BREAKFAST BEAT

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BFY Menuing

Better-for-you (BFY) eating has finally caught our attention and restaurant chains are reacting at breakfast by:

• Keeping portion sizes moderate
• Reducing salt, increasing flavor
• Offering healthier sides of fruits and grains

Some operators are addressing kid’s meals:

• McDonald’s plans to include produce or a low-fat dairy option in all Happy Meals by March 2012.
• The NRA’s “Kids LiveWell” program includes 20 chains (15,000+ locations)

committed to offering items meeting prescribed nutritional criteria.
• Burger King will stop automatically including fries and soda in kids’ meals.

The trick is to create flavorful items with fewer calories and more taste. Add freshness with salsa, fruit, or citrus. Add zip with roasted pepper or onion. Look at Bruegger’s Skinny Zesty Egg White Sandwich with turkey sausage, Swiss and sun-dried tomato spread (410 calories), or Dunkin Donuts’ line of Egg White Flatbreads with onion and peppers (under 300 calories).

Upscale Your Breakfast Sandwiches

Operators looking for ways to increase margins can create quick momentum by upgrading sandwich ingredients. In a recent study, 37% of consumers said they would pay more for higher-quality sandwich ingredients, and for those aged 54+, the figure rises to 43%. Eggs are a given, as they are the basis of 95% of QSR breakfast sandwiches. But how do you go beyond the formulaic add-ons of meat and American cheese that your guests can get elsewhere? Become a destination for breakfast by offering:

• Steak or jalapeños (Sonic)
• Avocado spread or banana peppers (Subway)
• Poblano chilies or Asiago cheese (Wendy’s)
• Turkey sausage or mushrooms (Einstein Bros.)
• Roasted veggies or sundried tomato spread (Brueggers)

Get creative with ciabatta, whole wheat wraps, herbs, or flavored spreads, and add some excitement to both your menu and bottom line.

Breakfast Growth with the Incredible! Egg

Take advantage of this growing daypart with the leading protein for breakfast, eggs. Familiar, versatile and convenient, eggs are essential in just about every restaurant. Eggs have a low food cost and are a high-quality protein ingredient that can work on the breakfast menu in numerous dishes.

To get all of the information you need about eggs and breakfast, American Egg Board is offering a complimentary copy of the reference booklet Eggs: A Natural for any Foodservice Operation. The 16-page guide covers everything you need to know about eggs for your breakfast menu such as egg nutrition and egg handling. To receive a copy, contact the American Egg Board at aeb@aeb.org/foodservice or by telephone at: 847-296-7043; or order from our website at: http://www.aeb.org/foodservice-professionals/egg-products/egg-information-order-form.

DID YOU KNOW?

• Egg-laying hens are fed a high-quality, nutritionally-balanced diet of feed made up mostly of corn, soybean meal, vitamins and minerals. Poultry nutrition specialists analyze the feed to ensure that the natural nutrients hens need to stay healthy are included in their diets.

• Eggs contain 41 IU of Vitamin D and are one of the few foods that are a naturally good source of this vitamin, meaning that one large egg provides at least 10% of the Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA).

• The amount of protein in one large egg is 6 grams or 12% of the Recommended Daily Allowance. The protein in eggs is one of the highest quality proteins found in any food.
**Shaking the Salt**

While the new 2011 Dietary Guidelines recommend a lower daily sodium intake, a recent review has determined that over the past five years, menu mentions of salt have increased by 144%. However, increased mention does not necessarily equate to increased amount. Artisanal seasonings such as salt/spice or salt/herb blends that improve flavor while reducing sodium are a major reason for the increased mentions.

Some chains have made news by decreasing their use of salt:
- Subway has reduced sodium by 28% in its Fresh Fit sandwiches.
- McDonald’s will reduce sodium menu-wide by 15% in the next 4 years.
- Darden is committed to a two-step reduction of salt by 20% over the next decade.

Maybe it’s time to create news by making your breakfast menu more memorable with spices, herbs, and spreads.

**Menu News**

**BURGER KING**
- BK’s egg and cheese muffin, apple fries with caramel sauce, and apple juice or fat-free milk is now part of the NRA’s “Kids LiveWell” program (see BFY Menuing article).
- Quaker Oatmeal - original and fruit-topped maple for $1.99.

**HARDEE’S**
- Fried Bologna Biscuit - egg and cheese on folded slice of Oscar Mayer Bologna; only in the Southwest.
- Double Loaded Omelet Biscuit - omelet sandwich made with sausage, bacon, ham, and Cheddar; only in the Midwest.

**SUBWAY**
- Yogurt Parfait - low-fat yogurt layered with strawberries, blueberries, and granola; only 160 calories and available all day.

**CHICK-FIL-A**
- Multigrain Oatmeal - toppings of cinnamon brown sugar, roasted mixed nuts, or dried fruit blend; 120-290 calories with 2.5-11 grams of fat.

**By the Numbers**

- QSR morning meal visits increased by 237 million between May 2007 and May 2011. (5)
- Total egg usage as a center-of-plate protein increased 18% between 2007 and 2011. (5)
- Breakfast generates $39.5 billion in consumer spending for QSR annually. (5)
- 19% of business and medical office managers surveyed ordered breakfast catering at least once/week, compared with 13% in 2007. (6)
- Total breakfast sandwich servings were up 3%, with breakfast wraps/burritos up 10% between May 2010 and May 2011. (5)
- QSR breakfast item penetration increased from 37% in 2007 to 48% in 2011. (5)

**SOURCES**
1. Technomic, 2010 Sandwich Consumer Trend Report
2. Datassential, Egg Menuing - Breakfast and Beyond, June 2011
3. Technomic, MenuMonitor, August 2011
4. Associated Press, August 26, 2011
5. The NPD Group/CREST®, August 2011
6. Technomic, Large Orders Off-Premise (LOOP), 2011 update