

For Immediate Release  
October 5, 2006

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### **Healthy Indulgence Striking Consumer Interest**

Seattle, WASH – Consumer awareness of nuts’ healthy reputation is influencing their consumption. Findings from the Hazelnut Council’s *Consumer Attitudes and Usage: Nuts Add Value* research show more Americans reaching for nuts, including hazelnuts.

The research shows a 72 percent awareness of the healthy benefits of including nuts in daily diets, up 12 percent from a similar study conducted in 2003. The results also show 49 percent of Americans consuming nuts “as an ingredient” in fresh or prepared food once a week or more often.

“The 2003 Federal Drug Administration claim about nut’s healthy properties has definitely had an impact on reversing the image of nuts as a fattening food,” said Vicki Nesper, Marketing Supervisor for the Hazelnut Council. “Awareness of the claim itself is up six percent from our last study.”

But the research also shows that consumers are becoming more demanding when it comes to healthier foods, and they don’t want to sacrifice everyday indulgences. In fact, 95 percent of consumers said they believe a food can be both healthy and indulgent. Seventy-five percent of these respondents consider a food with hazelnuts and dark chocolate both healthy and indulgent.

Other findings focus on the types of products consumers would like to see hazelnuts included in, including the link between hazelnut coffee and food. The research shows 75 percent of respondents who purchase hazelnut coffee say they would purchase other hazelnut products based on the liking of the flavored coffee.

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The Hazelnut Council is conducting additional research based on the same parameters and results are expected in December 2006. For more information about the research, please visit [www.hazelnutcouncil.org](http://www.hazelnutcouncil.org) or contact Vicki Nesper at 206-270-4668.

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