Two: 'Go Pink' Promotion Promises to Boost Sales

This October the mushroom industry will go pink for the second year in a row with the City of Hope - a top-ranking cancer hospital - to support Breast Cancer Awareness month. The 2009 pink promotion was a big success, generating the largest movement of fresh mushrooms for any time period, with a 6.7% rise in dollar volume and a 12.3% climb in pound volume.



In addition to fresh mushrooms, many other products will go pink this fall and retailers should consider an integrated marketing approach across categories to drive sales. Research indicates consumers will go out of their way to buy pink products⁴. To assist you in this, the Mushroom Council has developed POS materials available to promote the pink program. Research finds that well-executed POS materials can:

- Tempt shoppers who often do their routine shopping somewhat "unconsciously"⁵
- Capture the attention of leisure-time shoppers who rely on POS materials before purchasing⁶

Going pink is a great way for retailers to boost sales and show customers their commitment to the local community by offering a simple way to contribute to a larger cause. Through the pink promotion, the Mushroom Council will provide \$50,000 to City of Hope's research on breast cancer and mushrooms.

⁴ http://thepanelist.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=51&Itemid=10053, referenced on March 20, 2009

⁵ Nicolas, Catherin, "Retail Therapy: POS advertising - Retailing's final frontier?" Australian Centre for Retail Studies, July 2007

⁶ Howe, Anne, SVP, "BIGresearch and MARS Advertising Semi-Annual Shopper Mindset Survey." Market Intelligence & Insights at MARS, August 2005

As Grills Fire Up, Promote Fresh Mushrooms to Entice Healthy Shoppers



Attract healthy shoppers this grilling season with focused in-store promotions that emphasize the benefits of mushrooms as a nutritious complement to summer meals or a weight-friendly meat alternative.

This marketing approach promises to be a winner. Findings from the latest [annual health and wellness study](#) from ACNielsen and the Natural Marketing Institute showed that healthier Americans are hefty spenders. In fact, they:

- Log more shopping trips per household each year
- Shop online more often than less wellness-oriented groups
- Spend more annually
- Tend to buy more on promotion

And what do consumers consider healthy? According to the study, consumers showed favor in minimally processed foods; less of the “bad stuff” such as trans fats or MSG and more of the “good stuff,” such as vitamin D, omega 3s, fiber, antioxidants and heart-healthy ingredients. Mushrooms are also a clear winner in weight management – preliminary research suggests increasing intake of low-energy density-foods (meaning few calories given the volume of food), specifically mushrooms, in place of high-energy-density foods, like lean ground beef, can be an effective method for reducing daily energy and fat intake while still feeling full and satiated after the meal.

Appeal to Americans’ love for the grill with promotions celebrating summer grilling cookouts around the Fourth of July and Labor Day weekends. Encourage shoppers to incorporate mushrooms to add flavor, nutrition and flair to backyard meals.

Furthermore, including recipes alongside mushroom displays will provide new ways for consumers to think about cooking with mushrooms. In fact, the recipe below is a great grilling dish for any occasion. It’s easy and economical.

Quick & Easy Barbecue Pork and Mushrooms

Recipe courtesy of the Mushroom Council and mushroominfo.com

- Preparation Time: 5 minutes
- Cooking Time: 45 minutes
- Rest Time: 15 minutes
- Serves: 4
- Average cost per serving: \$2.90
- 1 whole pork tenderloin, trimmed (about 1 pound)
- 1 tablespoon barbeque sauce, honey-smoked
- 2 Portabella mushroom caps, sliced into 1/4 inch strips
- 1 tablespoon olive oil

Pre-heat grill to 350°. Place pork on a large sheet of aluminum foil. Rub the barbecue sauce on the pork. Spread the mushroom strips around the pork and drizzle oil over the pork and mushrooms. Sprinkle the grill seasoning over the mushrooms.

Fold the sides and ends of the foil up and crimp to seal. Place pork packet on the grill, close cover. Let the pork cook 45 minutes, remove from the grill and let rest 15 minutes. Carefully unwrap the foil and remove the pork.

Cut into 4 sections. With 2 forks, shred the pork. Mix the shredded pork with some of the remaining juices from the foil to moisten.

Americans Lack Vital Vitamin D, but Mushrooms Can Help

By Michael Holick, Ph.D., M.D.

It’s a startling statistic: *More than 200 million Americans lack vitamin D, a nutrient essential for maintaining health.* As a result, many suffer from a host of chronic conditions and life-threatening illnesses – from cancers and autoimmune diseases to infections and bone problems. I’ve studied this “sunshine vitamin” for more than 30 years, and it has become clearer how crucial vitamin D is to our wellbeing.

Vitamin D is actually a hormone made in the skin from exposure to sunlight. Sadly, if you live north of Atlanta, your skin can’t produce vitamin D from November through March. I’ve developed a simple plan for rebuilding and maintaining an optimal level of vitamin D, which combines a sensible amount of sun exposure, supplements and foods containing vitamin D.

In my new book, “The Vitamin D Solution,” I discuss the vital importance of vitamin D and note the benefits of eating fresh mushrooms, the only fruit or vegetable containing natural vitamin D¹. For more information, visit my website at www.DrHolick.com.

Dr. Michael Holick, Ph.D., M.D., is professor of Medicine, physiology and biophysics and director of the General Clinical Research Unit at Boston University Medical Center and considered one of the world’s expert on vitamin D.

¹ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, USDA Nutrient Data Laboratory. 2009. USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference, Release 22. www.ars.usda.gov/nutrientdata