Marketing Club Holds Aggie Ice Cream Competition

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Singing “The Scotsman.” Sitting on Old Main Hill. Cheering at football games. Making a bonfire at Second Dam. And of course, eating Aggie Ice Cream. These are just some of the things that make us Aggies.

One bite of Aggie Blue Mint or Caramel Cashew from the Aggie Creamery will take you back to the ‘good ole days’ when you and your friends were relaxing on the quad together enjoying some sun (or frigid mountain air) or cheering on the Aggies.

Reliving those memories was the goal for participants of the Aggie Ice Cream Competition held recently by the Huntsman Marketing Association (HMA), who were tasked with creating a new flavor of ice cream that ‘reminded you exactly why you chose to become an Aggie in the first place.’

Members of the HMA were divided into groups and given two weeks to perform research, run focus groups, experiment with flavors and syrups, distribute surveys, create a name for their ice cream, and prepare a presentation. In the end, “A-Game”, with its vanilla ice cream base, caramel swirl, and chocolate-covered churro bits, was the winning flavor.

Senior marketing major Kent Nelson, winning group member, stated that their hope was to make this flavor a part of Aggie culture.

“We were trying to come up with some Aggie-themed flavor,” said Nelson. “We went back to the old game day t-shirt that everyone wears. The classic one, my favorite one, is “Show Them Your A-game.” So we asked ourselves, ‘what kind of flavor would go with A-game?’”

Team members said that they paired Utah State sporting events with the phrase “A-game” which caused them to ask the question, ‘what tastes like sports?’

“We went to the concession stands,” said Nelson. “We thought, hotdog ice cream is not going to sell, popcorn ice cream is not going to sell, and candy ice cream is too common. So, what else do they sell at concession stands during sporting events? And the answer was churros!”

The ice cream prototype during the competition left judges in agreement that ‘A-Game’ was the best tasting flavor. The winning team received gift cards for Aggie Ice Cream.

When reflecting on what they learned most from their marketing experience, the group was unanimous that you can never run with the first idea that comes to mind. They said it often takes several tries before you discover what the customer wants and then perfect the product.

“You can’t go with what you think is going to be best,” said team member Andrew Thomas, a senior majoring in marketing. “We had one idea, but it went completely the other way after doing the survey and research and realizing that no one wanted our original idea for ice cream. So we went a different direction. It’s important to figure out what your target audience wants.”

Team members anxiously hope that they may someday see their flavor available at the Aggie Creamery.

“We hope that it can end up in stores,” said Thomas. “It was so good, and it was unique. You don’t normally have the cinnamon and sugar flavor with ice cream.”

We can expect many more marketing endeavors from the HMA at the Jon M. Huntsman School of Business. For more information visit the HMA page at huntsman.usu.edu/hma.