

Ice-cream sells like hot cakes

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Sales of ice-cream have soared this summer as temperatures have hovered above 40 degrees.

The gelato maker for Gelato Messina in Sydney, Nick Palumbo, said the store had experienced its best summer since opening in 2002, and sales increased 15 per cent on last year.

"As long as the temperature's over 24 to 25 degrees and as long as it doesn't rain, that's good for us.

" A storm comes through and it pours with rain, it's all over," Mr Palumbo said.

Another reason ice-cream was selling well was because it was relatively recession-proof.

"Simple pleasures like chocolate, beer and ice-cream . . . for the ladies it's ice-cream," Mr Palumbo said, citing a steady sale of flavours such as coconut and lychee, and hazelnut.

Elsewhere, New Zealand Natural marketing manager Kim Carlon said the recent lack of rain had helped drive sales.

"The distribution of ice-cream always increases leading into and during the summer months and the sunny and dry weather recently has definitely had a positive impact on sales," Ms Carlon said.

"Ice-cream is a relatively inexpensive feel-good treat. During a recession people are more likely to take the family for an ice-cream over other more expensive options like an expensive meal or a day trip.

" So in comparison to other things, an ice-cream's a pretty good option."

Mauricio Alarcon, head of marketing for Nestle Peters, the official providers of ice-cream for the Australian Open, said sales were up on last year.

Temperatures in Melbourne surged above 40 degrees during this year's tournament. "We had over 20 per cent growth of our sales in the Australian Open," Mr Alarcon said.

"We know we had a big increase in sales, both in cones and of course the refreshments as well."