

UNIT IV - FOOD SELECTION AND CONSUMER HEALTH

Lesson 1: Factors that Affect Consumer Choice

Objective

The student will be able to describe the factors that affect consumer choices of food.

I. Study Questions

- A. What factors affect consumer choice of foods?
- B. What sensory attributes influence consumer choice?
- C. How does convenience influence consumer selection?
- D. How does price affect consumer selection?
- E. How does packaging affect consumer selection?
- F. How does shelf life affect consumer choice?
- G. How do consumer concerns about safety affect food product selection?
- H. What nutritional concerns affect food product selection?

II. References

- a. Martin, Phillip R. Food Science and Technology (Student Reference).
University of Missouri-Columbia: Instructional Materials Laboratory, 1994.
Unit IV.
- b. Activity Sheet

AS 1.1: Comparing Snack Foods

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TEACHING PROCEDURES

A. Introduction

This unit will look at food science and technology through the eyes of the consumer. Consumer choices, food labels, beverage nutrition, and the link between diet and health will be covered.

B. Motivation

1. Video tape a TV food advertisement. Show it to your class and have them answer the following questions: Is the food healthy? Does it appeal to your emotions? Does it make you hungry/thirsty? What age group does the ad target? Does it list the price?
2. Bring several different pieces of hard candy to class. Have each student select a piece of candy without looking at it. Have students pinch their nostrils closed while they put the candy in their mouths. They should not be able to taste the candy nor should they know what flavor of candy they are eating. Discuss how the senses are dependent on each other. Ask, "Do you eat with your mouth, your nose, or your eyes?" An onion and an apple work well for this activity.

C. Assignment

D. Supervised study

E. Discussion

1. Discuss what factors affect a consumer's choice of foods. Remind the students that everyone is a consumer.

What factors affect consumer choice of foods?

- a. Location/supply
- b. Cost
- c. Time
- d. Knowledge/skill
- e. Energy
- f. Other people

- g. Emotions
 - h. Tools
 - i. Culture
 - j. Religion
 - k. Advertising
 - l. Lifestyle
 - m. Values
2. Discuss what sensory attributes influence the consumer's choice.

What sensory attributes influence consumer choice?

- a. Eyesight
 - 1. Color
 - 2. Size/shape
 - b. Odor/smell
 - c. Sense of taste
 - 1. Sweet
 - 2. Sour
 - 3. Salty
 - 4. Bitter
 - d. Feel/touch
3. Discuss how convenience affects consumer selection.

How does convenience influence consumer selection?

- a. Why convenience foods are purchased:
 - 1. Less time required
 - 2. Less energy required
 - 3. Less clean-up needed
 - 4. More variety
 - 5. Less equipment needed
 - b. Why convenience foods are not purchased:
 - 1. Desire to prepare their own food
 - 2. More costly to purchase convenience foods
 - 3. More packaging to dispose of
4. Discuss how the price affects consumer selection.

How does the price affect consumer selection?

- a. Smart shoppers are influenced
- b. Impulse buyers are influenced less

5. Discuss how packaging affects consumer selection. Have students complete AS 1.1.

How does packaging affect consumer selection?

- a. Labeling
 - b. Environmentally friendly
 - c. Size
 - d. Cost
6. Discuss how shelf life affects consumer choice.

How does shelf life affect consumer choice?

- a. Longer shelf life is desired
 - b. May cost more
7. Discuss how consumer safety concerns affect food selection.

How do consumer concerns about safety affect food product selection?

- a. Many consumers show no concern
 - b. Others examine food carefully
8. Discuss what nutritional concerns affect food product selection.

What nutritional concerns affect food product selection?

- a. Fat content
 - b. Calories
 - c. Additives
 - d. Vitamins and minerals present
 - e. Fiber
 - f. Cholesterol
- F. Other activities
1. Have students examine at least two newspaper advertisements for food. Compare the products they are advertising, their price, their pictures, the seasonality of the specials, the percentage of food to non-food items, etc.
 2. Tour a grocery store and locate the items targeted at impulse buyers.
 3. Invite a grocer to speak to the class on how they manage shelf-life on perishable items and what part advertisement plays in sales.

4. Acquire copies of A Guide to the Meat Department from the Beef Industry Council, 444 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611, (312)467-5520. Have students survey the class, their families, or the school using pp. 4-10, 36-40, compare the results to comparable statistics in A guide to the Meat Department.
5. Acquire copies of A Legitimate Beef, Pitman-Moore, Inc. 421 E. Hawley St., Mundelein, IL 60060, (800)541-7459. Have students ask two other people questions, at least one outside of their household. Have questionees write a brief statement on their reactions.

G. Conclusion

Consumers are influenced by a myriad of factors that affect their food selections. Location, time, cost, and religion are a few of these factors. In addition, sensory appeal, convenience, price, packaging, shelf life, safety risk, and nutritional content are all factors that play a major role in consumer selection.

H. Competency

Describe the factors that affect consumer choices of food.

Related Missouri Core Competencies and Key Skills: None

I. Answers to Evaluation

1. c
2. b
3. Advantages:
less time required
less energy required
less clean-up
more variety is possible
requires less equipment

Disadvantages:
more costly
consumers desire to prepare their own food
more packaging to dispose of
4. They are making decisions based on emotions, not necessarily intellect.
5. Fat content, calories, additives, vitamins and minerals present, fiber, cholesterol

6. Teacher's discretion

J. Answers to Activity Sheet

AS 1.1 - Teacher's discretion

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Date _____

EVALUATION

Circle the letter that corresponds to the best answer

1. Which of the following is the most economical choice when purchasing for a large family?
 - a. Large packages, extended shelf life, low cost, blemished cans
 - b. Small packages, short shelf life, high cost, no blemishes
 - c. Large packages, average shelf life, low cost, no blemishes
 - d. Large packages, short shelf life, high cost, no blemishes
2. A one-person family usually shops for:
 - a. Large packages, short shelf life, bright packages, low value
 - b. Small packages, long shelf life, fresh to touch, low cost
 - c. Small packages, short shelf life, attractive odor, low cost
 - d. Large packages, long shelf life, dull package color, high cost

Complete the following short answer questions.

3. Compare/contrast the advantages and disadvantages of convenience foods.
4. Why are impulse buyers less price influenced than shoppers who have planned ahead?
5. List five nutritional concerns consumers exhibit.

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6. Use these words in an essay describing a consumer's choice of foods: energy, knowledge/skill, cost, time, location, family size, advertising, religion, values, emotions, tools. (Use the back of this page if necessary.)

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AS 1.1

Lesson 1: Factors that Affect Consumer Choice

Name _____

Comparing Snack Foods

Objective: To compare different brands of snack foods

Activity Length: 20 minutes

Materials and Equipment:

*4 different snack foods in individual packages (potato chips, pretzels, banana chips, sunchips, corn chips, etc.)

Bowls

Scale

*If snack foods are not in individual packages, put a serving size for each food into a separate bowl.

Procedure:

1. Record the type of snack food in the top row in the columns under "Types of Snack Foods."
2. Compare the "Nutrition Facts" on the label of each snack food. Record your findings in Table 1.1.
3. Taste each snack food and record your preferences in Table 1.1.

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Table 1.1

	Types of Snack Foods			
Serving size				
Weight of product in bag				
Fat				
Saturated Fat				
Calories				
Carbohydrates				
Fiber				
Protein				
Sugar (g)				
Sodium (mg)				
Vitamin C				
Taste preference*				

*(for taste preference, rank 1 thru 4 with 1 being the most preferred.)

Key Questions:

1. Which snack food is the most nutritious? Which do you prefer?
2. Which contains the most salt?
3. Which contains the most fat?
4. Which one did you think tasted the best?