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LEVERS AT PLANTS

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SUSTAINABILITY IN 3D

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# How the beef crumbles

A new JBS USA product aims to innovate beef's most popular product



## PRODUCT:

Pound of Ground  
Ground Beef Crumbles

## PRICE:

\$5.99/lb.

## PLUS:

Total convenience and  
good beef taste

## PROBLEM:

Excess grease during  
cooking

Ground beef is the foundation of so many quick and comforting meals, which is why so many people keep a pound or more in their freezer. But how many times do we realize, often too late, that we forgot to plan ahead and defrost that brick of ground beef? Or, even if we have remembered to take it out, it's still frozen solid! JBS USA's Pound of Ground beef company wants to help alleviate that

mealtime pain point, so they've created frozen Ground Beef Crumbles, which do not require thawing ahead of time. These 100% pure, all-natural, uncooked crumbles are quick-frozen into small pieces so they're able to go from freezer to cooked in 7 to 8 minutes. Ground Beef Crumbles come in three varieties: Original 80/20, Hearty-Sized Pieces 80/20, and Original with Onions. Given the concept's

originality, we were excited to share the Original 80/20 with others to get their reactions and thoughts.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Our tasters included teens and their parents, millennials, and a number of individuals and families who often make week-night meals featuring ground beef.

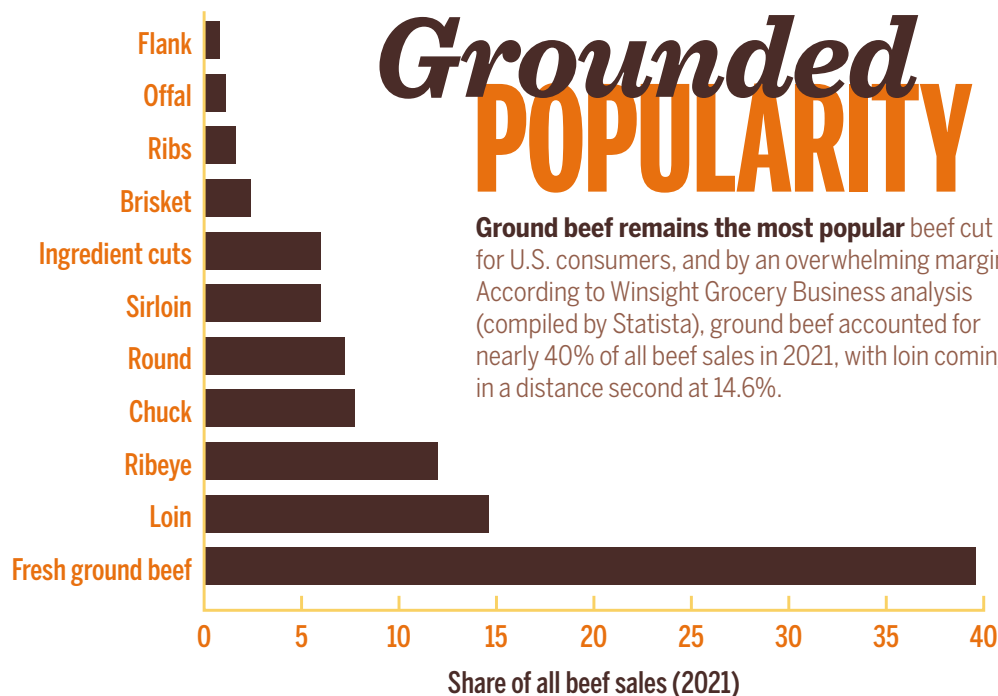
## FIRST IMPRESSIONS & APPEARANCES

Our tasters were quick to recognize the

convenience of the Ground Beef Crumbles.

"The main benefit is how easy it was to not have to remember to defrost it," one taster remarked, while another shared, "The concept is a great idea. Who hasn't forgotten to take out meat from the freezer for dinner?"

For another taster, the concept disrupted their expectations for the meal: "My husband asked me if I wanted the ground



Statista, from Winsight Grocery Business

beef for tacos for dinner and I said, “Isn’t it frozen?” He said, “That seems to be the point — you can cook it from frozen!”

One taster appreciated the ability to “just take out a scoop at a time instead of trying to hack off part of a frozen lump,” though another taster observed the product’s bag is “difficult to close if you don’t use the entire package.”

A number of tasters noted the product’s unorthodox appearance, as a result of its unique frozen processing. One taster

stated the beef looked “a little fake — it looked more like candy pellets than ground beef,” while another observed, “Visually, it seems too pink, yet it says, ‘No artificial colors.’ I’m not used to seeing ground beef pellets like this, so it’s not natural looking for me.”

Finally, a couple tasters commented that the nature of the Ground Beef Crumbles meat was not their preference. “Ideally, we want it to be organic, and grass-fed would be great,” the first taster said.

“We would be willing to pay more for that.” And the second taster said, “I prefer leaner ground beef for skillet dishes; I only use 80/20 for burgers, where you really need the fat.”

#### TASTE, TEXTURE AND MORE

The Ground Beef Crumbles received some very positive feedback from tasters.

“I tasted the Crumbles without seasoning,” a taster explained, “and they tasted quite different from store-bought ground beef — these

tasted more like beef freshly ground by a local butcher by request and cooked right away. You can definitely taste the freshness.”

Other tasters praised how the Crumbles tasted “exactly like the ground beef I buy from my local supermarket,” and that “The pieces of meat were a little bigger/rounder than if I chopped it myself — which everyone liked.” The latter taster used the beef in stuffed peppers, which “tasted great.”

There were some

disagreements, though, about the amount of liquid that resulted from cooking the Crumbles, and how that impact both taste and preparation.

“One complaint was the amount of fat/liquid I needed to drain,” a taster said. “I know it’s 80/20, but this seemed excessive.” A fellow taster told of measuring nearly one-half cup of cooking liquid, after preparing the beef.

Some tasters reported changes in texture after draining the beef. One, who followed the package’s instructions on draining the cooking liquid, found “the beef dried out a little as it sat in the pan.”

A different taster, who cooked the Crumbles for tacos, had a similar experience after draining the liquid. “The texture threw me off a little bit. I felt it was too crumbly for my taco and kept falling out everywhere,” the taster said. “I think it would be less noticeable in a sauce or if we hadn’t drained the pan. Maybe a little





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## TASTE *test*

*“They tasted quite different from store-bought ground beef—these tasted more like beef freshly ground by a local butcher.”*

grease would have helped it stay together.”

Three tasters used their Crumbles for sloppy joes, and the dish’s saucy nature provided them with unique insights about the product. All three tasters reported a finer-than-usual texture for their beef after it cooked, which for one taster, made the resulting dish “less like a sloppy joe because it flows over the bun more than when we normally make it.” Echoing that sentiment, a second sloppy joe eater shared, “I like more meat in my mouth because I like the taste, and it’s more concentrated that way. This is like soup.”

### UPSHOT

When it came to purchasing the product outside of the Taste Test, a number of tasters spoke highly of the Crumbles’ convenience.

“I will definitely buy this product to have on-hand, because being able to go from frozen to cooked in 10 minutes is a game changer!” one taster said.

Another taster said the Crumbles eliminate the problem of not only thawing frozen beef, but also the gray color and “funky” smell that results if it is not cooked promptly. “These frozen Beef Crumbles definitely solve those problems,” the taster said. “Can you imagine Pork Crumbles? How about Sausage Crumbles made with scrambled eggs in under 10 minutes? Sign me up!”

And a third taster commented that the product’s convenience helps balance cooking with a busy home life: “It’s nice to be able to throw together a quick meal without having to plan on thawing the meat the day before. I like that I didn’t have to chop it up too — another time saver!”

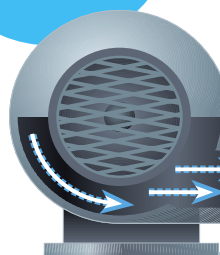
A couple tasters were not as enthused. One said, “I normally don’t keep ground beef in the freezer,” and thus will “continue to buy only fresh ground beef”; another doesn’t think the Crumbles are “a good price value,” that the “convenience is not im-

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## TASTE *test*

*“I liked how convenient it was to just open the box and throw it in the pan, but just wish it was less greasy.”*

portant to us,” and “I’m not sure I would have spotted this in the store, because I don’t look for uncooked meat in the freezer case.”

The Crumbles’ fat content, for a couple other tasters, complicates a repeat purchase. The first taster remarked, “I liked how convenient it was to just open the box and throw it in the pan, but just wish it was less greasy; if they came out with a 95/5 mix, and it was less greasy when cooking, this is something I would buy for sure.” And the second taster stated, “I will definitely keep this in the freezer for a ‘What is for dinner?’ night,” but nonetheless wished “it was a little leaner.”

And finally, two tasters reiterated how the Crumbles differ from the organic, grass-fed beef they typically buy.

One stated the fattier content of the Crumbles resulted in a taste that was “just okay” when compared to the leaner offerings they typically cook, while another expressed a willingness to pay more for an organic, grass-fed Crum-

bles that cost more. “Then, it would be an instant go-to, especially for quick ground meat nights or taco nights!”

### CONCLUSION

The convenience alone of not having to think ahead of time to take something out of the freezer to defrost can be worth its weight in gold... for some.

According to JBS USA, Pound of Ground Crumbles is a “first-to-market dinner solution that helps solve the age-old question, ‘What’s for dinner?’ with a ready-to-cook frozen ground beef.”

We, along with many of our tasters, love the concept, because it takes away one more thing to think about when deciding what to cook for dinner. But, the majority of us would prefer a leaner ground beef product, especially for a skillet dinner.

Perhaps Pound of Ground will extend their product line with a leaner item, as 90% lean/10% fat would suit many of us just fine — and being organic would be an additional delight!