



NEWS RELEASE

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A CLOSER LOOK AT THE 17TH ANNUAL WEBER GRILLWATCH™ SURVEY

Other Newsworthy Facts and Figures

Palatine, Ill., March 30, 2006—The 17th Annual Weber GrillWatch™ Survey is the nation's most comprehensive study on what, where, when, why, and how Americans cook outdoors. It is an objective, third-party study conducted by Greenfield Online to ensure accuracy and statistical integrity. All respondents were over age 21 and currently own a charcoal, gas, or electric outdoor barbecue or smoker. The sample was balanced demographically to represent households across the U.S.

One of the study's key findings was that, as a nation, the majority of Americans—66 percent—rate their grilling skills as “average.” Please see the enclosed survey lead news release for additional information on America's grilling scorecard.

The following details other newsworthy findings in these data categories: **Grill Quality Knowledge, American Grill Ownership, Grill Usage, Grilling Frequency, and Favorite Grilled Foods.**

Grill Quality Knowledge:

Although there is a significant difference in the quality of stainless steel used for outdoor grills, Americans don't know a lot about it. **The Weber GrillWatch Survey revealed that, in total, a whopping 69 percent of Americans say they are not aware of the different grades of stainless steel.**

To identify awareness and attitudes toward the differences, people were given a brief description of 304- and 430- grade stainless steel. (304 stainless steel is the higher grade that resists rust and corrosion, and it performs better at high temperatures). After being told about the differences, they were asked if they had been aware of the differences prior, *and* if the differences were important.

Two-thirds of the respondents (67 percent) say they believe the difference is important. Men are almost twice as likely to say they are aware of the different grades of stainless steel as women (41 percent compared to 22 percent). Women, on the other hand, are significantly more likely than men to believe the difference is important once it is explained (78 percent compared to 59 percent).

- ▶ 20% - **Aware** of the differences, and it **is important**
- ▶ 11% - **Aware** of the differences, and it **is not important**
- ▶ 47% - **Not aware** of the differences, but it **is important**
- ▶ 22% - **Not aware** of the differences, and it **is not important**

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American Grill Ownership:

While gas grills continue to be the most popular type of outdoor barbecue grill in the U.S. (66 percent), charcoal ownership increased again to 49 percent in 2005, up from 47 percent in 2004 and 42 percent in 2003.

- ▶ 61% - Gas: liquid propane tank
- ▶ 5% - Gas: natural gas line
- ▶ 49% - Charcoal
- ▶ 12% - Smoker
- ▶ 7% - Electric

When it comes to the type of grill that Americans use most often, gas grills with liquid propane tanks are in the lead at 55 percent, followed by charcoal grills (36 percent).

- ▶ 55% - Gas: liquid propane tank
- ▶ 36% - Charcoal
- ▶ 4% - Gas: natural gas line
- ▶ 3% - Electric
- ▶ 2% - Smoker

Grill Usage:

Consumers who own both a charcoal grill and a gas grill tend to use the gas grill more frequently (59 percent), although the percentage that use both grills regularly is increasing (from 16 percent in 2004 to 22 percent in 2005).

- ▶ 22% - I regularly use both grills
- ▶ 19% - I use the charcoal grill more often
- ▶ 59% - I use the gas grill more often

Americans grill for many reasons, but the single most important reason continues to be for the flavor of the food. For smoker owners, that number jumps to 69 percent. Women are three times more likely than men to cite that there are no pots and pans to clean up afterwards (12 percent versus 4 percent) whereas men are twice as likely as women to say that it's fun (13 percent versus 6 percent). The total percentages as to why people like to grill (with all demographics combined) are:

- ▶ 56% - The flavor of the food
- ▶ 10% - It keeps the house cool
- ▶ 10% - It's fun
- ▶ 8% - No pots and pans to clean up afterwards
- ▶ 7% - Being outdoors
- ▶ 6% - A healthy way to cook
- ▶ 2% - It's my way of contributing to the family
- ▶ 1% - I like the challenge of getting the fire just right

More than one-quarter of grill owners have smoke-cooked something on the grill, and 43 percent say they would like to try it. People between the ages of 35 and 54 are more likely to have smoke-cooked something on the grill (32 percent) than those in older or younger age brackets (23 percent for people 55+ and 20 percent for people under 35). Although men are more likely to have tried smoke cooking than women (30 percent versus 23 percent), the difference has decreased from last year (33 percent versus 20 percent). Those in the South Central region are more likely to have tried smoke cooking (37 percent) than people in other regions.

- ▶ 26% - Yes, I have smoke-cooked
- ▶ 43% - No, I haven't smoke-cooked but I would like to try it sometime
- ▶ 31% - No, I haven't smoke-cooked, and I'm not interested in smoke cooking

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People who own smokers seem to be the heartiest of the bunch when it comes to braving the cold weather: 60 percent say they grill in weather below freezing (compared to 51 percent last year). By comparison, 43 percent of gas owners and 38 percent of charcoal owners say they grill in temperatures below freezing.

Consistent with last year's GrillWatch, the majority of Americans prefer grilling outdoors to cooking inside by a wide margin (76 percent compared to 24 percent). More men continue to prefer grilling outdoors over women by a small margin (79 percent to 73 percent).

- ▶ 76% - Grilling outdoors
- ▶ 24% - Cooking inside

Grilling Frequency:

The majority of Americans fire up their grill at least once a week (70 percent), a number that has remained consistent over the past five years. **Women are slightly more likely to say they grill at least a few times per week more than men (48 percent compared to 42 percent).** Those who primarily use stand-up gas grills are more likely to grill at least a few times per week (53 percent) than are those who mainly use charcoal grills (40 percent). Statistics among all respondents:

- ▶ 3% - Daily
- ▶ 42% - A few times a week
- ▶ 25% - Once a week
- ▶ 15% - Twice a month
- ▶ 5% - Once a month
- ▶ 11% - Only on special occasions

Overall, the upward trend continues of Americans grilling more than the year before. While 56 percent say they are grilling as frequently as one year ago, almost one-third (30 percent) say they are grilling more often. Only 12 percent are grilling less often than a year ago. Those owning outdoor electric grills and smokers are more likely to be grilling more than last year (39 percent and 37 percent respectively). Younger grill owners under age 35 continue to be significantly more likely to be grilling more now (45 percent) than those between ages 35 and 54 (31 percent) or 55 and older (22 percent). The statistics for all demographics combined:

- ▶ 30% - More often than one year ago
- ▶ 56% - About as often as one year ago
- ▶ 12% - Less often than one year ago
- ▶ 2% - I wasn't grilling one year ago

Approximate two-thirds of all grill owners (66 percent) hosted at least one barbecue this past summer. Those under age 35 throw the most barbecues, with 80 percent throwing at least one barbecue last summer.

- ▶ 9% - One barbecue
- ▶ 14% - Two barbecues
- ▶ 13% - Three barbecues
- ▶ 9% - Four barbecues
- ▶ 21% - Five or more barbecues

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Americans grill for a wide variety of holidays and special occasions. A whopping 86 percent of Americans report they fire up the grill on the Fourth of July, followed by Labor Day (78 percent), birthdays (74 percent), and Memorial Day (71 percent). The percentage of people grilling on Mother's Day, Father's Day, and graduations increased this year by 7, 5, and 7 percentage points, respectively.

- ▶ 86% - Fourth of July
- ▶ 78% - Labor Day
- ▶ 74% - Birthday
- ▶ 71% - Memorial Day
- ▶ 58% - Father's Day
- ▶ 48% - Mother's Day
- ▶ 36% - Anniversary
- ▶ 28% - Graduation
- ▶ 21% - Thanksgiving
- ▶ 19% - New Year's Day/Eve
- ▶ 13% - Valentine's Day
- ▶ 15% - Christmas
- ▶ 8% - Cinco de Mayo
- ▶ 1% - Chanukah
- ▶ 1% - Kwanzaa

Favorite Grilled Foods

The percentage of grill owners who grill the entire meal significantly increased this year to 18 percent from 8 percent last year.

- ▶ 18% - The entire meal
- ▶ 93% - Main course
- ▶ 25% - Side dishes
- ▶ 14% - Appetizers
- ▶ 1% - Desserts

When asked to pick the top foods they grill **most often**, once again hamburgers, steak, chicken pieces, and hot dogs topped the list. This year, ribs replaced pork chops as the number five food grilled most often.

- ▶ 68% - Hamburgers
- ▶ 46% - Steak
- ▶ 43% - Chicken pieces
- ▶ 37% - Hot dogs
- ▶ 14% - Ribs
- ▶ 12% - Bratwurst
- ▶ 12% - Pork chops
- ▶ 10% - Beef roasts (tenderloin, prime rib, tri-tip, etc.)
- ▶ 7% - Sausages
- ▶ 6% - Salmon
- ▶ 4% - Beef brisket
- ▶ 4% - Potatoes
- ▶ 4% - Corn
- ▶ 3% - Whole chicken
- ▶ 2% - Pork roast/tenderloin
- ▶ 2% - Shrimp
- ▶ 2% - Shish kebab
- ▶ 1% - Lamb chops
- ▶ 1% - Whole turkey

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Again this year, Americans say their ***all-time most favorite food to grill*** is steak, followed by hamburgers, poultry, and ribs. The top fish to grill is salmon and the most popular veggie is corn.

- ▶ 35% - Steak
- ▶ 14% - Hamburgers
- ▶ 13% - Poultry
- ▶ 6% - Ribs
- ▶ 4% - Pork
- ▶ 3% - Hot dogs
- ▶ 3% - Rib-eye
- ▶ 2% - Salmon
- ▶ 2% - Filet mignon
- ▶ 2% - T-bone
- ▶ 1% - Corn

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-LineSM (1-800-GRILL-OUT®) and a content-rich website with grilling tips, techniques, and more than 200 original Weber recipes at www.weber.com®.

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