

13.3% Moisture
If No. 1111 / C... 13.3%
Should Change To Higher Moisture
Received
What About Future Testing On
Product's Ability to Retain This

RITZ NON-MENTHOL HIGHER MOISTURE PROTOTYPE TEST Added Moisture
(MDD #85-42716)

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

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PURPOSE:

This report provides final results of product testing of the higher moisture RITZ non-menthol prototype.

BACKGROUND:

Results from the RITZ Non-Menthol In-Market Pick-Up Product Test (MDD #85-42708) showed a drop in consumer acceptance ratings. *Since* Moisture loss was hypothesized as being a contributing factor in the lower ratings ~~that were observed~~ (versus the HLP manufactured product and the original prototype) *a higher moisture prototype was developed (13.25% versus the spec of 12.75%) and tested.*

AA This research assessed a means of addressing a possible moisture loss problem through initially increasing moisture from 12.75% to 13.25% in the non-menthol product. *allow* The increase in initial product moisture would provide for an expected short-term moisture loss without an associated drop in consumer acceptance. *allow* This research assessed whether an acceptable RITZ product could be made at the higher moisture.

Following Discusses This Product's Performance *after two weeks of aging.*

OBJECTIVE:

To determine whether a higher moisture non-menthol product achieves acceptance ratings comparable to the ~~original prototype~~ *and* the lower moisture, Protos translation product, *as well as the original HLP prototype*

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS/KEY FINDINGS:

- The higher moisture RITZ non-menthol prototype was as acceptable as the lower moisture, Protos translation product among all three action standard smoker groups.
 - The higher moisture (13.3%) Protos-made product was positively perceived as less strong than the lower moisture (12.7%) Protos translation product among all three smoker groups. However, the higher moisture appeared to ^{have some} negatively affect taste characteristics among the ~~secondary~~ and ~~tertiary~~ action standard smoker groups. *18-24 year old* *18-24*
- The higher moisture prototype achieved comparable ratings to its original prototype among primary and secondary action ~~standard groups~~; but like the Protos translation (and HLP post-production) product, the higher moisture prototype was inferior to its original prototype among 18-24 year old 100mm Female smokers.

- While the Protos translation product was too strong compared to the original prototype among all three action standard smoker groups, the higher moisture Protos prototype was perceived to be milder than the original prototype among primary and tertiary action standard smokers. Like the Protos translation product, the higher moisture prototype had the slight advantage of a more natural taste than the original prototype among 18-34 year old Female Stylish segment smokers.
- The high moisture RITZ non-menthol Protos-made product was also as acceptable as the HLP manufactured product among all three action standard groups.
 - As was the lower moisture, Protos translation product, the high moisture Protos-made product was perceived to have improved taste characteristics (more natural and less bitter tasting) compared to the HLP manufactured product among all three action standard smoker groups.
- Against Benson & Hedges and Virginia Slims Lights, the high moisture prototype maintained the ratings attained by both the Protos and HLP post-production products, except among
 - Females 18-34. Among ^{the} primary action standard smokers, the high moisture prototype was at parity with Benson & Hedges, losing the superiority that had been achieved by the original prototype, the Protos translation and HLP post-production products.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on this research, an increase in the moisture of RITZ non-menthol generally would not adversely affect consumer acceptance of fresh product. Given the loss of product moisture over time in all brands, an increase in the initial moisture of non-menthol RITZ is recommended to extend the period of time in-market over which the product is acceptable to consumers.

NEXT STEPS

Since an increase in moisture to 13.3% can not be sustained in manufacturing, ^{whatever} ~~a feasible~~ increase ^{is possible} in the moisture of RITZ non-menthol should be considered.

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