

*** For Immediate Release ***

Despite COVID, Canadians are willing to spend more to get more – Premiumization a growing trend says BrandSpark Shopper Study



Canadians have a growing appetite for balance; when it comes to food, they crave both enjoyment and health

Toronto, ON (February 4, 2021) – Today, the results of the 18th annual Best New Product Awards (BNPA) were released together with new research by BrandSpark International on Canadians’ shopping habits for consumer products. More than 18,000 Canadians voted on the latest beauty, health, personal care, food, beverage, household, pet, and home goods products in 82 categories. Innovation was strongly represented from the health-conscious realms, with winning brands including Yoats, Geovita, Maple Leaf, and Jamieson.

“With thousands of new products launched each year, consumers want to know which ones are really the best and deserve their hard-earned dollars,” said Robert Levy, President of BrandSpark International. “It’s difficult for consumers to sort through all of the options and hard for brands to break through the clutter. Unsurprisingly, 65% of Canadians rely on the recommendations of other consumers to choose which products to buy. This is where the Best New Product Awards program comes in”, said Levy.

“Over the past 18 years, the Best New Product Awards has become the most influential awards program for Consumer products and is recognized as the Canadian Shoppers’ Seal of Approval,” says Kim Diamond, Vice President of the Best New Product Awards (BNPA). “The BNPA’s help products stand out from the competition. Year after year, we see brands gain an edge in the market by leveraging their win across traditional, digital and e-commerce channels” Diamond adds.

Key takeaways from this year’s BrandSpark Canadian Shopper Study:

- The innovations that resonate most Canadians focus on premiumization, health, taste, sustainability, effectiveness, and convenience.
- 70% say they like trying new products as they search for new experiences and superior performance.
- Canadians’ belief that “research & development is consistently leading to better products” strengthened through 2020.
- Sustainability is on the minds of Canadian shoppers with 61% saying it is important that food products are produced following sustainable practices.
- 78% of Canadians agree that taste is the most important factor when buying food, but they are also trying to eat better with 67% making changes to live healthier.
- Natural food continues to be a priority for Canadians with 63% trying to buy products that are more natural (up from 57% last year).

Premiumization

A growing portion of Canadians are willing to spend more to get a better product. This trend is especially strong for skin care & beauty. With spending down elsewhere due to COVID restrictions, Canadians are ready to treat themselves on the products they use at home.

- 58% say “I don’t mind spending a lot on health care products that I know work” (vs. 55% a year ago)

- Similarly, those agreeing that ‘price is the most important factor in my beauty / personal care decisions’ dropped 5 percentage points to 45%
- 49% say “I don’t mind spending a lot on **skin care** products that I know work” (vs. 42% a year ago)
- 49% say “I don’t mind spending a lot on **household care** products that I know work” (vs. 47% a year ago)

Our Trust in Scientists (R&D is making products better)

Canadians’ belief that “research & development is constantly leading to better products” strengthened through 2020.

- 71% believe that R&D continues to lead to better OTC health products (+7 percentage points vs. a year ago)
- 64% believe in R&D for beauty & personal care (+7 percentage points)
- 59% believe in R&D for food & beverage (+6 percentage points)
- 60% believe in R&D for household care (+2 percentage points)
 - In household care, a desire for traditional natural products is balanced against the desire for high efficacy & innovation.

Food

When it comes to food, Canadians are getting better at balancing enjoyment and health.

- For food, 78% agreed that taste is the most important factor, up 5 percentage points continuing the premiumization trend.
- But shoppers are looking to **balance taste and health** with 67% agreeing they are making changes to live healthier.
 - 84% believe there is a lot they can do with food and nutrition to prevent illness.
 - This increased from 79% a year ago - one of the largest shifts in the study
 - 4 in 10 continue to believe that the best tasting food is usually not healthy and 47% feel that there are not enough convenient & healthy options.
 - Even as many of us work from home and don’t need to worry about office lunches, other pressures have maintained our appreciation for convenience.
 - 66% agree that indulgent foods are worth it occasionally, and rather than cut out indulgent foods, 59% try to find healthier versions that compare.

New innovation in Health/OTC products

Consumer belief in the relevance of innovation is particularly strong for over-the-counter health products, with 71% agreeing these products are consistently being improved.

2021 Best New Product Award Winners

FOOD & BEVERAGE CATEGORIES	PRODUCT
Bagels	Dempster's Bagels
Bread	Stonemill Honest Wellness Plant-Based Protein Bread
Breakfast Sausages	Longo's Breakfast Sausages
Canadian Whisky	Gray Jay Deluxe Canadian Whisky
Candy Gummies	Twizzlers Gummies
Cannabis Infused Beverage	Little Victory
Cereal	Cheerios Oat Crunch Oats 'N Honey
Chocolate Bar	M&M Dark Chocolate Bar
Coffee Pods	Maxwell House Zero Waste Coffee Pods

Cookies	MadeGood Red Velvet Soft Baked Mini Cookies
Crackers	Cheez-It Crackers
Flavoured Cheese	Armstrong Mexican Fiesta Natural Cheddar Cheese Block
Flavoured Sparkling Water	Farm Boy Organic Sparkling Water
Frozen Meal	CRAVE Meals
Frozen Pizza	Dr. Oetker Momenti
Ice Cream Bars	Häagen-Dazs Ruby Cacao Ice Cream Bars
Kettle Cooked Potato Chips	Miss Vickie's Signature
Lactose Free Milk or Alternatives	Lactantia Milk n' Oats
Low Alcohol Spirit	Good Sunday Grapefruit Gin Soda
Mexican Food	Uncle Ben's Zesty Mexican Style Beans
Milk	Beatrice EverFresh Milk
Mixed Grains	Geovita Mixed Grains
No Sugar Added Juice	R.W. Knudsen Organic Celery Apple Cucumber Juice
Non-Dairy Frozen Dessert	DRUMSTICK Non-Dairy Cones
Oat Yogurt Alternative	Yoats
Oatmeal	Quaker Cocoa & Sea Salt Flavour Instant Oatmeal
Organic Kids Yogourt	Stonyfield Organic Kids Drinkable Yogourt
Pizza Kit	Dr. Oetker Pizzaiolo Kit
Premium Chocolate	Golden Gallery Signature
Prepared Meat	Maple Leaf Natural Meal Ingredients
Protein Snack Kit	Schneiders Protein Kits
Rice Snack	Quaker Crispy Minis Everything Large Rice Cakes
School Safe Brownie	Sara Lee Little Bites Brownies
Sliced Cheese	Balderson Natural Cheese Slices
Specialty Coffee	NESCAFE GOLD Cappuccino & Latte
Sugar Alternative	LIVA Date Sugar
Sweet Baked Good	Bimbo Umo Japanese Style Steam Baked Donuts & Cakes
Vinegar	Longo's Curato Red Wine Vinegar
Water Flavour Enhancer	Tetley Cold Infusions

HEALTH, BEAUTY & PERSONAL CARE CATEGORIES	PRODUCT
Anti-Aging Face Serum	L'Oréal Paris Revitalift Triple Power LZR 0.3% Pure Retinol Night Serum
Bed Wetting Product	Ninjamas Nighttime Underwear
Body Moisturizer	AVEENO Restorative Skin Therapy Repairing Cream
Body Wash	Softsoap Body Wash Gentle Wash Coconut & Lemon Grass
Clear Skin Supplement	Jamieson Clear Skin
Cold & Flu Relief Liquid	Vicks NyQuil Complete VapoCOOL Liquid
Dry Shampoo	LiveClean Dry Shampoo Mist
Eyeliners	Revlon Colorstay Micro Hyper Precision Gel Eyeliner
Face Moisturizer (over \$25)	NEUTROGENA Bright Boost Gel Cream
Foundation	COVERGIRL Clean Fresh Skin Milk Foundation
Hair Treatment	L'Oréal Paris Hair Expertise 8-Second Wonder Water
Joint Health Supplement	Nature's Bounty Ultra Strength Turmeric

Lipstick	Revlon Super Lustrous Lipstick The Luscious Mattes
Magnesium Supplement	Jamieson Magnesium Gummies
Makeup Primer	Revlon PhotoReady Prime Plus
Manual Toothbrush	Oral-B Manual Toothbrush Clic Starter Kit
Mascara	Burt's Bees All Aflutter Volumizing Mascara
Plant-based Fiber	Organic Traditions Whole Psyllium Flakes
Probiotic	Jamieson Extra Strength Probiotic Gummy
Sensitive Toothpaste	ProNamel Intensive Enamel Repair
Sunscreen	NEUTROGENA Ultra Sheer Face Mist SPF 50
Throat Lozenge	Vicks VapoCOOL MAX Drops
Vitamin C Face Serum	Indeed Labs Vitamin C Brightening Drops
Vitamin C Supplement	Jamieson Juicy White Peach Chewable Vitamin C
Whitening Toothpaste	Crest 3DWhite Whitening Therapy Charcoal + Tea Tree Oil
Women's Razor	Joy
Women's Shave Prep	Schick Skintimate Vanilla Sugar Shave Gel

HOUSEHOLD & PET CATEGORIES	PRODUCT
Dish Liquid	Dawn Platinum Powerwash Dish Spray
Dishwasher Detergent Pacs	Finish Quantum Ultimate
Dog Food	Nature's Recipe Wet Dog Food
Dog Treat	Milk-Bone Farmer's Medley Limited Ingredient Treat
Fabric Enhancers	Downy Defy Damage
Laundry Pods	Tide Hygienic Clean Power pods
Multi-Purpose Cleaning Wipes	Lysol Simply Wipes
Sanitizing Spray	Microban24 Aerosol

HOME GOODS CATEGORIES	PRODUCT
Air Fryer	Hamilton Beach Air Fry Countertop Oven
Blender	Vitamix Immersion Blender
Cookware Set	Ninja NeverStick Cookware
Cordless Hand Blender	Cuisinart EvolutionX Cordless Rechargeable Hand Blender
Cordless Hand Mixer	Cuisinart EvolutionX Cordless Rechargeable 5-Speed Hand Mixer
Mattress Protector	Bedface Arctic Cooling Mattress Protector
Pet Vacuum	Shark UltraCyclone Pet Pro+ Cordless Handheld Vacuum
Vacuum	Shark Navigator Lift-Away ADV Upright Vacuum LA301C

About BrandSpark International

Founded in 2001, BrandSpark International is a boutique research and consulting firm that provides leading organizations with the clear direction they need to optimize brand positioning, ignite brand strategy, understand the evolving omni-channel shopper and prioritize growth initiatives. **Best New Product Awards Inc.** runs major awards programs Best New Product Awards and BrandSpark Most Trusted Awards, and consumer shopper site, www.ShopperArmy.com which is a community who test products and provide quality ratings and reviews, and shopper actions. Shopper Army also offers cash back at 100+ top online stores. To see more information on the winners, visit: www.ShopperArmy.com/bnpa-2021

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