

## **A Qualitative Exploration of 2014 Consumer Mango Messaging**

### **The Big Picture**

The National Mango Board (NMB) conducted qualitative research in June 2014 with small groups of mango buyers and non-buyers to provide direction on effective messaging. Three small 90-minute group sessions were held in each of two markets; Baltimore and Sacramento. One group represented a combination of buyers and non-buyers while one group included only buyers and the other included only non-buyers.

The focus group started with a discussion of mango associations, usage, likes and dislikes, and the buying or eating experiences and then progressed through a series of messaging statements. The statements covered general, educational, nutrition and sustainability messaging along with testing of various spokesperson acceptance.

### **Key Findings**

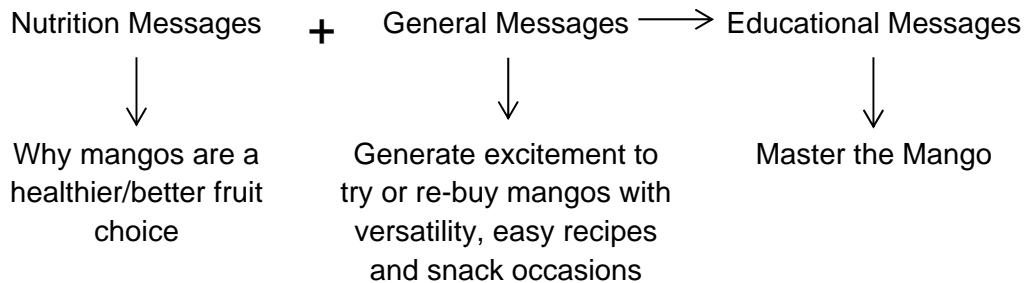
- Positive associations included tropical, sweet, reminder of island vacations or cruises and sunshine. Another positive association is healthy, based on the halo effect of fruit.
- Barriers for both buyers and non-buyers included lack of familiarity, not knowing what to do with a whole mango, the perception that the mango is not portable and therefore not an easy snack choice, and the belief that mangos are seasonal in nature. Even buyers indicated they were not well versed in selection and cutting, with one user indicated she just “starts hacking at it.”
- Other negative associations/perceptions included not being available year-round and being expensive.
- Initial mango experience came from vacation, at a friend’s house or restaurant dish. Only a few had mangos growing up and therefore made them a staple in their household. Repeat purchase was motivated by seeing a display or retail special or having mangos requested by family members.
- Nutrition was the strongest of the four messaging sets with the most compelling advantage over competitive fruits. Top interest was paid to “makes skin look younger/healthier,” “100% of daily Vitamin C in a single cup,” “20 vitamins and minerals” and “100 calories a cup.”
- General messaging was also strong with information that catches the attention of both buyers and non-buyers such as its versatility (“it makes me more interested to know you can do different things with mangos” said a non-buyer) and taste-related enticements such as “mangolicious.”
- Educational messages are important but need to be carefully laid out for non-buyers to make the process sound easy and give them a place to start. How to

pick a mango, ripening and storage information and cutting instructions are important pieces especially for non-buyers who are intimidated by a whole mango.

- Sustainability messages were received with the least enthusiasm and buy-in, making it the weakest and riskiest messaging set. The topic raised concerns about the mango's origin and the information was perceived as "too heavy" to be motivating.
- A spokesperson representing mangos should be able to reinforce the positive nutrition and good-for-you aspect of mangos and provide easy recipes and tips on how to choose and prepare mangos. The top suggestion among all groups was a credible, believable spokesperson who they could identify with such as a real mom or a relatable, down-to-earth chef (Jamie Oliver, Bobby Flay were mentioned.) The groups were skeptical of celebrities who would be doing the work just for money and the option of having a grower as a spokesperson would possibly reinforce the "not local" aspect of the fruit, which was questioned in multiple groups.

### **Implications**

- This research suggests a strong umbrella message platform that would allow consumers to "meet the mango" through a sequence of the message sets that starts with getting the consumer's attention, creating a call to action and then facilitating a successful experience with "how-to's."



- "Meet the Mango" introduces mangos to new users and opens the door to educating buyers, leading to increased purchase frequency.
- Nutrition messages can be used to convince consumers that whole mangos are a super-nutritious food and help overcome the "mystery fruit" barrier for non-buyers.
- Follow introductory enticement with educational "how-to" message to combat the perception that mangos are scary (non-buyers) or a hassle (buyers) – paying particular attention to clarity, simplicity and the literal nature of messaging.

### **Messaging Detail:**

- General messages/words that worked well:
  - Mangolicious
  - Tropics
  - Mango Sunshine
  - Prepare in advance for days of snacking
  - Versatility and recipes

- Education messages/words that worked well:
  - Feel for the give
  - Soft but firm
  - Two minutes of learning, a lifetime of goodness
  - Master the mango slice-and-scoop
  
- Nutrition Messages/words that worked well:
  - Rich in Vitamin A, powerful antioxidants, mangos make skin look younger
  - Meet the mango
  - 100% of your daily Vitamin C in a single serving (year-round acceptance)
  - ABCs ... 20 essential vitamins and minerals
  - Sweet and delicious at 100 calories a cup
  
- Sustainability messages/words that worked well:
  - Harvested by hand
  - Provides jobs for local workers
  - Counters global warming