



P R E S S R E L E A S E

20 June 2006

Sweden divided by herring at Midsummer

– Herring in mustard-cream sauce most popular in the north and onion-pickled herring favoured in the south

Midsummer is a Swedish tradition that Swedes stick closely to. Especially when it comes to traditional Midsummer food, which starts with myriad variants of pickled herring, sour cream, roe, crispbread and cheese. Sales statistics compiled by Hemköp from Midsummer 2005 show that people from the Norrland province stick most closely to their traditional Midsummer dishes, while sales of pickled herring are greatest in south-eastern Sweden. Breaking down the country into pickled herring variants, it is apparent that herring in mustard-cream sauce is the most popular in northern, central and eastern Sweden, while people in southern Sweden buy the most pickled herring in onion brine.

Hemköp's statistics are based on a selection of Swedish Midsummer products from grocery stores across the country during the Midsummer period in 2005. The sales figures have been adjusted for the populations of the respective regions.

"As previously, it is primarily people from Norrland, central Sweden and Stockholm who hold fast to their Midsummer traditions," says Fredrik Jakobsson, Marketing Director at Hemköp. "The traditions are the least rigid in the Skåne province. Judging by the numbers, we can see that cakes and pastries are becoming more and more popular in Norrland, and that people in Stockholm have grown more health-conscious since a year earlier. Otherwise, consumption has been constant of Baltic herring and crispbread in the north, pickled herring in Stockholm and sour cream in south-eastern Sweden."

People in the north eat the most herring in mustard-cream sauce, crispbread, marinated meats, eggs, beer and cakes, while they are not so fond of sour cream. People in central Sweden like shrimp, crayfish and soft drinks. Sweet-pickled herring and aged cheese are most popular in the Stockholm area and Visby, while onion-pickled herring and cream are less popular. People in Gothenburg celebrate Midsummer with herring, while Baltic herring is rarity. People in Småland and Östergötland continue to favour sour cream with their onion-pickled herring, while the Midsummer favourite of people in Skåne is still "prinskorv" – small fried sausages. Herring in mustard-cream sauce is not high on their list, however.

For further information, please contact:

Maria Strömbäck, Information Officer, Hemköp, mobile tel.: +46-70-669 98 23

Fredrik Jakobsson, Marketing Director, Hemköp, mobile tel.: +46-705-47 94 41

Hemköp aspires to be the food chain for food enthusiasts, where it is easiest to buy healthy, wholesome food products. A broad product offering, an accent on fresh food and personal service are hallmarks of Hemköp. Hemköp's stores can be found at more than 160 locations across Sweden, with combined annual sales of approximately SEK 9 bn. Hemköp is part of Axfood AB, which conducts retail food business through the wholly owned store chains Hemköp, Willys and Willys hemma, totalling approximately 240 stores in all, and wholesale business through Dagab and Axfood Närlivs. In addition, Axfood collaborates with a large number of proprietor-owned stores tied to Axfood through agreements, including in the Hemköp chain but also under the Handlar'n and Tempo store profiles. Axfood is listed on the Stockholm Stock Exchange O-List, Attract 40. Axel Johnson AB is the principal owner with approximately 45% of the shares.

STATISTICAL DATA

The statistics below show sales figures of a selection of Midsummer products in percentages for grocery stores across Sweden during the period 30 May – 26 June 2005. The sales figures have then been adjusted according to the populations of the respective regions.

Statistics from 30 May-26 June 2005	North	Central	East	West	South-east	South
Pickled herring and anchovies	16%	17%	15%	16%	19%	16%
Tinned herring	14%	16%	13%	19%	21%	18%
Onion-pickled herring	14%	14%	12%	19%	21%	20%
Sweet-pickled herring	17%	16%	21%	15%	15%	16%
Herring in mustard-cream sauce	25%	24%	22%	11%	14%	5%
Baltic herring	80%	9%	3%	1%	2%	5%
Shrimp and crayfish	14%	19%	18%	18%	18%	13%
Roe and caviar	21%	16%	21%	14%	14%	13%
Crispbread	26%	22%	17%	13%	12%	9%
BBQ sauce/marinades	23%	17%	15%	16%	17%	11%
Sour cream	13%	17%	15%	18%	20%	17%
Heavy cream	19%	18%	12%	17%	19%	15%
Eggs	22%	16%	17%	17%	14%	13%
Beer (Class II)	23%	19%	17%	16%	14%	11%
Soft drinks	19%	19%	15%	16%	16%	15%
Aged cheese	14%	13%	22%	15%	18%	18%
"Prinskorv" sausages	13%	16%	17%	14%	17%	23%
Cakes/pastries	36%	14%	28%	9%	3%	10%
Soft cookies	23%	22%	14%	15%	14%	12%

Red = above average, **Green** = average, **Blue** = below average

Regional breakdown

The following cities/towns are included in the **north** region: Hudiksvall, Ljusdal, Sundsvall, Härnösand, Kramfors, Sollefteå, Örnsköldsvik, Östersund, Umeå, Skellefteå, Lycksele, Piteå, Luleå, Boden, Haparanda, Kalix, Kiruna, Gällivare.

The following cities/towns are included in the **central** region: Enköping, Eskilstuna, Kristinehamn, Filipstad, Karlstad, Säffle, Åmål, Arvika, Örebro, Karlskoga, Lindesberg, Västerås, Köping, Fagersta, Sala, Borlänge, Falun, Avesta, Hedemora, Ludvika, Mora, Gävle, Sandviken, Bollnäs, Söderhamn.

The following cities/towns are included in the **east** region: Stockholm, Södertälje, Norrtälje, Uppsala, Nyköping, Katrineholm, Visby.

The following cities/towns are included in the **west** region: Falkenberg, Varberg, Göteborg, Alingsås, Uddevalla, Trollhättan, Vänersborg, Borås, Lidköping, Skara, Falköping, Skövde, Mariestad.

The following cities/towns are included in the **south-east** region: Mjölby, Motala, Linköping, Norrköping, Jönköping, Tranås, Eksjö, Nässjö, Vetlanda, Värnamo, Ljungby, Växjö, Västervik, Hultsfred, Vimmerby, Oskarshamn, Kalmar, Nybro, Karlskrona, Kristianstad, Hässleholm, Halmstad

The following cities/towns are included in the **south** region: Ängelholm, Helsingborg, Landskrona, Malmö, Lund, Trelleborg, Ystad, Simrishamn, Eslöv.