



A LOT ABOUT SPAM

*"We dine well here in Camelot
We eat ham and jam and SPAM a lot"*

Knights of the Round Table

So, What *is* SPAM?

SPAM is a canned "shoulder pork and ham/spiced ham" pork product of Hormel Food Corporation that was introduced in 1937. SPAM luncheon meat, like most other luncheon meats, is precooked. However, SPAM is often pan-fried, or otherwise heated through again to add texture.

What do the Letters S.P.A.M. Stand For?

The original name was "Hormel Spiced Ham," accurate but not memorable. When its market share took a dive, the name "SPAM" debuted. A Hormel official once stated that the original meaning of the name SPAM was "Shoulder of Pork and Ham." According to writer Marguerite Paten in "SPAM – The Cookbook," the name was suggested by Kenneth Daigneau, brother of the Hormel vice president, and an actor. Other accounts credit the name to the winning entry in a national naming contest. There are numerous explanations of the origin of the SPAM acronym: "Specially Processed Assorted Meat," "Spiced Pork And haM." "Specialty Processed Army Meat," and "SPare haM." The company line today is: the SP and AM were taken from "SPiced haM."

According to Hormel's trademark guidelines, SPAM is spelled with all capital letters and is treated as an adjective, as in the phrase "SPAM luncheon meat." As with many trademarks, consumers typically simply refer to similar meat products as SPAM. In 2007, Hormel celebrated SPAM's 70th Anniversary and the seven billionth can was produced.

How *Monty Python* Gave the Word a New Meaning

SPAM was one of the few meat products excluded from the British food rationing that began in World War II (and continued for a number of years after the war), and the British grew heartily tired of it. The British comedy troupe *Monty Python* used this as the context for their classic SPAM sketch: (Mr. and Mrs. Bun enter the Green Midget Café, where all the other diners are Vikings. They ask the waitress what the cafe serves for breakfast. All the items she lists include SPAM. All told, SPAM is uttered 132 times, much to the couple's dismay.

Thus, the word "spam" became a term to describe something that keeps repeating and repeating to great annoyance. Today, the term "spam" also means network abuse on the Internet particularly junk e-mails and massive junk postings. Hormel, the maker of SPAM, does not object to the term, but insists that it be spelled in lower case to distinguish it from the capitalized SPAM trademark.



Where is most of the SPAM in the U.S. made?

Austin, Minnesota, is home to the plant that produces SPAM for most of North America and Europe, and is also home to the SPAM Museum. 1991 marked the inaugural “Annual State Fair Best SPAM Recipe Contest.” Today, the competition is held at more than 40 state and regional fairs.

What state consumes the most SPAM?

The state of Hawaii and the territory of Guam consume the most SPAM per capita.

What country gave SPAM credit for helping them win World War II?

Over 100 million pounds of SPAM were shipped abroad to feed the Allied troops. Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev credited donations of American supplies of SPAM for the ability of the Soviet Union to feed the Red Army during World War II.

How Many Kinds of SPAM Are There?

There's SPAM with cheese, with real bacon, as singles and spread. Plus, *Hickory Smoked*, *Hot & Spicy*, *Low Sodium* and *SPAM Lite*. *Golden Honey* debuted for the Broadway production of *Spamalot* and *Stinky French Garlic* for the London premiere. The SPAM can morphed from the key opening tins of the 1930s to the easy-open front ring of the 1960s. The convenient top pull-tab came in the 1980s, a polypropylene can with a side-opening ring was introduced in the late 1990s along with the current ergonomically enhanced corner pull-tab.

What is the SPAM Club?

The SPAM Club is a group of devoted Eric Idle and *Monty Python* fans. SPAM Club members get exclusives throughout the site, such as e-mailed issues of “The Daily Dirty Fork” newspaper, Adopt-An-Eric, access into virtual parties, and, such club events, as “The SPAM Bag” and “Get Well Soon Eric.”

SPAM and SPAMALOT...

SPAM has become an integral part of *Spamalot*, not only by being part of the musical, but by their promotional events that include the SPAMMOBILE and the creation of the *Honey Grail Limited Edition SPAM*.