



For the 52 weeks ending March 24, 2019, chocolate dominated the confectionery sector with \$14.1 billion in sales.



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Forward Thinking: Sweet as Sugar

Chocolate innovation is being driven by limited-edition flavors, plant-based formulas and chocolate experiences, while non-chocolate candy activity is being led by a variety of unique texture and flavor combinations and new food and beverage applications inspired by candy flavors.

In 2019, the confectionery industry generated \$37.5 billion in retail sales, and Euromonitor and National Confectioners Association (NCA) project category sales will reach \$39.9 billion by 2024^a. According to Polaris Market Research, the global sugar confectionery market size is anticipated to reach \$69.5 billion by 2026, growing at a rate of 4.3%^b. According to IRI data for the 52 weeks, ending March 24, 2019, chocolate dominated the confectionery sector with \$14.1 billion in sales followed by non-chocolate candy that reached \$7.4 billion and gum achieved \$3.1 billion^c.

^acandyusa.com/sweet-insights-state-of-treating-2020/

^bwww.polarismarketresearch.com/industry-analysis/sugar-confectionery-market

^cwww.iriworldwide.com/es-es/insights/publications/snapshot-of-confectionery

Chocolate innovation is being driven by limited-edition flavors, plant-based formulas and chocolate experiences, while non-chocolate candy activity is being led by a variety of unique texture and flavor combinations and new food and beverage applications inspired by candy flavors.

Chocolate Corner

According to Euromonitor and NCA, in 2019, chocolate represented 56% of confectionery sales with a 2.2% growth. In 2019, online chocolate sales reached \$817 million and increased 15.5% in the 52 weeks ending December 29, 2019, according to IRI.

KitKat has been busy adding new flavors to its portfolio. In 2018, Nestlé released the KitKat Gold limited-edition in Australia. Due to its popularity, Nestlé has launched KitKat Gold in the United Kingdom and has added the flavor to the range. KitKat Gold highlights the brand's signature crispy wafer in a milk chocolate base, topped with creamy white chocolate and caramel notes.

In the United States, the Hershey Company has been actively launching new flavors and limited-edition seasonal flavors. In April 2019, KitKat added Duos Mint + Dark Chocolate as the first year-round flavor introduced in nearly a decade. The new flavor consists of mint creme on the top and dark chocolate on the bottom, surrounded by crispy wafers. In 2020, for Easter, Lemon Crisp KitKats launched with crisp wafers in lemon-flavored white crème. For the spring, limited-edition KitKat Birthday Cake debuted, which has a "birthday cake flavor and aroma of frosting perfectly paired with the surprise crunch of sprinkles." For the summer, limited-edition KitKat Apple Pie joined the lineup and is described as the "iconic wafer surrounded in the delicious taste of apple pie."

During the COVID-19 pandemic, in partnership with DC Comics, Hershey introduced the Super Hero Milk Chocolate collection featuring seven DC Comic superheroes: Aquaman, Batman, Cyborg, Green Lantern, Superman, The Flash and Wonder Woman. The first batch of chocolate bars was shared with front line workers in May, and in July, they rolled out to the public. In June, for a chance to win \$5,000, the Whatchamacallit brand by Hershey asked fans to name a new candy bar, which includes chocolate, chocolatey crisps and peanut butter.

The classic individual rectangle green foiled wrapped Andes Crème de Menthe candies have been upgraded and are now available in the Andes Snap Bar XL!, which comes with 12 individual mints that can be snapped off. In honor of National Ice Cream Month in July, Sugarfina unveiled the Gelato Candy Collection in Mint Chip, Salted Caramel, Stracciatella and Strawberry flavors. Dunkin' released a line of Coffee Bars inspired by the brand's coffee flavors. Offered in Caramel, French Vanilla, Hazelnut and Original Blend varieties, the bars contain 26 mg of caffeine.

Theo Chocolate, known for its organic chocolate bars, unveiled two new additions to its line: Peanut Butter and Jelly Cups and Coffee and Cream Cups. The Peanut Butter and Jelly Cups have a layer of peanut butter and raspberry jelly in a 55% dark chocolate shell while the Coffee and Cream Cups contain dark chocolate and coffee-infused coconut oil in a 45% milk chocolate shell. Lake Champlain Chocolates recently launched the Restorative Moments Chocolate Bar Collection, which is made with 70% organic and fair trade certified chocolate and offered in six flavors: Crunchy Quinoa, Extra Dark, Golden Spice (ginger, turmeric, cardamom and cinnamon), Hazelnut Crunch, Lightly Salted and Raspberry Jam. To appeal to consumers with allergies or dietary intolerances, Nomo, in the United Kingdom, introduced the Nut Free Hazelnut Crunch Choc Bar made with crunchy cocoa nibs, crisp rice cereal pieces and natural nut-free flavor.



Apple Pie is one of KitKat's many limited-edition seasonal flavors. It launched for the summer and is described as the "iconic wafer surrounded in the delicious taste of apple pie." Photo courtesy of the Hershey Company.

Go Big or Go Home

The expression “one’s eyes are bigger than one’s stomach” is appropriate for this year’s activity from Mars Wrigley and The Hershey Company. Mars Wrigley unveiled a Snickers bar that was two feet high and 26 inches wide with more than 3,500 lb of chocolate and 1,200 lb of caramel, peanuts and nougat. Originally it was declared the world’s largest chocolate nut bar by the Guinness Book of World Records. However, two weeks after, Hershey’s usurped the title with a Reese’s Take 5! bar that was nine feet long, five and a half feet wide and two feet high weighing nearly three tons (5,943 lb).

Plant-Based Chocolate

Brands are raising the bar and introducing plant-based chocolates suitable for vegans, consumers with dietary needs or those who are looking for cleaner, healthier products with less sugar.

Candid has introduced Noons, a whole-plant, lower-sugar chocolate collection sweetened with cacao fruit. The products are paleo-friendly, vegan, gluten-free, non-GMO and formulated with organic ingredients, including tropical fruits and superfoods. Noons are available in four varieties: Banana & Nibs, Golden Berry Turmeric & Mango, Mango & Cinnamon and Pineapple & Coconut. In addition, the products are packaged in a recyclable box and compostable inner bag.

Barry Callebaut introduced Plant Craft, a range of dairy-free and vegan ingredients including chocolates, cocoa powders, nuts, fillings and decorations. The M_lk Chocolate product is 100% dairy-free and “is creamy, milky and has the typical milk chocolate flavor and texture” and took the Barry Callebaut R&D team two years to develop. With the slogan “Eat No Evil,” U.K.-based brand Prodigy introduced Coconut Cahoots and Peanut & Caramel Cahoots. The products are plant-based, vegan-friendly and use

sustainable packaging. Targeted to active consumers, Japanese start-up brand True Food Chocolate unveiled a Plain and Dark guilt-free plant-based chocolate. The products contain only six ingredients: cacao, coconut, chicory, vanilla, hemp seed and monk fruit, and are suitable for consumption in the morning or after a workout.

Chocolate Experiences

Prior to COVID-19, brands were launching chocolate experiences and events. During COVID-19, with mandated store closures, many brands moved their businesses online to offer virtual interactive experiences.

In February, Hershey’s opened its first-ever Hershey Bar at Barclays Center in Brooklyn, New York. In addition to a signature chocolate martini, the menu offers three cocktails incorporating Jolly Ranchers: Blue Raspberry Margarita, Green Apple Vodka Chiller and Watermelon Daiquiri Slush as well as non-alcoholic options such as hot chocolate and milkshakes. Also, in February, Barry Callebaut opened the world’s first 3D printing studio through its Mona Lisa brand in Girona, Spain. The “innovative technology empowers chefs to design ‘unseen’ and bespoke chocolate creations, made from 56% high-quality Belgian chocolate, without compromising on taste or texture.”

In San Francisco from March 6-8, 2020, the first Craft Chocolate Experience took place at the Palace of Fine Arts. The event had 93 exhibitors from 23 different countries and offered lectures, demos and pairings. Chocolate manufacturer Teta Frida opened Chocolate Village By The River, a luxury camping resort in Slovenia. Visitors can indulge in chocolate experiences ranging from a guided chocolate factory tour with a beer and cocktail tasting session to a wellness treatment sauna with a chocolate bath and chocolate toiletries, including shampoo, shower gel



Candid has introduced Noons, a whole-plant, lower-sugar chocolate collection sweetened with cacao fruit in four varieties: Banana & Nibs, Golden Berry Turmeric & Mango, Mango & Cinnamon and Pineapple & Coconut. Photo courtesy of Candid.



Ford Gum and Impact Confections have partnered on Warheads Super Sour Gumballs in five flavors: Blue Raspberry, Green Apple, Lemon, Orange and Watermelon. Photo courtesy of Ford Gum, Inc.

and toothpaste. In July, The Hershey Story Museum in Hershey, Pennsylvania, reopened its Chocolate Lab classes and offered visitors an opportunity to make “Yankee Doodle Bar,” “S’mores Galore” and “Planet Chocolate” treats.

Nestlé International Travel Retail (NITR) Smarties Music Creator, sold exclusively at duty-free shops, launched in 2019. The colorful, durable flute intended for use multiple times was made of plastic. To align with Nestlé’s global goal to transition to 100% recyclable and reusable packaging by 2025, in 2020, the brand relaunched a sustainable Smarties Music Creator. The updated package replaces the single-use plastic components with a recyclable carton box and offers a 38-g tube of Smarties with a durable interior flute and flute container. In addition, the brand is supported by online, digital content and includes a learn-to-play guide and music sheet.

In 2018, Dutch-based brand Tony’s Chocolonely announced plans to build a \$105 million Chocolate Circus with expectations of up to 500,000 visitors a year. In June, Tony’s Chocolonely delivered the plans to the planning council for a three-building theme park designed by Amsterdam-based architecture and urban planning company SeARCH. The theme park includes a roller coaster and is expected to take three years to build.

Although not edible chocolate, a novel experiential product is Coco For Real, a new nail polish

from Nails Inc., which offers chocolate-scented nail color with an ultra-glossy and high-shine finish. The chocolate-scented shades are available in I’m Fondue You (a caramel foil) and 100% Hot Chocolate (a dark creamy mocha).

Digital Experiences

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing, chocolate brands are reaching consumers stuck at home through virtual experiences.

In March 2020, the Fine Cacao and Chocolate Institute, Uncommon Cacao, and the Craft Chocolate Experience partnered to create the #StayHomeWithChocolate Festival to drive online sales to small chocolate businesses impacted by COVID-19, and to inspire consumers to stay home and buy chocolate online while being entertained and educated with a variety of Instagram Live sessions hosted by chocolate experts. In May 2020, Stay At Home With Chocolate hosted digital events in honor of Mother’s Day and followed up with more events in June in honor of Father’s Day.

On April 29, 2020, U.K. chocolate brand Firetree hosted its first Virtual Chocolate Tasting Event through Zoom. Customers signed up for the event and purchased a curated box of three single estate chocolates to taste at home. During the event, chocolate maker Martyn O’Dare took visitors on a journey through the Southern Sea’s volcanic islands, where the brand sources their cocoa, and discussed

the Bean-To-Bar process. On July 2, 2020, Firetree hosted its second Virtual Chocolate Tasting Event and showcased four single-origin bars that were carefully curated for their fruity taste.

In June 2020, Barry Callebaut's launched a new BC Live platform to host three 40-minute lunch hour webinars to introduce and educate manufacturers and formulators about the newest trends and uses for chocolate ingredients. The "Centennial Chocolate Trends" webinar focused on millennial and Gen Z consumers and their preference for better-for-you and sustainable food, while "Chocolate Solutions for Eating Lifestyles" looked at adapting ingredients to fit dietary choices like vegan and keto. The "New Chef Concepts LIVE," a kitchen demo, showed how to incorporate these trends into healthier treats and snacks.

Candy Land

Gum and non-chocolate candy offer consumers a variety of textures and flavor combinations ranging from soft and chewy to gummy and fluffy. In 2019 gum/mints were 15% of confectionery sales with a 1.2% increase, while non-chocolate was 30% of confectionery sales and grew 3.4%, according to Euromonitor and NCA. According to IRI for the 52



Hi-Chew unveiled the Soda Pop Mix, which includes Ramune and Cola flavors. The Ramune flavor was inspired by the Japanese carbonated drink and features a tangy lemon-lime flavor, while Cola was inspired by the classic American soda. Photo courtesy of Morinaga America, Inc.

weeks ending December 29, 2019, online gum/mint sales reached \$126.8 million with a 40.4% increase, and non-chocolate was worth \$655 million, up 36.5%.

Chew on This

At the end of 2019, Mars Wrigley announced plans to roll out Starburst gum in the brand's four classic flavors sometime this year. Ford Gum has introduced a variety of new products this year. The iconic Jelly Belly flavors have been translated into a line of sugar-free gum in Berry Blue, Island Punch, Very Cherry and Watermelon varieties. Ford Gum and Impact Confections have partnered on Warheads bubble gum and a Sour Watermelon Squeeze Candy.

The Warheads Super Sour Gumballs are available in five flavors: Blue Raspberry, Green Apple, Lemon, Orange and Watermelon. The Mastika Gum Co. debuted Mastika Collagen, a gum made with 5% beef collagen to promote smooth, beautiful skin. The gum is halal, free of sugar and aspartame and is packaged in a pink tin with a mirror for reuse.

Soft & Chewy

Hi-Chew has been busy releasing new flavors. Originally introduced last year as part of the Sweet & Sour Mix, Hi-Chew has added the Sweet & Sour Watermelon variant as a standalone core flavor. Tropical Smoothie and Piña Colada have joined the brand's Fruit Combos range, which features two layers of flavors. The Tropical Smoothie flavor has an outer layer of passion fruit with a mango layer inside while Piña Colada is surrounded by a creamy coconut outer layer with a pineapple flavor within. Hi-Chew unveiled the Soda Pop Mix, which includes Ramune and Cola flavors. The Ramune flavor was inspired by the Japanese carbonated drink and features a tangy lemon-lime flavor while the Cola was inspired by the classic American soda.

Starburst Swirlers is a new product highlighting flavor mashups of the brand's traditional flavors in a new chewy-stick shape. The Swirlers are available in three flavor mashups: Cherry-Lemon, Strawberry-Cherry and Strawberry-Orange. SweeTarts launched Twisted Rainbow Punch Ropes and Twisted Mixed Berry Ropes Bites. The Twisted Rainbow Punch Ropes are multi-colored licorice with a fruit punch flavor and a tart filling while the Twisted Mixed Berry Ropes Bites are a bite-sized candy that combines cherry, strawberry and raspberry flavors together with a tart center. Airheads introduced Filled Ropes in Bluest Raspberry, Cherry, Watermelon, Strawberry and Orange flavors. For a limited-time, Hershey's offered Izizzlers, an untwisted version of the brand's classic strawberry-flavored Twizzlers.



Joffer Beverage Company launched a line of Jelly Belly-flavored sparkling waters in eight varieties: French Vanilla, Lemon Lime, Orange Sherbet, Piña Colada, Pink Grapefruit, Tangerine, Very Cherry and Watermelon. Photo courtesy of Joffer Beverage Company.

SmartSweets, known for low-sugar candy, has introduced Sweet Chews, “the first-ever plant-based, low-sugar chew” offered in three flavors: Mango, Strawberry and Watermelon. Like the brand’s other products, the chews are free from sugar alcohols and artificial sweeteners and are formulated with plant-based, non-GMO ingredients that are free from gluten, dairy, soy, lactose, peanuts, tree nuts and artificial colors. According to SmartSweets, the product has 84% less sugar than a traditional chew and contains 10 g of fiber and 3 g of sugar per bag.

BeanBoozled added the Fiery Five to its lineup, which highlights Carolina Reaper, Cayenne, Habanero, Jalapeño and Sriracha flavors. Skittles Dips joined the Skittles portfolio and are the classic candy covered in a creamy yogurt-flavored coating. In honor of Pride month and to celebrate the LGBTQ+ community, in June 2020, Skittles introduced the limited-edition Skittles Pride Packs, which are a gray and white colorless design with a label that reads “Only #OneRainbow matters during Pride.” The packs contain the brand’s signature five flavors: Grape, Green Apple, Lemon, Orange and Strawberry, but the candies are colorless.

Yummy Gummy

Last year, Perfetti Van Melle launched Airheads Gummies in six classic Airheads flavors: Blue Raspberry, Cherry, Green Apple, Orange, Strawberry and Watermelon. The gummies come in five shapes, including a balloon, bow tie, hat, mustache and sunglasses. In April, to celebrate Haribo’s 100th birthday, the brand launched the limited-edition Passport Mix, which features a combination of popular flavors and shapes from various countries. The mix contains Crocs (France), Balla Balla (Spain/Portugal), Brix (Spain/Portugal), Rings (United Kingdom/Ireland), Cherries (Germany/United States), Goldbears (Germany/ United States), Happy Cola (Germany/ United States) and Airplanes (limited-edition shape).

Known for hard candy lollipops, Bazooka has released Push Pop Gummy Rolls “in a dispenser that allows consumers to pull, press and push to get the ideal piece of gummy candy” in Berry Blast, Blue Raspberry, Strawberry and Watermelon flavors. In addition, Push Pops has released a new Cotton Candy flavor to its hard candy line while Juicy Drop has added Strawberry Kiwi to its Juicy Drop Pop and Juicy Drop Gummies product offerings.

Jolly Ranchers has extended its hard candy range into new Fruit Flavored Gummies in Original and Sour varieties in Blue Raspberry, Cherry, Grape, Green Apple and Watermelon flavors.

Shaped like classic jelly beans, Jelly Belly launched a new line of gummies in two varieties: Sweet and Sour. Using Jelly Belly’s true-to-life flavors, both lines feature Berry Blue, Green Apple, Lemon, Orange and Very Cherry flavors. The gummies are vegan, non-GMO, contain no animal gelatin and the colors are made from natural sources. Smashmallow, the brand known for marshmallows, has debuted Smashgummy, a new gummy candy. Shaped like hot air balloons, the gummies are available in two varieties: Fresh Picked with Cherry, Orange, Peach and Strawberry flavors, and Pucker Up with Sour Green Apple, Lemon, Raspberry and Watermelon. The products are made with non-GMO ingredients, use a kosher certified bovine gelatin source, are free from carrageenan as well as artificial colors, flavors and corn syrup, and are sweetened with organic cane sugar, monk fruit juice and allulose.

Albanese has debuted the Ultimate 8 Flavor Gummi Bears collection, which is made with natural flavors, colors from real fruits and vegetables and are gluten free and fat free. The new collection includes eight unique flavors: Alphonso Mango, Amity Raspberry, Asian Pear, Black Currant, Blood Orange, Crimson Cranberry, Fuji Apple and Queen Pineapple.

Cloud Nine

According to The S'mores Cookbook, Americans buy 90 million lb of marshmallows every year^d. It is estimated that, during the summer, approximately 50% of marshmallows sold are roasted for s'mores.

In 2019, Smarties, released Squashies, a unique application that is a cross between a gummy and marshmallow. The raspberry and cream-flavored foam gummy is fat-, gluten-, and peanut-free and naturally colored pink from black carrot extract. Peeps is notorious for launching a variety of new flavors in the spring for Easter. This year the brand did not disappoint. New 2020 Peeps marshmallow flavors include Chocolate Pudding, Hot Tamales Fierce Cinnamon, Raspberry Delights (flavored marshmallow dipped in crème flavored fudge) and Root Beer Float.

Peeps also debuted a Kellogg's Froot Loops Rainbow Pop, which features four different colored chicks on a stick flavored like the breakfast classic, sold exclusively at Target and Walmart. For consumers who are not a fan of marshmallows but enjoy the iconic chicks, Peeps partnered with shoe brand Crocs to offer a limited-edition Peeps x Crocs Classic Clog collaboration. Available in three colors—blue, pink and yellow—the clogs come adorned with 3D charms shaped like the quintessential chicks.

Stuffed Puffs introduced a Chocolate-On-Chocolate flavor that consists of cocoa marshmallows that are filled with milk chocolate. At the beginning of the year, Oreo released a Chocolate Marshmallow cookie that featured pieces of marshmallow in the cookie with a chocolate marshmallow creme filling.

^dwww.realsimple.com/food-recipes/recipe-collections-favorites/desserts/smores-facts



Albanese's new Ultimate 8 Flavor Gummi Bear collection includes eight unique flavors: Alphonso Mango, Amity Raspberry, Asian Pear, Black Currant, Blood Orange, Crimson Cranberry, Fuji Apple and Queen Pineapple. Photo courtesy of Albanese.

Spangler is bringing Necco Wafers back in the original packaging. Seven of the eight original flavors—Cinnamon, Clove, Lemon, Lime, Licorice, Orange and Wintergreen—are the same formula, while the Chocolate flavor has been tweaked.

Sweet Spot

Prior to COVID-19, new candy and chocolate stores were opening. According to John Downs, president & CEO of NCA, “Consumers are looking for experiences, and we know that chocolate, candy, gum and mints provide that special and unique quality for our retail partners. Retailers are delighting their shoppers’ every day—on the shelves or virtual shelves in every place they shop.” Due to COVID-19, the entire retail landscape is changing, and consumer experiences will be different as the world slowly eases into a new normal.

Touted as the world’s first department store of candy, in December 2019, ItSugar opened a three-story, 22,000 square-foot candy shop at the American Dream mall in East Rutherford, New Jersey. The store showcases more than 10,000 choices of candy and has branded shops such as Sour Patch Kids, Oreo, Nerds, Reese’s, Peeps, Pez and Starbursts located on the second floor.

In January, the Mars Retail Group announced the opening of three new M&M’s “experiential” stores. The M&M’s experiential store at The Florida Mall in Orlando is moving to Disney Springs at Walt Disney World Resort, while the Mall of America in Minneapolis will be home to an M&M’s flagship experiential store with more than a 24,000-square-ft footprint.

In early 2021, Berlin is slated for M&M’s first European experiential store. Each shop “will celebrate the culture and spirit of the local community both in design and merchandise” and highlight signature experiences such as the Wall of Chocolate, larger than life characters and personalized, customizable and interactive experiences.

Candytopia launched in Phoenix, Arizona, and, like California and New York City, it features interactive art installations, including candy sculptures, exhibits and images. At the beginning of March, Happy Pills, a Barcelona-based candy store, opened its first U.S. franchise in Boston. The store is designed to have the ambiance of a pharmacy, and customers fill pill-bottle-like containers with one or more of 88 different candies and a variety of labels. In response to the reopening of stores, on Saturdays and Sundays in the summer, New York City’s oldest candy store, Economy Candy, debuted a Push Cart Service and offered the “Economy Candy To-Go” package, which includes \$10 Mystery Sweet, Mystery Sour and Mystery Chocolate bags.

Candy-Inspired Crossover

Iconic candy flavors are being translated into different applications ranging from breakfast cereals and dairy products to snacks and beverages.

Hershey's and General Mills have teamed up on a line of three candy-inspired cereals: Hershey's Kisses, Reese's Puffs Big Puffs and Jolly Rancher. Nabisco unveiled Chips Ahoy! Sour Patch Kids Limited Edition Cookies, which features "the crunchy, sweet texture of a Chips Ahoy! cookie combined with sweet and sour candy pieces."

In 2019, Yoplait collaborated with Starburst on a candy-flavored yogurt line in the four classic Starburst flavors: Cherry (red), Lemon (yellow), Orange (orange) and Strawberry (pink). This year, Yoplait released Gushers Yogurt, available in three flavors: Blue Raspberry, Green Apple and Tropical Punch. The yogurt is formulated with "burstin' beads" to mimic the Gushers experience. Using Barry Callebaut's Ruby Cacao, Häagen-Dazs has introduced a Ruby Cacao Crackle Pistachio Sweet Cream Trio Crispy Layers ice cream and Ruby Cacao Ice Cream Bars.

In the United Kingdom, for Valentine's Day, Heinz collaborated with the department store Fortnum & Mason to create a nine-piece limited-edition "ValenHeinz" Tomato Ketchup Truffles box with milk, dark and white chocolate truffles. For the holidays, Kellogg's will introduce Froot Loops candy canes. Hilco, the novelty candy brand, partnered with Kraft Heinz to include holiday Kool-Aid branded items such as candy canes, tube toppers with gummies and a book of candy. In addition, the company is creating a Kool-Aid line of popping candy bags with triangular pouches inside in Cherry, Grape and Tropical Punch flavors.

Joffer Beverage Company launched a line of Jelly Belly-flavored sparkling water in eight varieties: French Vanilla, Lemon Lime, Orange Sherbet, Piña Colada, Pink Grapefruit, Tangerine, Very Cherry and Watermelon. According to the brand, each flavor is formulated with carbonated water and natural flavors with no sugar or sweeteners.

How Sweet It Is

Americans have a sweet tooth for chocolate and candy all year long. According to an FMCG Gurus survey of 2,000 U.S. consumers, 94% of respondents said they purchase confectionery products, with



Kellogg's Froot Loops Rainbow Pop is a new product, which features four different colored chicks on a stick flavored like the breakfast classic (right). For Easter, Peeps moved into fashion and collaborated with shoe brand Crocs on the limited-edition Peeps x Crocs Classic Clog collection (above). Photo courtesy of Just Born, Inc.



58% expressing that their buying habits change throughout the different seasons of the year^e. The data revealed that respondents seek out experiential flavors when buying confectionery in the spring and traditional flavors when buying confectionery in the winter. However, with the impact of COVID-19, 64% of respondents thought that these habits would change.

The NCA and 210 Analytics surveyed more than 1,500 adults, and according to the NCA "Sweet Insights: State of Treating 2020" report, almost 90% of consumers agree that good emotional well-being leads to better physical well-being leading to a happy life. More than 70% of shoppers agreed that treating is important for their emotional well-being, and this has become even more prevalent during COVID-19. In April and May 2020, FMCG Gurus ran two studies on how COVID-19 has impacted consumers' eating habits with 23,000 consumers across 18 countries. The study showed that 60% of respondents had increased the amount of comfort food they purchased over the last month.

Chocolate innovation will continue to be driven by new flavors as well as limited-edition flavors and plant-based formulas, while unique texture and flavor combinations and new food and beverage applications inspired by candy flavors will lead non-chocolate candy activity. Due to the uncertainty of COVID-19, virtual and interactive chocolate and candy experiences will replace large in-person gatherings and events. Although consumer behaviors are changing during these unusual times, chocolate and candy are mainstays offering comfort and indulgence.

^efmccgurus.com/reports/fmcg-gurus-how-has-covid-19-changed-consumer-behaviour/