

BACON FACT SHEET



Bacon Popularity

- Pig meat is the single most popular in-home meat consumed and almost a third is accounted for by Bacon consumption* (30%)
- 46% of us grill bacon, 29% tend to fry, whilst 2% stir fry rashers*
- Bacon is not just for breakfast! 27% of bacon rasher occasions occur at the in-home evening meal
- Bacon rashers are increasingly being consumed with onions, pasta and rice, suggesting they are being used more in dishes and home cooking*
- Households don't want to be without bacon – there's generally some in the fridge and, even if people don't have a specific recipe in mind when they buy it, it is acknowledged that it will be eaten fairly quickly after purchase**
- The humble bacon sarnie is the nation's favourite "guilty" food, despite the growing popularity of exotic, spicy dishes***
- The Bacon sandwich is the UK's fastest growing out of home snack item****

Bacon Shopping

- Bacon – more than any other protein – is at the top of the consumers' shopping list. Seven out of ten bacon shoppers have made the decision to buy even before they enter the store**
- Bacon is a £1.3 billion industry, with consumers currently purchasing 221.6k tonnes per year. *****
Rashers are the most popular form of bacon*

Bacon Through the Ages

- Until well into the Sixteenth Century, bacon or bacoun was a Middle English term used to refer to pork in general. The term bacon comes from various Germanic and French dialects. It derives from the French bako, common Germanic bakkon and Old Teutonic backe, all of which refer to the back
- British Bacon is part of our national heritage; there are records of the Romans salting sides of bacon as early as 200BC and Julius Caesar brought his own bacon with him when he landed in ancient Britain in 55BC
- The reason that bacon has been such an important food for so many years is simply because 'cured' or 'preserved' bacon provided many of our ancestors with their only source of meat during the long and often harsh winters
- The country's earliest traditional breakfast of bacon and eggs dates back to 1560
- Roman soldiers received a 'salarium', a ration of salt as part of their payment. Salt was a prized commodity, partly owing to its necessity for preserving meat. This is where the term 'salary' originated

Bacon Language

- Some of our favourite sayings in Britain have bacon connotations but few people really know where they stem from:
 - To bring home the bacon – there are several possible origins to this saying. One goes back almost a thousand years to the Essex village of Dunmow where, it is said, in AD 1111 a noble woman offered a prize of a side of bacon, known locally as a flich, to any man from anywhere in England who could honestly say that he had had complete marital harmony for the preceding year and a day. In over 500 years there were only eight winners!
An alternative explanation comes from the ancient sport of catching a greased pig at country fairs. The winner kept the pig and 'brought home the bacon'



- To save one's bacon - indicates that a situation has been rescued. This has little to do with the bacon that was brought home; rather the word here could derive from Baec which is Old Dutch and Anglo-Saxon for "back". However, like many sayings, there are other suggestions as to the origin. The most likely of these is that, in the early 17th century, "bacon" was thieves' slang for "escape". Alternatively, Brewer suggests it may mean the sides of home-killed bacon that every peasant family would have hanging up in the house; this would have been valuable property and if you or somebody else "saved your bacon" from fire or theft you would have had a narrow escape

Bacon in Literature

- Much of British literature is scattered with references to bacon:
 - In Shakespeare's Henry IV, Falstaff urges action crying, 'On bacons, on!' referring to his peasant companions and in Thomas Hardy's novels, the vivid descriptions of country life highlight the central importance of the 'family pig'
 - Streaky bacon was first recorded in Charles Dickens's 'Oliver Twist' in 1838
 - In The River Cottage Meat Book, Hugh Fearnley Whittingstall speaks of 'the universal adoration of bacon' and also adds 'It's no secret that almost every vegetarian admits they miss bacon'!

Bacon Quotes

- British middle-distance runner, Doug Larson, a gold medal winner at the 1924 Olympic games in Paris must have been tempted by pork since he observed that: *'life expectancy would grow by leaps and bounds if green vegetables smelled as good as bacon'*
- *'I had rather be shut up in a very modest cottage with my books, my family and a few old friends, dining on simple bacon, and letting the world roll on as it liked, than to occupy the most splendid post, which any human power can give'* Thomas Jefferson
- *'I've long said that if I were about to be executed and were given a choice of my last meal, it would be bacon and eggs'* James Beard
- *'The bacon sandwich is one of the western world's greatest triumphs'* Gregg Wallace
- *"My husband was doing a cardio workout at eight o'clock this morning when I was having a bacon sandwich. There's nothing like a bacon butty when you come back to Wales - but he's American."*
Catherine Zeta Jones
The Sun, 24/07/2010, p.39
- *'Bacon is the greatest hangover cure known to man, a veritable miracle food. The smell of it alone proves that aromatherapy isn't all witless, wishful bullxxx'* Al Murray, The Pub Landlord

Bacon Psychology**

- Bacon's role at the centre of family meal occasions, such as relaxed weekends, on carefree holidays, or often when fathers are cooking, triggers positive emotions throughout life and positions bacon as an adult food that children can eat and enjoy
- Bacon's intense taste, firm chew and its ability to dominate other tastes within the total meal powerfully reinforces its position as an adult food. But while many adult foods are difficult for children to eat, bacon transcends the age barrier
- When speed is essential a bacon sandwich not only fits the bill but, the way in which it combines with the bread produces, an attractive texture as well as a satisfying taste. Bacon's strong, savoury sensation in the mouth is extremely comforting



- As bacon is so substantial it brings a distinct advantage to meals. Due to its intense taste and rich, distinct flavour, it persuades us through messages sent to the brain by the mouth and taste buds, that we have eaten more than we really have

Bacon Nutrition

- Bacon is an excellent source of protein and two rashers of grilled back bacon (50g) contains about 13g of protein. Protein is essential for growth and aiding the body to heal itself and also keeps hunger at bay
- Bacon is a good source of Vitamin B1 (Thiamin), with 50g containing 35% of your RDA. B1 is important for vitality and energy release
- Bacon is also an excellent source of Vitamin B12 which can help fight anaemia and boosts vitality. 50g of bacon provides 50% of your RDA of B12
- Bacon contains both zinc and selenium. These are antioxidants and help boost your immunity
- The fat content of Back Bacon has reduced dramatically over the years, by 60% between 1978 and 1996*****

Notes/Sources

* Kantar Worldpanel Usage August 2011

** Bacon – A Category Report April 2005 – Meat and Livestock Commission Centre of Consumer and Market Insight

*** Research by the BBC Good Food magazine Jan 2010

**** NPD Crest Group 12 months ending September 2011

***** Kantar WorldPanel 30 October 2011

***** McCance and Widdowson 1978 and 1996 editions

-ENDS-

For further information about Bacon Connoisseurs Week, the new 'Red White and Bacon' recipe booklet or Bacon recipes/shots please contact:

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The Red Tractor logo– Bacon

The Red Tractor Bacon logo indicates the quality and country of origin of the bacon, that it has been produced to high animal welfare standards, is traceable back to Red Tractor farms and independently inspected at every stage of production.




**GREAT
BACON**
STARTS WITH
**GREAT
PORK**