

Q.

Can I have an ice cream which is lower in fat and calories and tastes as good as my favourite?

I eat light ice cream sometimes, but I know I'm compromising on taste. It makes me feel as if I'm settling for second-best



A.

Dreyer's Slow Churned Rich and Creamy ice cream

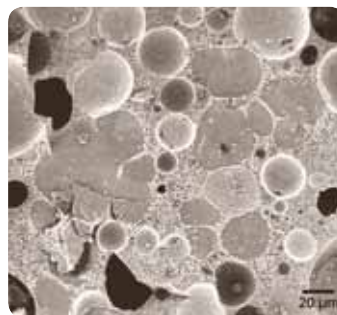
Dreyer's Slow Churned Rich and Creamy... a miracle come true: lower fat and calories but full taste

Understanding the consumer
The craze for light foods began in about 1980 when increasing consumer awareness of the effects of food on health fuelled a growing demand for low-fat, low-sugar and low-calorie varieties. But fat contributes significantly to flavour and texture. So, compared with regular products, consumers often perceive light products as inferior. In the US, where ice cream is seen more as a food than a treat, most ice cream lovers carried on eating full-fat products.

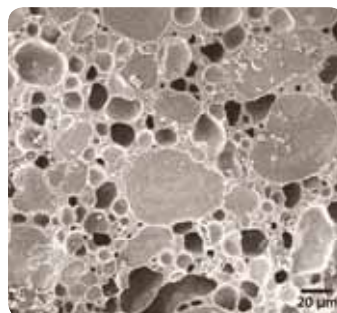
From understanding to actionable insight What was holding the consumer back was the absence of a desirable alternative to full-fat ice cream. If only someone could create an ice cream with less fat but no sacrifice in pleasure, then that would be a miracle... the best of both worlds.



Under the microscope:
Dreyer's Slow Churned light ice cream has a finer structure and texture than regular ice cream



Conventional ice cream



Dreyer's Slow Churned

From insight to product
It was only in the 1990's that technology was developed to make low-fat ice cream with the same rich texture and taste as regular ice creams. First, Nestlé in Switzerland and then Dreyer's in the US worked on a process called "extrusion freezing". Nestlé was already using extrusion cooking for breakfast cereals. The challenge was to transfer the technology from cereals to ice cream, in effect by turning the extrusion-cooker into a freezer.

It took R&D almost a decade to perfect the technology. The secret? By "destabilising" the tiny fat droplets in the product, half the fat goes twice as far. This changes the ice cream's microstructure so that it feels and tastes the same as full-fat ice cream.

The consumer at the heart of all we do With the guidance of PTC Beauvais, extrusion freezing was first used in Spain to make ice creams with novel shapes. Dreyer's R&D also used it for their new Slow Churned Rich & Creamy product – an ice cream with half the fat and a third fewer calories. Working with consumer feedback, they perfected it. At last, consumers had a truly light product – yet with all the pleasure of the old, full-fat, regular ice cream.

The ultimate satisfaction
R&D innovation has satisfied a major consumer need. This first light ice cream with full taste, texture and pleasure, has been hugely successful with consumers in the US. Sales are increasing by over 50% per year. It proves that the product fulfils the promise in its advertising that it delivers "the original, unexpected and exciting sensory experience". Nestlé now has global patents, covering both the technology and the products.