

Pack Type, Sell-Through and Sales Growth Guide 2017 Plans



Pelland

Danielle Pelland, the Army & Air Force Exchange Service's (AAFES) senior buyer responsible for seasonal candy, is already fully engaged in how the Exchange will pursue its Halloween candy selection for 2017, and has been reviewing and re-tuning the Halloween assortment since the end of calendar year 2016. Last year's celebration produced a double-digit sales increase and Pelland is exploring the possibilities for further sales headroom.

REACHING SALES GOALS

As part of her goal of getting just the right assortment into AAFES stores in time for the this year's October celebration, Pelland told *E and C News* that as with other prime candy holidays during the year, she prepares for Halloween by "taking a close look at the categories within a season to see where we can gain efficiencies within the assortment; right-sizing the SKU count; selecting correct pack type for each store format; and planning the assortment at the pack-type level."

For Halloween 2017, Pelland said that she set up vendor appointments in December, with selections completed and vendors notified during the first week of March.

"Orders will be in the vendors' hands no later than mid-May, with product shipping in late June," she explained.

As to what she was looking for during her work on Halloween 2017, Pelland said, "I was looking to add new items to the assortment for variety. In addition, I also looked at the pack type, sell-through and growth to determine where budget dollars should be allocated."

AAFES 2016 Best-Selling Halloween Candy By Unit Volume

Candy	Unit Volume
1) Hershey's Reese's Peanut Butter Pumpkin (king size)	199,592
2) Hershey's Cadbury Halloween Screme Egg (1.2 oz.)	16,498
3) Hershey's All-Time Greats (snack-size bag, 100 pieces assorted, 36.22 oz.)	16,153
4) Hershey's Butterfinger Peanut Butter Cups Skulls (1.2 oz.)	11,778
5) Hershey's Reese's Peanut Butter Pumpkin (1.2 oz.)	11,395
6) Brach's Candy Corn (bag, 11 oz.)	11,097
7) Mars M&M's Minis Milk Chocolate (tube, 1.77 oz.)	11,046
8) Mars Snickers Pumpkin Singles (1.1 oz.)	9,145
9) Hershey's Candy (snack-size bag, 100 pieces assorted, 36.9 oz.)	9,078
10) Hershey's Candy (snack-size bag, 100 pieces assorted, 39.9 oz.)	8,668
11) Mars Snickers Crème Pumpkins 2-To-Go (2.83 oz.)	7,771
12) Mars Twix Ghosts (singles, 1.06 oz.)	7,235
13) Pez Halloween Dispensers	7,210
14) Just Born Mike and Ike Caramel Apple Flavor Candy (theater-box size, 5 oz.)	6,745
15) Brach's Candy Corn (bag, 4 oz.)	6,641
16) Tic Tac Bewitching Blend (1 oz.)	6,127
17) Pez Halloween Assorted Blister Pack Counter Display (0.87 oz.)	6,060
18) Just Born Hot Tamales Cinnamon Apple Flavor (theater box, 5 oz.)	5,726
19) Jelly Belly Disney Star Wars (bags, 1 oz.)	5,628
20) Mars Twix Caramel Halloween Ghosts 2-To-Go (2.12 oz.)	5,552

Source: AAFES

"In doing this, I found that we have had a steady growth in extra-large bags of candy for Halloween year over year and the sell-through continued to be high, indicating we have not met demand. Knowing that, I looked at other pack types with poor sell-through, right-sized that assortment, and opened up more open-to-buy dollars for the larger-sized bags."

HALLOWEEN SALES

AAFES will look to improve upon its sales activity during Halloween in 2016, when it produced a double-digit sales increase, far above what she said were industry projections of a 3-percent increase in dollar volume during this period.

For Halloween 2016, AAFES reported \$2.7 million in candy dollar volume, an 11-percent increase over the prior year, and unit sales of 725,000, a 12-percent uptick versus 2015.

Pelland noted that industry is forecasting a 2.9-percent increase in Halloween candy sales, and AAFES, once again, hopes to exceed that percentage increase.

To that end, "The 2017 promotions will focus on different pack types and aggressive price points," she noted.

—E and C NEWS

AAFES PHOTO



With planning that commenced at the end of the calendar year, AAFES believes it can top 2016's Halloween candy 11-percent sales increase. McCord Exchange, JB Lewis-McChord, Wash.