



## PRESS RELEASE

# FORGET RECESSION – ENJOY A GOOD SANDWICH

Despite all the negatives of recession, it seems that ready-to-eat sandwiches are now such an important part of our lives that we no longer see them as a luxury.

According to a new report, published by the British Sandwich Association (BSA) to coincide with British Sandwich Week 2010, over 126 million more ready-to-eat sandwiches were purchased last year than in 2008, an increase of 4%. In all, the industry produced over 3 billion sandwiches with a market value of more than £6 billion.

Furthermore, although another three billion lunch boxes were taken to work, an increasing number of people bought ready-to-eat sandwiches from supermarkets which they took home, presumably to put into lunch boxes the next day? Indeed, 7 million more sandwiches were purchased in supermarkets last year to take home than in the previous year – an 8% increase.

“Although there was a dip in commercial sandwich sales in late 2008 when the black clouds of recession were everywhere, by early last year this had turned around and our industry was forging ahead again,” says Jim Winship, Director of the Association. “It seems that while some consumers reacted to all the negative publicity by making more sandwiches at home, this was short-lived. The evidence suggests that people get bored with the limited choice of ingredients they have in the home for making up lunch boxes -

the choice of fillings in sandwich outlets is generally much greater. We suspect people also value that extra 10 minutes in bed each morning if they don't have to make up a lunch box!"

The Report, which reviews the different sectors of the market, finds that while men continue to dominate the ready-to-eat sandwich market, women are becoming more important and gradually taking a bigger share.

Sandwiches are also highly fashion led with constant changes in the 20 most popular fillings, although chicken salad remains at number one spot, where it has been for some time. In fact, chicken generally is the most popular sandwich filling accounting for about 30% of all ready-made sandwiches.

"In the last year we have seen more traditional fillings, like salmon and cucumber or ham and mustard, coming back into the top 20," says BSA Director Jim Winship. "It may be that we all seek the reassurance of old favourites that we know well in these less certain times."

While the sandwich industry remains generally confident about the future, the Report raises some concerns over Government initiatives to force healthy eating targets on the nation by getting businesses to reduce salt, fat and sugar levels in ready-to-eat foods.

"We support the general principles behind this," says BSA Director Jim Winship, "but not everyone has the same dietary requirements and these arbitrary targets do undermine freedom of choice. We believe it is much more important that products are clearly labelled so that consumers can choose for themselves.

"We are also concerned that if reductions are made too quickly, consumers will find products too bland as it takes time for palates to adjust to reductions in ingredients such as salt."

“Another consequence for the industry is that there is a risk of innovation suffering because new product development resources are having to be focused on reformulating products to meet Government targets – yet innovation and choice are known to be major drivers for maintaining the industry’s growth.”

Further details about the Report, which is published by the British Sandwich Association, can be found on their website at [www.sandwich.org.uk](http://www.sandwich.org.uk)

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For further press information please contact BSA Director Jim Winship on 01291 636331 or 07850 104034



**The British Sandwich Association is the trade body representing the sandwich industry both in the UK and overseas, including both commercially made sandwiches and the ingredients used for making sandwiches in the home. The commercial sandwich in the UK employs in excess of 300,000 people in the UK.**