



## Smoking Kills Your Taste Buds

*truth® and BIGS are joining forces to save your taste buds one pack of seeds at a time*

**(Washington, D.C.) July 16, 2018** – Smoking can dull - or kill - your taste buds by changing the blood supply they receive<sup>1</sup>. **truth** – one of the largest and most effective youth smoking prevention campaigns, has partnered with **BIGS®** Sunflower Seeds to draw attention to the topic of tobacco, the ways in which its chemicals impact your taste buds and how sunflower seeds can help current smokers quit.

Seventy percent of smokers want to quit yet only 7.4 percent are able to each year.<sup>2</sup> Chewing sunflower seeds can help curb cravings and are sometimes used by people trying to quit smoking.<sup>3</sup> As part of this collaboration, **truth** x **BIGS** will distribute mini bags of “#ChewOnThis Smoking Kills Your Taste Buds” sunflower seeds nationwide at a variety of events including the Vans Warped Tour, High School Nation, Nitro Circus and select Minor League Baseball games. The bags will feature humorous farewell messages bidding goodbye to some of the most popular **BIGS** sunflower seeds flavors, including Dill Pickle, Bacon and Ranch.

“Our partnership with **BIGS** provides a unique opportunity to reach youth and young adults in an unexpected way,” said Eric Asche, chief marketing officer of Truth Initiative®, the national public health organization that directs and funds the **truth** campaign. “We hope these products will start a conversation on the dangers of tobacco use. Having a tangible product in market that conveys our message is a perfect opportunity to increase the relevancy of the **truth** message. We are thrilled to work with **BIGS** on this life saving work.”

The **truth** x **BIGS** partnership is particularly well suited to reach young athletes, a population with whom tobacco prevention is particularly important as high school athletes use smokeless tobacco products nearly twice as much as their non-athlete counterparts<sup>4</sup>. For many years, major league baseball players have used sunflower seeds to help them quit using smoke-less tobacco products like ‘chew’.

“Sunflower Seeds are a great alternative to tobacco products, and **BIGS** is proud to partner with **truth** in its mission to end tobacco use among our youth,” said Greg O’Neal, VP of Marketing for **BIGS** Sunflower Seeds. “By placing compelling messages about the hazards of tobacco usage on bags of **BIGS** seeds, we hope to provide our younger generations with the information and tools needed to make their own smart choices regarding tobacco habits.”

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<sup>1</sup> Jacob, N., Golmard, J.L. & Berlin, I. Chem. Percept. (2014) 7: 47. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12078-014-9164-5>

<sup>2</sup> Babb S, Malarcher A, Schauer G, Asman K, Jamal A. Quitting Smoking Among Adults — United States, 2000–2015. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2017;65:1457–1464. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6552a1>

<sup>3</sup> 10 ways to resist tobacco cravings. Mayo Clinic. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/quit-smoking/in-depth/nicotine-craving/art-20045454>. Published November 15, 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Combustible and Smokeless Tobacco Use Among High School Athletes — United States, 2001–2013 <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6434a2.htm>

Since 2000, **truth** has helped bring teen cigarette use down from 23 percent to less than 6 percent in 2018.<sup>5</sup> The **truth** x BIGS collaboration is part of the movement to inspire youth and young adults to be the generation that ends smoking for good. By encouraging young people to use their social influence and creativity in the fight against Big Tobacco, **truth** continues to take on an industry that spends \$1 million each hour on marketing alone.<sup>6</sup>

To learn more about how **truth** x BIGS are calling on people to save taste buds, visit [www.thetruth.com/truthxBIGS](http://www.thetruth.com/truthxBIGS).

#### **About truth®**

**truth** is one of the largest and most successful youth tobacco prevention campaigns. The campaign exposes the tactics of the tobacco industry, the truth about addiction and the health effects and social consequences of smoking. **truth** gives teens facts to make their own informed choices about tobacco use and inspires them to use their creativity in the fight against tobacco. The campaign is credited with preventing hundreds of thousands of teens from starting to smoke and is empowering this generation to end smoking for good. To learn more, visit [thetruth.com](http://thetruth.com). **truth** is part of Truth Initiative®, a national public health organization dedicated to achieving a culture where all youth and young adults reject tobacco. To learn more about Truth Initiative, visit [truthinitiative.org](http://truthinitiative.org).

#### **About BIGS**

BIGS Sunflower Seeds, a brand of Conagra Brands, Inc. (NYSE: CAG) has been the fastest-growing sunflower seed brand for eight consecutive years. With a collection of bold, dynamic flavors, BIGS high-quality, jumbo seeds are grown in the USA and fire-roasted for the biggest kernel crunch. BIGS collection of co-branded partners brings authentic taste to your favorite seeds. For more information on BIGS Sunflower Seeds, visit [bigs.com](http://bigs.com).

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<sup>5</sup> The Effect of Branding to Promote Healthy Behavior: Reducing Tobacco Use among Youth and Young Adults <http://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/14/12/1517>

<sup>6</sup> [Office on Smoking and Health, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion](#)