

Supermarket Turkey Deli Marketing - 2017

Deli meats are a popular favorite with American consumers, whether eaten at deli shops or, more commonly, purchased freshly sliced from the supermarket deli counter or in pre-packaged form in the meat case. In U.S. supermarkets, turkey ranks as the most popular deli meat, due in large part to its versatility and availability in a variety of flavors. Chicken, while no match for its larger cousin, does have its own significant following and has increased in popularity as the variety of flavors expands. This Insight focuses on supermarket advertising of turkey and chicken deli meats in 2017.

Deli turkey sliced at supermarket deli service counters falls into three distinct categories based on how the products are manufactured to meet the desired end use, reported by USDA Market News as Category 1, 2, and 3 on the [Weekly Retail Turkey Feature Activity report](#). Category 1 (Cat 1) deli meats are made from whole muscles and retain the natural muscle structure most suitable for cutting into thicker slices, as though cut from a roast (think a slice of Thanksgiving turkey). Category 2 (Cat 2) deli meats are comprised of smaller cuts of meat bound together to retain some of the natural muscle structure but able to be sliced more thinly. Category 3 (Cat 3) deli meats are made up of pieces of muscle, chopped and reformed into loaves that can be thinly shaved and stacked.

Full service deli counters in supermarkets are most likely to offer Cat 1 and 2 deli meats. Cat 3 may also be found here but, as these products require a deft hand to shave them to the correct thickness, are more likely to be found pre-sliced and packaged in the meat case. In 2017, Cat 1 turkey deli meat accounted for 57 percent of supermarket advertising with Cat 2 at 34 percent and Cat 3 at 9 percent. In 2017, turkey deli meat sliced at the deli counter accounted for 73 percent of grocer ad share with chicken at 27 percent.

Regardless of the category or type, deli meats are marketed under either processor or private/store brand names. Some of the larger grocery chains and grocery distributors carry their own private brands of deli meats, manufactured and co-packed for them by major processing companies. In 2017, 56 percent of ads for service turkey deli meats specified a processor brand, most commonly Cat 1 and 3 offerings. Features for Cat 2 turkey deli were evenly split between processor and private label. Interestingly, advertising of chicken deli meats was split between processor and private brands with 68 percent of Cat 1 offers carrying a processor brand while 64 percent of Cat 2 offerings carried a private brand.

In 2017, supermarket featuring of self-service deli meats, pre-sliced and packed outpaced featuring of service deli meats 54 percent to 46 percent. The most common pack size was tubs/pouches weighing 7-10 ounces and accounting for 83 percent of ads for self-service turkey deli (chicken self-service is only reported in 7-10-ounce packs). Offerings of self-service turkey deli accounted for 61 percent of ad share in 2017 and 83 percent were for processor branded product.

Featuring of service deli meats is evenly split throughout the year and is also a popular supermarket offering in the form of deli meat platters perfect for gatherings to mark special occasions. Cat 1 features were slightly more popular in the first quadrimester (4 months) of 2017 while Cat 2 offerings were the clear favorite during the summer months and Cat 3 dominated ad share in the third quadrimester of the year with December seeing the highest feature rates of the year in 2017. Self-service deli meats are most popular during the summer months but reach their peak with the start of the new school year.

SERVICE DELI MEATS							SELF-SERVICE DELI MEATS					
TURKEY	Category 1		Category 2		Category 3		TURKEY	7-10 oz.		16 oz.		
	volume	price	volume	price	volume	price		volume	price	volume	price	
Processor	60%	8.34	50%	6.02	56%	4.05	56%	84%	3.24	87%	5.20	84%
Private	40%	8.04	50%	6.27	44%	4.71	44%	16%	2.90	13%	5.28	16%
Total	100%		100%		100%			100%		100%		
share	57%		34%		9%		share	83%		17%		

note - tubs or pouches

Information for this report is derived from data reported in the [Weekly Retail Turkey Feature Activity](#) report.

