



# NEWS RELEASE

## **Weber-Stephen Products Co.**

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## **THOUGH MOST RATE THEIR SKILLS AS AVERAGE, AMERICANS' LOVE AFFAIR WITH GRILLING GROWS**

### ***17<sup>th</sup> Annual Weber GrillWatch™ Survey Reveals Americans Could Take Better Advantage of Grilling Tips, How-To's and Recipes***

Palatine, Ill., March 30, 2006—Although the majority of outdoor grill owners (54 percent) grill year round, and 70 percent grill at least once a week, most grillers (66 percent) rate their skills as “average,” according to the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Weber GrillWatch™ Survey.

However, almost one in four men (23 percent) are more satisfied with their personal grilling skills, saying that they are “better than most.” Women aren't quite as confident: Only 12 percent say they are “better than most.” Smoker owners are the proud peacocks of the bunch when it comes to rating their grilling finesse, with nearly one-third (32 percent) saying they are “better than most.” Finally, younger grill owners have less confidence at the grill, with 22 percent of young bucks under age 35 giving themselves a “not as good as most” grade when it comes to grilling skills. In contrast, only 14 percent of people over 55 years of age thought their skills were less than stellar.

The objective, third-party survey, conducted by Greenfield Online to ensure accuracy, is the nation's most comprehensive study on what, where, when, why, and how Americans cook outdoors. All survey respondents were over age 21 and own a gas, charcoal, or electric barbecue grill or smoker. Respondents were balanced demographically to represent households across the U.S.

“Knowledge is power—and that applies to the grill, too,” said Jamie Purviance, chef and author of *Weber's Real Grilling™* cookbook. “I think many of these self proclaimed ‘average’ grillers just haven't learned the advanced techniques that would take them to the next level.” Purviance added that cooking over flames is different from other ways of cooking because a flame is not as easy to control as an oven. “What separates the master grillers from the masses is knowing how the fire can flavor the food, and knowing the kind of heat that is right for fish, vegetables, and meats.”

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## 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Weber GrillWatch Survey™: America's Grilling Scorecard

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According to the survey, many grillers say they need to brush up on their skills, with nearly half (48 percent) of grillers reporting that they decide when to take their food off the grill by cutting into it—a major no-no, as this allows precious juices and flavor to escape. Thirty-eight percent simply “look at their food,” 25 percent poke their food with a fork, and 19 percent “just wing it.” Other responses include: “My spouse/partner tells me when it’s done (11 percent) and “I touch it” and “I taste it,” which came in at 9 and 6 percent, respectively.

- Fact: Approximately one-third (33 percent) of Americans say they always, frequently, or occasionally undercook or overcook their grilled food.

In addition, Americans can't resist the urge to sneak a peek while their food is cooking on the grill, with an overwhelming 78 percent of grillers admitting they're lid lifters. Another 11 percent defiantly grill with the lid up all the time. As a rule, the lid should be left closed: Each time it's lifted, heat escapes, adding to the cooking time and ultimately drying out the food. Just 11 percent of GrillWatch respondents are at the top of the class in this area, reporting they always keep the lid down.

- Fact: Charcoal users are more likely to always grill with the lid up (17 percent) than gas users (7 percent).

In general, a scant 2 percent of Americans have attended a grilling class. The overwhelming majority of grill owners—98 percent—have skipped school altogether. Grill owners under 35 years of age seem most interested in taking a grilling class in the future, with 38 percent expressing interest; a respectable 33 percent of those between 35 and 54 would like to take a class; and 23 percent of those age 55 and over are interested in heading back to school.

Weber-Stephen Products Co., headquartered in Palatine, Ill., is the premier manufacturer of charcoal and gas grills, grilling accessories and other outdoor room products. In 1952, founder George Stephen designed the Weber® kettle with a lid that allows outdoor cooks to grill in all kinds of weather. A family-owned business for more than 50 years, Weber has grown to be a leading exporter of outdoor grills worldwide. Weber charcoal and gas grills are available at select home centers, hardware stores, department stores, patio stores and other retail outlets. Weber has the strongest consumer outreach program in the industry with its all-year, round-the-clock Weber Grill-Line<sup>SM</sup> (1-800-GRILL-OUT®) and a content-rich website with grilling tips, techniques, and more than 200 original Weber recipes at [www.weber.com](http://www.weber.com)®.

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