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Major League Ballparks Predicted to Serve Almost 22 Million Hot Dogs This Season

Council petitions to have 'Take Me Out to the Ballgame' updated to include hot dogs

Washington, D.C., April 2, 2009 – Despite competition from ever-increasing food options - ranging from Ichiro Sushi offered at Safeco Field in Seattle to Rocky Mountain Oysters (fried bull testicles) at Coors Field in Colorado - hot dogs are still top dog in our nation's ballparks, according to the National Hot Dog & Sausage Council's (NHDSC) annual survey.

With Opening Day this weekend, the NHDSC forecasts that ballparks around the country will serve 21,733,839 hot dogs this season — an impressive feat and enough to round the bases 30,186 times and stretch to and from Citizens Bank Park in Philadelphia and Tropicana Field in St. Petersburg, FL, the two sites of the 2008 World Series.

When it comes to individual ballparks, Fenway Park, home of the Boston Red Sox, topped the survey this year. Fenway Park, which finished second in last year's survey, will serve up more than 1.5 million hot dogs over the 2009 season, according to projections. Always boiled and grilled, the Fenway Frank is served on a New England style bun (split from the top) and topped with a choice of mustard and relish.

While the World Champion Philadelphia Phillies didn't take the trophy in this competition, they did win the equivalent of the National League pennant, finishing second overall. Fans are expected to consume 1.25 million hot dogs at Citizens Bank Park this season. Lucky fans might also catch a free dog, which the Phillie Phanatic, the team's official mascot, shoots into the stands every game using the finely-tuned technology of the Hatfield Hot Dog Launcher.

Third place in this year's survey goes to Dodger Stadium, home of the Los Angeles Dodgers, with 1.2 million famous Dodger Dogs expected to be devoured. This foot-long pork frankfurter is served grilled or steamed, on a steamed bun, with mustard and relish and choice of toppings.

"There's no question that hot dogs hit a grand slam year after year," said Tom Super, spokesman for the Council. "The connection and nostalgia between hot dogs and baseball has been around for over a century. After all, hot dogs were Babe Ruth's performance enhancing drug of choice."

Stadiums around the country offer a range of options to hot dog-hungry fans. Turner Field, home of the Atlanta Braves, dresses their Georgia Dog with coleslaw, chili and onion relish. Dolphin Stadium, home of the Florida Marlins, stocks its condiment carts with banana peppers. The Tampa Bay Rays' Tropicana Field offers "The Heater," which is served with spicy chili and shredded cheddar. Arizona Diamondback's Chase Field has a specialty concession stand called

“Big Dawgs,” which features five foot-long specialty hot dogs including the Arizona Dog with chorizo, cheese and tortilla chips and the Wisconsin Dog with mac and cheese and bacon bits. The Metrodome, stadium of the Minnesota Twins, is home to the “Dome Dog,” a black angus dog served hot off the grill with toppings made fresh daily. When the Chicago Cubs are in town, many teams will add the famous Chicago Dog to their menu for the series: a natural casing beef frank, served on a poppy seed roll topped, (or "dragged through the garden" as they say in the Windy City), with yellow mustard, sweet pickle relish, chopped onion, fresh tomato, pickle spear, sport peppers and a dash of celery salt.

For those fans with big appetites, a number of ballparks offer special events like “dollar dog nights,” where as many as 70,000 hot dogs are sold in one evening.

Sausage Consumption

When it comes to hot dog’s close cousin, the sausage, no one is in the same ballpark as the Milwaukee Brewers. It is projected that 430,000 sausages will be served this year at Miller Park – the only park in all of Major League Baseball where sausages outsell hot dogs. Many of the park’s sausages and hot dogs are dipped in Milwaukee’s-own special “Stadium Sauce” before being placed in the bun.

Based on sausage consumption projections, the NHDSC has updated its 2009 Fantasy Sausage Race Rankings for the Miller Park Sausage Race, the race of sausage mascots held before the bottom of the sixth inning at every home game: #1 Brett Wurst (bratwurst), #2 Frankie Furter (hot dog), #3 Guido (Italian Sausage), #4 Stosh Jonjak (Polish sausage) and #5 Cinco (Chorizo).

The New York Mets finished a distant runner-up to the Brewers, with approximately 405,000 sausages expected to be sold at the new Citi Field this year. Finishing third in the NHDSC’s first-annual sausage consumption survey is Comerica Park, home of the Detroit Tigers, with 250,000 projected in sausage sales.

Take Me Out to the Ball Game

Last year, “Take Me Out to the Ball Game” celebrated its 100th anniversary. But for over a century now, the song has contained a gaping omission – the hot dog. With all due respect to peanuts and Cracker Jack™, hot dogs continue to dominate as ballpark’s favorite fare, so the Council has petitioned the U.S. Copyright Office in its quest to have hot dogs included in the song that’s been sung during the seventh inning stretch for decades.

“Clearly, the omission of hot dogs was inadvertent because, as the story goes, the song’s author, Jack Norworth, wrote the song in 1908 but didn’t attend a baseball game himself until 1940,” Super noted. “We are confident that if Mr. Norworth were alive today, he would agree to alter the verse and pay tribute to America’s cultural icon. Behind ‘The Star Spangled Banner’ and ‘Happy Birthday to You,’ ‘Take Me Out to the Ballgame’ is the third most sung song in the United States and we think it should be updated accordingly for the next 100 years.”

For additional information, visit the Council online at <http://www.hot-dog.org>.