

FUN WITH FOOD

Hot Diggity Dog! Preparing The Perfect Frank

(NAPSA)—Let's be frank: Americans love hot dogs. In the U.S., people on average eat 70 franks each year. Although consumers do "relish" their dogs at certain events—baseball games, barbecues, picnics, etc.—hot dogs are a favorite dinnertime meal for the family or a quick convenient snack when on the go. Quite simply, hot dogs are a staple of the American diet.

When it comes to preparing a great-tasting hot dog, how you cook and dress it isn't as important as the frank you choose. Besides the traditional all-beef variety, there are hot dogs for every taste bud, including turkey for the health conscious or ones with robust flavors that are perfect for the grill, such as the new GrillMaster franks.

Speaking of the grill, while microwaved and boiled hot dogs are popular, 60 percent of Americans prefer their hot dogs grilled, according to the National Hot Dog and Sausage Council. Sara Lee Executive Chef Brian Averna is a self-proclaimed "foodie" and has perfected the art of grilling hot dogs. His tips include:

- DO prepare the grill by coating the rack with vegetable oil or cooking spray. This will prevent food from sticking and will ease cleanup.

- DO use tongs to gently turn hot dogs to avoid accidental cuts or holes that would cause natural juices and flavors to seep out.

- DO use pure and clean lump charcoal to prevent foreign substances or impurities from alter-



A majority of Americans love their hot dogs grilled, and there's an art to bringing out the frank's best flavor on the barbecue.

ing the flavor of your franks. Also, allow at least 30 minutes for the coals to reach the proper glowing white-ash stage before you begin grilling.

- DO use mesquite chips and keep the grill covered while cooking if you like the "smoky" flavor.

Once your hot dog is ready, pile on the toppings. Remember, dress the dog, not the bun. Condiments should be applied in the following order: wet condiments (mustard, chili), followed by chunky condiments (relish, onions, sauerkraut), then shredded cheese and, finally, spices such as celery salt or pepper. Different regions of the country have different variations of their favorite hot dog topping recipe, but there is no right or wrong way to top a hot dog.

For more tips on enjoying a great-tasting Ball Park hot dog, grilled or otherwise, visit www.ballparkfranks.com.