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Study shows quality is king in Chinaâ??s infant formula market

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China accounts for almost half of all infant formula sales globally. To gain new market insights, Advanced Lipids, manufacturer of the fat ingredient INFAT®, surveyed 211 urban Chinese parents.

All fed their children with infant formula, either exclusively or in combination with breastfeeding. Nearly three in five (59%) named nutritional value as one of the two factors most important to them when choosing formula, while 45% chose quality and 39% chose safety. Only six per cent said price was an important factor.

The survey shows that many Chinese parents are prepared to shop around to find high-quality products. Eight in ten (80%) of the respondents (all of whom lived in major cities and had a joint income above the national average) said they had tried at least two different formulas, with 38% trying at least three.

The most common reasons for switching products were that another formula offered higher quality (75%) and concerns about safety (74%). By far the most common source of information was the internet: 71% of parents searched online before deciding on a product, compared to 49% who consulted friends and 27% who sought the advice of a doctor.

The parents were much more likely to prefer to buy formula products manufactured overseas than in China (82% v 18%). However, country of origin was not a significant driver of product choice, with only 2% of respondents considering it one of the most important factors when choosing a formula.

Advanced Lipids is the manufacturer of INFAT®, a high-quality fat ingredient for formula. INFAT® contains high levels of the structured triglyceride SN-2 palmitate (also known as OPO) and mimics the structure of human milk fat, providing a range of health benefits for

infants.