



**- Advertisement -**

**As summer approaches, watermelon promotions kick into high gear**



Few things are as

emblematic of summer as a big juicy watermelon on a hot day. As the watermelon industry prepares for its high season, the National Watermelon Promotion Board is set to launch a bevy of promotions to make sure America's favorite summer fruit is top of mind with consumers.

### **National Watermelon Retail Merchandising Contest returns**

This summer, retailers across the country have a juicy opportunity to win a share of over \$10,000 in cash and prizes by entering the 2025 National Watermelon Retail Merchandising Contest.

The contest challenges retail chains, independents and commissaries to showcase their best watermelon merchandising efforts between June and August. Whether you focus on whole watermelon, fresh-cut, mini watermelon or a vibrant combination of all three, the goal is to create an

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engaging, high-impact display that draws customers in.

Marketing and merchandising creativity are key to winning. Participants are encouraged to use a mix of marketing tactics to make their watermelon displays truly shine. These can include bold, colorful signage and promotional materials, sampling stations or social media promotion to build excitement both in-store and online.

“This contest is about celebrating the incredible creativity we see at store level,” said Juliemar Rosado, director of retail and international marketing for the National Watermelon Promotion Board. “Retailers play a vital role in inspiring shoppers and driving excitement for fresh watermelon. This contest is a fun way to recognize their hard work while boosting summertime sales and consumer engagement.”

### **Simply Watermelon campaign highlight**

The 2025-26 Simply Watermelon campaign continues to celebrate the simplicity and joy of watermelon through dynamic digital and in-person activations. Simple recipes, simple nutrition and simply delicious. With a focus on Millennials and Gen Z, the campaign taps into fitness and youth audiences by sponsoring local run clubs and partnering with wellness influencers to create authentic content around watermelon’s natural hydration and health benefits.

Event kits featuring promotional materials and watermelon sampling enhance pop-up club events, encouraging user-generated content and amplifying reach.

Watermelon’s message will also meet young athletes and their families through an in-app advertising partnership with TeamSnap, the largest youth sports management platform, reaching 25 million users.

These efforts, alongside major appearances at the Marine Corps Marathon and national fitness events like IDEA World, strategically position watermelon as the go-to refreshment for active lifestyles. Together, these initiatives aim to drive brand engagement, consumer education, and year-round watermelon demand, keeping it simply essential in the minds of the next generation.

### **Welcoming watermelon to more menus, one bite at a time**

According to recent research 62 percent of consumers are very interested in trying fresh watermelon in innovative dishes, and throughout the summer months, when watermelon is a menu darling, the NWPB will be educating and inspiring foodservice. A new year-round paid media initiative will complement earned media by delivering continuous watermelon messages.

The Watermelon Welcome campaign will target K-12 and college foodservice to greet students with watermelon and the NWPB will sponsor the IFPA K-12 Foodservice Forum.

For chains, the board will sponsor the Flavor Experience and satellite events at the National Restaurant Show — after all tasting is believing and no menu is complete with watermelon. New culinary student-focused initiatives include Culinary Institute of America competitions and in-classroom usage.

The NWPB supports operators with ideation and promotional initiatives, assisting those who don’t yet use watermelon or helping expand its menu presence. The expanding foodservice program will

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boost watermelon's presence in kitchens and on menus, ensuring it becomes a staple in foodservice moving forward.

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