

# Popcorn Market Report by Type (Microwave Popcorn, Ready-To-Eat (RTE) Popcorn), Distribution Channel (On-Trade, Off-Trade), End Consumer (Households, Commercial), and Region 2024-2032

<https://marketpublishers.com/r/PBCEC0A87DE6EN.html>

Date: July 2024

Pages: 141

Price: US\$ 3,899.00 (Single User License)

ID: PBCEC0A87DE6EN

## Abstracts

The global popcorn market size reached US\$ 13.4 Billion in 2023. Looking forward, IMARC Group expects the market to reach US\$ 22.1 Billion by 2032, exhibiting a growth rate (CAGR) of 5.6% during 2024-2032. Surging health-conscious consumers favoring low-calorie, high-fiber snacks, the convenience of ready-to-eat (RTE) options, innovative flavor and premium product introductions by key players, the cinema industry's expansion, burgeoning per capita income, advancements in packaging technology, and the rising demand among vegan and gluten-free populations are some of the factors boosting the market growth.

### Popcorn Market Analysis:

**Market Growth and Size:** The popcorn market is experiencing significant growth globally, driven by increasing demand for healthier snack options. The market's expansion is underscored by a rising consumer preference for convenience foods and the growing popularity of microwave popcorn. With consumers increasingly opting for ready-to-eat (RTE) snacks, the popcorn industry has capitalized on this trend by offering a variety of flavors and packaging innovations. As a result, the market is projected to continue its upward trajectory, reflecting a robust increase in popcorn market share across various regions. This growth is further supported by the competitive popcorn market price trends, making it an accessible option for a broad consumer base.

**Major Market Drivers:** The growth of the popcorn market is propelled by several factors, such as shifting consumer preference towards healthier snacking options, the rise of digital movie streaming services, and increasing the demand for popcorn as a movie companion. Moreover, the globalization of cinema, innovations in flavors and

packaging, the growth of retail and convenience stores, and the surging number of social gatherings and family occasions, are propelling the market growth.

Furthermore, the strategic marketing campaigns by key players and the adoption of organic and non-genetically modified organism (GMO) popcorn varieties are driving the market growth.

**Technological Advancements:** In the popcorn industry, technological advancements have significantly impacted production and packaging processes. Innovations in microwave popcorn technology, including better packaging solutions that enhance shelf life and taste, have contributed to the market growth. The development of high efficiency popping machines has also improved the quality and consistency of popcorn, making it more appealing to consumers. Furthermore, technology has played a crucial role in the expansion of flavor offerings, with new coating and seasoning techniques allowing for a broader range of tastes.

**Industry Applications:** Popcorn finds its applications in various settings, such as movie theaters, sports venues, and at-home consumption. The popcorn industry has also made inroads into the catering and hospitality sectors, providing unique snacking options for events and venues. Additionally, gourmet popcorn has found a niche in the gift industry, where it is packaged and sold as a premium product for various occasions.

**Key Market Trends:** The popcorn market is witnessing several emerging trends that are shaping its future owing to the growing preference for organic and natural popcorn, reflecting the broader consumer shift towards healthier and more sustainable eating options. The introduction of exotic and gourmet flavors is also appealing to consumers looking for a premium snacking experience. Moreover, strategic partnerships between popcorn brands and entertainment and social media influencers are boosting the product's visibility and appeal. The focus on sustainable packaging solutions is also becoming a priority, addressing environmental concerns among consumers.

**Geographical Trends:** The North American region leads in the popcorn market, primarily due to the United States' significant popcorn market share. This dominance is attributed to the deep-rooted cultural significance of popcorn as a traditional snack for movie-going and at-home entertainment. The availability of a wide range of flavors and packaging options, coupled with high consumer spending power, further supports the market's growth in this region. Additionally, the presence of major market players and extensive distribution networks in North America ensures easy accessibility of popcorn products to consumers, reinforcing the region's leading position in the global market.

**Competitive Landscape:** The competitive landscape of the popcorn market is characterized by the presence of both global giants and local players, contributing to a dynamic and competitive environment. These companies compete on various fronts, including flavor innovation, packaging, marketing strategies, and pricing. Strategic partnerships, mergers, and acquisitions are common strategies adopted by companies

to expand their market presence and popcorn market share. The focus on research and development (R&D) activities to introduce healthier and more innovative products is also a significant trend among market players, aiming to meet the evolving consumer preferences and maintain a competitive edge in the market.

**Challenges and Opportunities:** The popcorn market faces challenges such as fluctuating raw material prices and the need for continuous product innovation to keep up with changing consumer tastes. However, these challenges present opportunities for market players to innovate and differentiate their offerings. The growing demand for healthier snack options opens up new avenues for the development of organic and non-GMO popcorn. Moreover, the expansion of the global retail landscape and the increasing penetration of e-commerce offer significant opportunities for the market growth.

**Popcorn Market Trends:**

**Rising popularity of healthy snacking options**

The global shift towards healthier lifestyles has significantly impacted snack choices, with popcorn emerging as a frontrunner in the healthy snacking segment. Popcorn, being a whole grain, is naturally high in dietary fiber and antioxidants, while also being low in calories when air-popped and minimally seasoned, which further aligns well with the increasing consumer demand for snacks that support weight management and overall health. The trend is further bolstered by the growing awareness and education regarding the benefits of consuming whole grains and reducing intake of processed foods high in sugars and saturated fats.

**Expansion of the ready-to-eat (RTE) popcorn segment**

The RTE popcorn segment has seen rapid expansion, driven by the demand for convenience among consumers owing to the hectic schedules and busy lifestyles. It offers a hassle-free snacking option, eliminating the need for preparation and cooking, which is particularly appealing to the urban population and younger demographics. Manufacturers have responded to this demand by investing in innovative packaging solutions that preserve freshness and flavor, further enhancing the product's appeal. The RTE popcorn segment's growth is indicative of the broader trend towards convenient, healthy, and flavorful snack options.

**Innovative flavor introductions and premium product offerings**

The popcorn market has witnessed a surge in innovative flavor introductions and premium product offerings, catering to evolving consumer tastes and preferences for novelty and gourmet options. Manufacturers are experimenting with a plethora of flavors

ranging from sweet, savory, and spicy to artisanal combinations like truffle, caramel sea salt, and cheese. These innovative flavors not only satisfy diverse palates but also add a sense of indulgence to the snacking experience. Additionally, premium popcorn brands are focusing on sourcing high-quality, non-GMO kernels and employing artisanal cooking methods, further elevating the product's status.

### Growth of the cinema industry globally

The global growth of the cinema industry plays a pivotal role in driving popcorn consumption, as it remains the quintessential movie snack. The experiential association of popcorn with movie-watching has a long-standing tradition that spans across cultures, making it an integral part of the cinema-going experience. As the cinema industry expands, with more multiplexes and theaters opening in emerging markets, the demand for popcorn as a complementary product continues to rise.

### Popcorn Industry Segmentation:

IMARC Group provides an analysis of the key trends in each segment of the market, along with forecasts at the global, regional, and country levels for 2024-2032. Our report has categorized the market based on type, distribution channel, and end consumer.

### Breakup by Type:

#### Microwave Popcorn

#### Ready-To-Eat (RTE) Popcorn

Ready-to-eat (RTE) popcorn accounts for the majority of the market share

The report has provided a detailed breakup and analysis of the market based on the type. This includes microwave popcorn and ready-to-eat (RTE) popcorn. According to the report, ready-to-eat (RTE) popcorn represented the largest segment.

The ready-to-eat (RTE) popcorn segment is propelled by the growing trend towards healthier snack alternatives. Consumers are increasingly seeking out snacks that not only satisfy their hunger but also offer nutritional benefits. RTE popcorn, often marketed as a lower-calorie, whole-grain, and fiber-rich option, appeals to health-conscious buyers. Additionally, the availability of gourmet and artisanal varieties has broadened its appeal, attracting a diverse consumer base looking for premium, convenient snack options without the need for preparation.

The microwave popcorn segment is driven by the increasing demand for convenient, quick-to-prepare snack options among consumers leading busy lifestyles. Factors such as the ease of preparation, wide availability, and the variety of flavors catering to different taste preferences contribute significantly to its growth. The segment benefits from innovations in packaging that improve shelf life and preserve taste, making it a popular choice for at-home movie nights and snack cravings.

Breakup by Distribution Channel:

On-Trade

Off-Trade

Supermarkets and Hypermarkets

Convenience Stores

Online Channel

Other Channels

The report has provided a detailed breakup and analysis of the market based on the distribution channel. This includes on-trade, and off-trade (supermarkets and hypermarkets, convenience stores, online channel, other channels).

The on-trade segment is driven by the increasing consumer demand for gourmet and artisanal popcorn experiences, often found in cinemas, entertainment venues, and specialty stores. This trend is fueled by a growing interest in unique flavor profiles, premium ingredients, and the desire for healthier snacking options. Consumers are willing to pay a premium for these experiences, which has led to innovations in popcorn offerings, including organic and non-GMO options, catering to health-conscious customers. The on-trade segment benefits from the social aspects of popcorn consumption, where it is often shared among friends or enjoyed during a movie, enhancing the consumer's overall experience.

The off-trade segment is driven by the increasing demand for convenient, ready-to-eat snack options among consumers leading busy lifestyles. Supermarkets, hypermarkets, and online retailers are the primary channels facilitating this segment's growth, offering a wide range of products that cater to the convenience factor. The off-trade segment capitalizes on the consumer's desire for quick and easy snack options, leading to the proliferation of microwaveable and ready-to-eat popcorn in various flavors and packaging sizes. Additionally, the rise of e-commerce has made it easier for consumers to purchase gourmet and specialty popcorn from the comfort of their homes, further driving the off-trade segment's growth.

## Breakup by End Consumer:

Households

Commercial

Households accounts for the majority of the market share

The report has provided a detailed breakup and analysis of the market based on the end consumer. This includes households and commercial. According to the report, households represented the largest segment.

The household segment in the popcorn market is driven by the increasing demand for convenient and easy-to-prepare snack options. With busy lifestyles and the growing trend of at-home movie nights and family gatherings, consumers are seeking quick, tasty, and healthier alternatives to traditional snacks. Popcorn fits this niche perfectly, offering a whole grain, fiber-rich option that can be easily made in a microwave or on the stovetop. Additionally, the availability of a wide range of flavors, from classic butter and salt to gourmet combinations, caters to diverse palates, further boosting its appeal in households.

The commercial segment is driven by the expanding cinema and entertainment industry, alongside the rising popularity of gourmet and specialty popcorn in retail outlets. Cinemas and movie theaters have traditionally relied on popcorn sales as a significant revenue source, due to its high-profit margin and strong association with movie-watching experiences. In addition, gourmet popcorn shops and specialty flavors are increasingly common in shopping malls and as part of online offerings, attracting consumers looking for premium, artisanal, and unique snack options.

## Breakup by Region:

North America

United States

Canada

Asia-Pacific

China

Japan

India

South Korea



Australia  
Indonesia  
Others  
Europe  
Germany  
France  
United Kingdom  
Italy  
Spain  
Russia  
Others  
Latin America  
Brazil  
Mexico  
Others  
Middle East and Africa

North America leads the market, accounting for the largest pet milk market share

The market research report has also provided a comprehensive analysis of all the major regional markets, which include North America (the United States and Canada); Asia Pacific (China, Japan, India, South Korea, Australia, Indonesia, and others); Europe (Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, Russia, and others); Latin America (Brazil, Mexico, and others); and the Middle East and Africa. According to the report, North America accounted for the largest market share.

The North America popcorn market is driven by the increasing demand for convenient and healthy snack options among consumers. The region's strong entertainment industry, particularly in the United States, has also played a significant role in popularizing popcorn as a must-have snack during movie screenings and events. Additionally, the introduction of various flavors and healthier options, such as organic and non-GMO popcorn, caters to the growing health-conscious segment, further fueling market growth.

Europe's popcorn market is driven by the rising popularity of on-the-go snacks and an increasing focus on healthier eating habits among consumers. European consumers are showing a keen interest in innovative flavors and gourmet popcorn, which has encouraged manufacturers to expand their product lines. Furthermore, the market is supported by the growing trend of home movie nights and streaming services, making

popcorn a preferred snack choice.

In the Asia Pacific region, the popcorn market is driven by the growing influence of Western culture and the increasing number of multiplexes and cinema halls. The region experiences a significant demand for RTE snack options due to the fast-paced lifestyle of consumers, particularly in urban areas. Additionally, the introduction of local flavors and spices in popcorn varieties has made the product more appealing to the Asian palate, contributing to market growth.

Latin America's popcorn market is driven by the growing demand for convenient and affordable snack options. The region sees a significant uptake in the consumption of popcorn during social gatherings and family occasions. Moreover, the expansion of retail distribution channels and the introduction of microwave popcorn have made it easier for consumers to prepare popcorn at home, further boosting the market growth.

The Middle East and Africa popcorn market is driven by the expanding retail sector and the increasing number of multiplexes across the region. There is a growing preference for flavored popcorn among consumers, which has led to the introduction of a variety of flavors suited to local tastes. Additionally, the rising awareness of health benefits associated with consuming popcorn, such as its high fiber content, has positively impacted the market's growth in this region.

**Leading Key Players in the Popcorn Industry:**

Key players in the popcorn market are actively engaging in strategies to enhance their market presence and cater to the diverse preferences of consumers. These strategies include product innovation, where companies are introducing a wide range of flavors from classic butter and salt to more gourmet and exotic options, catering to both traditional and adventurous palates. Additionally, there is a noticeable shift towards offering healthier options, such as organic, non-GMO, and low-calorie popcorn, to appeal to health-conscious consumers. Marketing efforts have also been amplified, with companies leveraging social media and digital platforms to reach a wider audience, particularly targeting millennials and Gen Z consumers. Furthermore, strategic partnerships with entertainment and retail sectors are being pursued to increase product visibility and accessibility. These efforts are complemented by investments in sustainable and eco-friendly packaging solutions, responding to growing consumer demand for environmentally responsible products.

The market research report has provided a comprehensive analysis of the competitive landscape. Detailed profiles of all major companies have also been provided. Some of



the key players in the market include:

Amplify Snack Brands Inc. (The Hershey Company)  
Campbell Soup Company  
Conagra Brands Inc.  
Eagle Family Foods Group LLC (The J.M. Smucker Company)  
Frito-Lay North America Inc. (Pepsico Inc.)  
Great American Popcorn  
Joe's Gourmet Foods Ltd.  
Popz USA LLC  
Preferred Popcorn  
Proper Snacks Ltd.  
Quinn Snacks Inc.  
Weaver Popcorn Bulk LLC

(Please note that this is only a partial list of the key players, and the complete list is provided in the report.)

#### Latest News:

In October 2022: Conagra Brands Inc. announced the launch of a new product line featuring innovative flavors aimed at catering to evolving consumer tastes. The company aimed to capitalize on the growing demand for gourmet popcorn with unique taste profiles, introducing flavors like Chile Lime, White Cheddar, and Sea Salt Caramel.

In November 2022: Frito-Lay, a subsidiary of PepsiCo Inc., made headlines in November 2022 when it announced a significant expansion of its Smartfood popcorn line. The expansion included the introduction of new flavors and a packaging redesign aimed at enhancing shelf appeal and consumer experience.

In January 2023: Quinn Snacks Inc., a pioneer in the natural popcorn sector, announced its transition to 100% compostable and biodegradable packaging for its microwave popcorn, making it the first in the market to implement such environmentally friendly packaging at scale.

#### Key Questions Answered in This Report

1. How big is the global popcorn market?
2. What is the expected growth rate of the global popcorn market during 2024-2032?
3. What are the key factors driving the global popcorn market?
4. What has been the impact of COVID-19 on the global popcorn market?
5. What is the breakup of the global popcorn market based on the type?

6. What is the breakup of the global popcorn market based on the end consumer?
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