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New HPBA National Poll Reveals: It's All About the Cookout

May is National Barbecue Month (NBM), kicking off the peak outdoor cooking season! And this year, consumers reveal it's all about the cookout. In fact, according to results from the **Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association's (HPBA) 2012 National Barbecue Poll**, 85% say during the warmer months, they prefer to cook outside on the grill or smoker. The poll also revealed that when it comes to a successful cookout, it's all about:

- **The Flavor.** Consumers prefer their food tender (57%), juicy (56%) and smokey (44%). This year, meats including burgers (84%), steak (83%), hot dogs (82%) and chicken parts (74%) top the list as the most popular foods prepared outdoors.*
- **The Location.** Sixty-six percent of consumers say the best place to host or attend a cookout is in someone's backyard, followed by the beach (14%) and park (8%).
- **The Atmosphere.** With NBM kicking off the peak outdoor cooking season, it's no wonder 55% of consumers agree the most appealing reason for dining or entertaining outside is to enjoy the weather; 39% enjoy the use of the grill the most, 35% prefer dining or entertaining outside for the casual atmosphere, and 19% for less mess inside the house. In fact, those planning on hosting a cookout do so for the social/fun atmosphere it creates (71%).
- **The Accoutrements.** Accessories make already-convenient outdoor cooking even easier. When it comes to the go-to tools, consumers report top usage of long-handled tongs (72%) followed by a grill-cleaning brush (68%), long-handled fork (60%), and long-handled spatulas (54%).*
- **The Recipe.** Taking a cue from the carefree spirit of summer, households who cook outdoors are more inclined to not use a recipe and just "wing it" (36%) followed by using a tried and true, classic recipe (34%) or an easy, no-fuss recipe (33%).

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About the HPBA NBM Poll: *The findings are taken from a survey of 1,000 people, conducted by the Polling Company™, Inc. from April 12 - April 16, 2012. The margin of error is +/- 3.1 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. For more information, visit www.hpba.org.*

*[Statistics from the 2012 HPBA State of the Barbecue Industry Report](#)