

NEWS RELEASE

December 18, 2017

Consumers Prefer Bottled Water, Recognize It As A Healthy Choice And Think It Should Be Available Wherever Drinks Are Sold

Alexandria, VA – More than three in five Americans (63 percent) say bottled water (still and/or sparkling) is among their most preferred beverages, followed by coffee (62 percent), according to a new national survey. Fewer Americans (58 percent) say soft drinks (regular and/or diet) are among their most preferred drinks. Nearly all Americans (94 percent) believe that bottled water is a healthier choice than soft drinks, and 93 percent say bottled water should be available wherever drinks are sold.

The survey, conducted online by *Harris Poll* on behalf of the International Bottled Water Association (IBWA) of more than 3,000 US adults aged 18 and older, also found that among those who have ever purchased bottled water, those who identify bottled water as among their most preferred beverages are more likely than those who identify soda as one of their most preferred beverages to recycle their water containers. “This poll is consistent with consumption figures released earlier this year that show, for the first time in history, bottled water is the No.1 packaged beverage in the United States (by volume),” says Jill Culora, IBWA’s Vice President of Communications. “People are shifting away from less healthy packaged drinks and choosing the healthy option – bottled water.”

Bottled water drinkers[1] find many factors important when choosing a beverage, but taste (99 percent), quality (99 percent) and safety (92 percent) are at the top of their list. Bottled water drinkers also say that features like ready to enjoy (82 percent), convenient packaging when on the go (80 percent) and re-sealable packaging (74 percent) are important to them when choosing a beverage. Sixty-nine percent of bottled water drinkers say low calories are important when choosing a beverage, while 72 percent say the lack of artificial sweeteners is important.

Nearly all Americans (99 percent) drink water – tap, filtered, or bottled and among them, 33 percent drink both bottled water and tap/filtered water equally. Roughly three in 10 water drinkers (31 percent) drink only/mostly bottled water, including 16 percent who drink mostly bottled water and 15 percent who only drink bottled water. Over a third (35 percent) drink only/mostly tap or filtered water, including 23 percent who drink mostly tap or filtered water and 12 percent who drink only tap or filtered water. Eighty-two percent of Americans agree they should drink more water and 90 percent believe that bottled water is a healthy and convenient beverage.

Among those who ever purchase bottled water, bottled water drinkers are more inclined to recycle their bottled water containers than those who say soda is among their most preferred beverages, as they are more likely to say they always recycle bottled water containers at home (66 versus 60 percent) and away from home (37 versus 32 percent). This is consistent with a 2016 PET bale analysis study that found bottled water is the number one most recycled product in curbside recycling systems, with a rate of 53.1 percent, compared to soda bottles, which was 20.4 percent. The 2016 study[2], by the National Association of PET Container Resources, included other food and beverage containers in its analytics.

“The new poll also found that people who own their own home report they recycle more often than renters, both at home and away from home. The poll also showed that people who were married said they recycled more often than those who were single,” says Culora.

When asked about their general opinion of bottled water as a beverage choice, 86 percent of

Americans had a “very positive” or “somewhat positive” opinion of bottled water, and women are significantly more likely than men to have a positive opinion (88 versus 84 percent) as well as adults ages 18-44 compared to those ages 55+ (91 versus 81percent). Only 14 percent of Americans have a “somewhat” or “very” negative opinion of bottled water as a beverage choice.

IBWA encourages consumers to make healthy hydration a part of their daily lives and pick water as their beverage of choice, whether it’s at home, at the office, or on the go. For more information about bottled water, visit bottledwater.org.

[1] Bottled water drinkers refers to those who say bottled water (still and/or sparkling) is among their most preferred beverages

[2] NAPCOR PET Bale Sort Data 2008 - 2016