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PRESS RELEASE

No Bitter News for Bitrex® – New survey indicates customer concern for child safety

for immediate release 8th April 2008

Consumers are prepared to spend more on products that protect their children according to new research carried out by Bitrex. 64% of parents would be prepared to pay up to 15p more to help avoid accidental poisoning.

Macfarlan Smith, who manufacture Bitrex, a safety additive that makes household products taste exceptionally bitter, carried out the survey of just under 1000 parents in late 2007 and early 2008.

And there's good news for retailers too, with consumers displaying a preference for supermarkets who show concern and responsibility for their customers by stocking products containing Bitrex or who include Bitrex in their own brand products.

The parents surveyed, mostly mothers, were concerned about the issue of accidental poisoning and virtually all mothers of under 3s had some child safety measures in their house. They reported textbook knowledge of the importance of locking potentially dangerous products away and insisting on child-proof caps. Awareness of Bitrex was lower – but 86% thought that the product was a worthwhile contribution to child safety.

The research indicates that household cleaners are a segment where brand switching is frequent with 83% prepared to change brands 'depending on what is on offer', with product information inducing 56% to make a change.

While cleaning ability is obviously paramount for cleaning products, at least 87% of consumers will mention at least one child safety measure, with 64% specifically endorsing the importance of additives to prevent accidental swallowing.

When offered the specific choice of a product containing Bitrex over one that didn't, 70% of consumers would actively choose the one containing Bitrex.

Given the large numbers of factors involved in choice of supermarket, it is also perhaps surprising that the research found 43% of consumers prepared to switch retailers to one that included Bitrex in their products. In addition 61% of consumers said that they thought that a retailer who added Bitrex to their product was showing a concern for customer well-being.

Cameron Smith, Bitrex® Business Manager at Macfarlan Smith said,

'This research shows that parents will actively search supermarket shelves for brands containing our product. We know that parents take accidental swallowing very seriously. This research confirms that they are already taking steps to keep harmful products away from children and that they will look for child resistant caps. But this study shows us that they are also interested in a third line of defence where the possibility of harm will be dramatically reduced by our additive.'



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'Every parent recognises the horrible moment of inattention when a cap is inadvertently left off for a second or two and the phone rings. Bitrex is made for that moment. What this research also shows is that parents respond well to retailers who share their concern about child safety and who either stock products with child safety measures or add Bitrex to their own brands.

'We are very pleased with the positive news in this survey, we are obviously keen to increase awareness of our product but we also want to continue to improve child safety in the home. We see our role as working in partnership with parents, manufacturers, retailers and dedicated safety organisations to make homes even safer.'

ENDS

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Notes for Editors

1. Denatonium Benzonate was discovered in 1958 by Macfarlan Smith and registered under the Bitrex trademark in the United Kingdom, Canada and the USA later the same year. First used in denaturing alcohol - making it legally unfit for consumption - it is now added to a wide range of household cleaners, pesticides, and DIY and automotive products. Since being approved in the UK and US in the early 1960s, Bitrex has been officially recognised as the denaturant of choice in more than 40 countries.

It is inert and odourless, meaning it doesn't affect the product performance other than making it exceptionally bitter

UK sales began in 1960, and by 1963, customers included I.C.I, Rentokil and Avon Products. The first use of Bitrex simply as a taste aversive was in a cream to prevent tail-biting in pigs.

Bitrex® has been used in a variety of applications since. One of the main uses is as a human aversive. Due to its overwhelming bitter taste, it is ideal for helping prevent accidental poisonings. Many supermarkets in the UK and Europe use the Bitrex® logo on their products as a selling point to their customers.

2. Research was carried out by Swift Research with customers at five leading supermarket chains in late 2007 and early 2008. The majority of interviews were carried out outside supermarkets and the remainder online. 976 people were interviewed, 88% were female, only 9% had no child at home, 74% were weekly supermarket shoppers, the majority were working parents and in social class terms the sample closely reflected the national profile.



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3. If you suspect your child has ingested something they shouldn't have, please phone NHS Direct on 0845 46 47 (England & Wales) or 08454 242424 (Scotland)
4. Take the Bitrex taste test – try Bitrex out. Taste cautiously with tongue and see why it's possible to detect Bitrex in an Olympic size swimming pool at levels as low as 50 parts per billion

