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English 2010

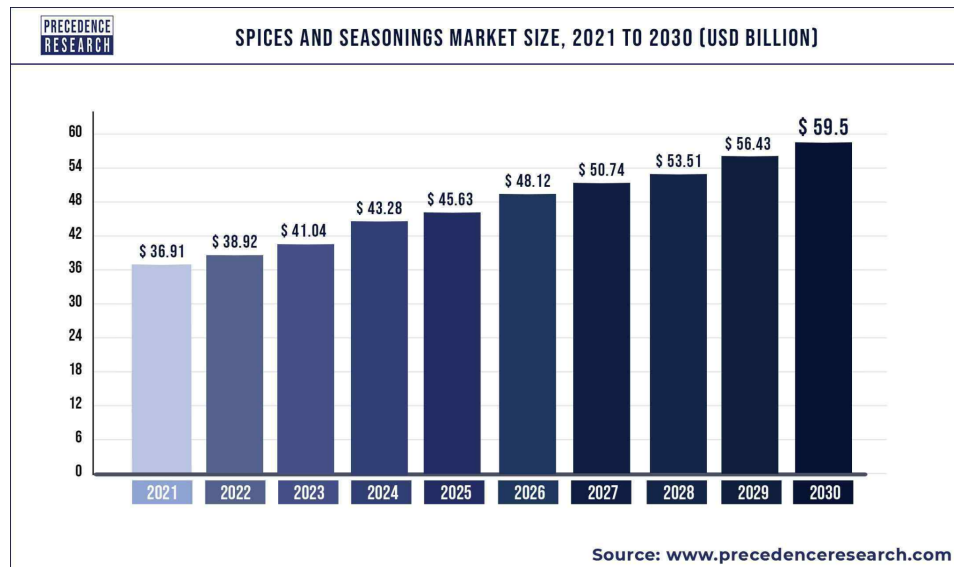
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### Why isn't there a spicy label on every spicy product?

Imagine this, you are on a date with a person you really like. We went to Buffalo Wild Wings, which is a restaurant known for their chicken legs and their spiciness. So being brave, you try to impress your date by trying a wing that is a little spicy. Not knowing what “pretty spicy” means and knowing that you can handle Taco Bell’s diablo sauce. So you order some wings that are Chipotle Buffalo Seasoning, which is considered medium of their spicy scale. Then your order arrives and you begin to eat the wings like they are carrots. Then a couple minutes hit and you realize that the medium spicy is way hotter than the Diablo sauce. You start to tear up from the heat and you receive the disapproval of the date. This story is nonfiction and could happen to you. This is not only a problem in restaurants not knowing how spicy food is but also in the marketplace across America. That every item/ entree should have been labeled with the SHU units of spiciness because of the safety for the people, our rights to know and the satisfaction to the consumers.

The sounds of a universal spiciness unit system may sound crazy but it does exist. It’s called Scoville Heat Units, or SHU, a unit system to measure the spiciness or the pungency (Doctor James Macdonald). In other words, pungency is the amount of capsaicin in a product or pepper. JSTOR describes it saying that Wilbur Scoville invested it in 1912 by dilution in sugar-water like the Thai Chili can still be tasted after being in 100,000 drops of sugar-water (Macdonald, 2017). This scale has a scale from 1 to 17 million drops of sugar-water with a jalapeno pepper being from 2.5 thousand to 8 thousand SHU to a Ghost pepper being 600,000 to 1,041,427 SHU (*Chili Pepper Scoville Scale*). The accuracy of the scoville scale was determined by five human taste-testers to sense heat was undetectable. As we know that this human variable was unpredictable. Toketemu, health writer, states, “Today, a process called high-performance liquid chromatography can determine the exact concentration of capsaicin, eliminating the need for human taste testers. But the Scoville Scale is still the official measurement, used by foodies and experts alike” (Ohwovoriole). Even through, The scoville scale was first tested with humans,

now it is more reliable. Showing forth that if we had a universal unit of measurement to put on for spicy, we would use the Scoville Heat Unit.



“Spices and Seasoning Market size,2021 to 2030 (USD Billion).” Precedence Research, June 2022, <https://www.precedenceresearch.com/spices-and-seasonings-market>. 1/03/2023.

Even though the unit of measurement is important. Why is this important to you? What is this craze for spiciness? Well the phenomenon about spices is something that is on rise.

“according to EuroMonitor, sales of herbs and spices hit \$283 million in 2012, compared to \$212 million five years earlier”(Gulli). Since the early 2010’s, the spice group has grown. This trend of growth in sales of spices does not stop at our current day. If we look at the chart above, it shows us the projected increase in spice and seasoning in the future market. In other words, the want for spicy food is only going to increase and with this increase, we need to label what is pungency. This adds on to another reason why it is Important to label the species and food we eat.

As sales of spices rise, so do the risks that come along with spicy food eating. With the thrill of the heat comes consequences too. I personally love to eat spicy food. I remember going to the local In-n-Out and grabbing extra peppers for home, so I can boost my “tolerance”. So eventually, I could hotter peppers like habanero or etc. Jonathan Soma, writer from Bon appetit, contests to why could spiciness be dangerous, “A pastor and his wife, Tim and Mary Katherine Gann, sued Steak 'n Shake in 2010 after a waiter allegedly served their son a hot sauce so spicy

that he had to be hospitalized. According to the lawsuit, the appropriately named Blair's Mega Death Sauce caused their son to break out in hives, have difficulty breathing, and be "[inflicted with] severe injuries to his body and permanent damages" (bon appetit). The list of symptoms are things that could happen to anyone who eats something spicy. This is a danger that companies who invest into spicy will need to protect them against lawsuits. What other better way to protect them from a lawsuit than to label how spicy their product is. Just like, the olden days when the FDA asked for products to put food allergies, for the common protection of the people. Putting a label for SHU will provide safety. Do you Remember the case Liebeck v McDonald's? Where Stella Liebeck received her coffee and received a severe burn after a spill of it. She later received 3 million dollars and McDonald's to protect themselves from another lawsuit, put the label Caution: Hot on every cup ever since. If not cautious, the legal world will take you down. Because of the scare for big corporations, that is why we need to have Scoville Units labeled on every product.

### Citations-

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