



A Holistic Approach to Understanding Moms’ Definition of a ‘Clean’ Infant Formula

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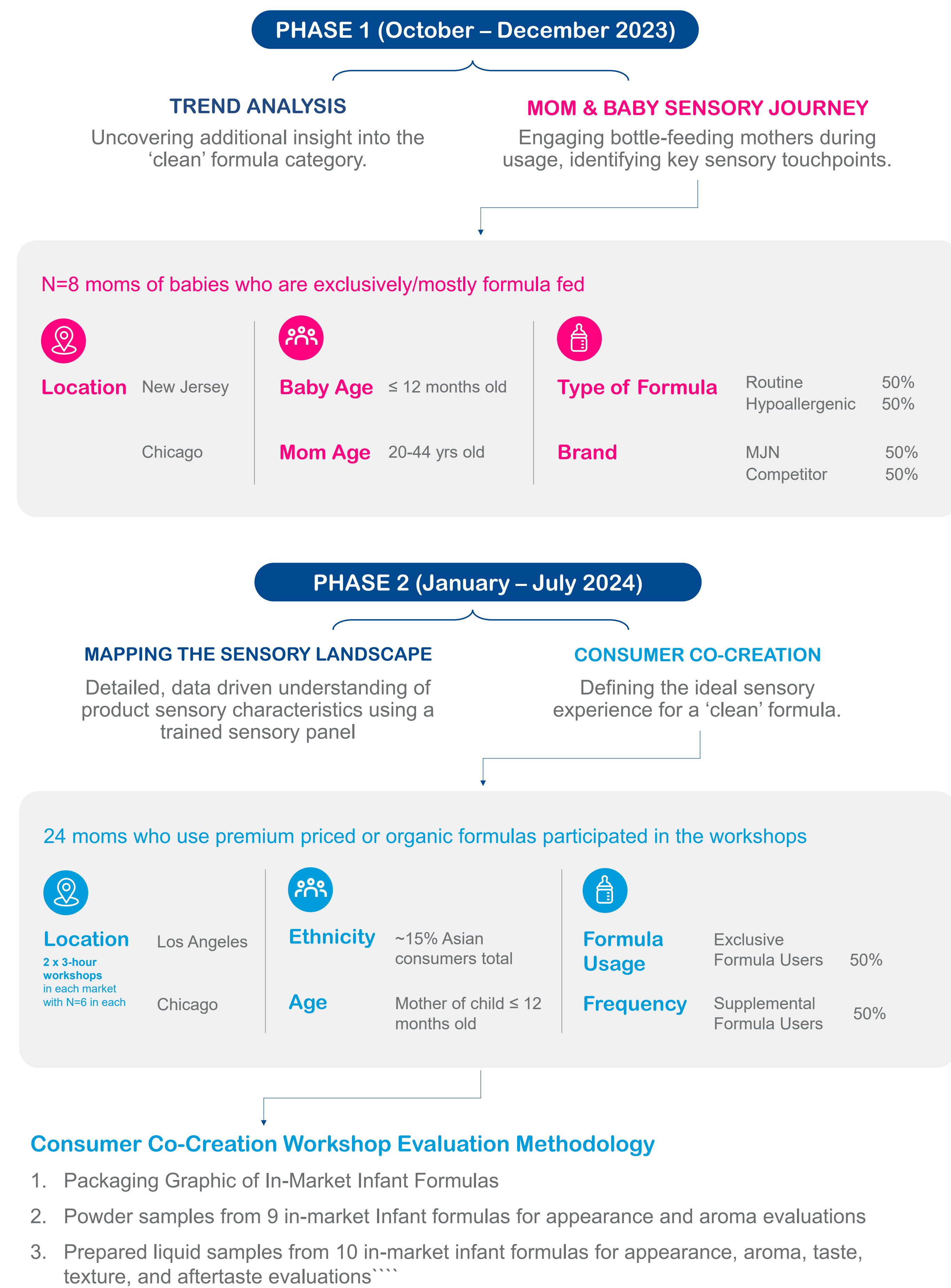
INTRODUCTION

- The clean label movement - once a niche preference - has become a defining force in the infant formula category, driven by modern parents’ desire for transparency, simplicity, and trust.
- As this macro trend gains momentum, the infant formula market has become increasingly competitive, with emerging brands leveraging “clean” claims to disrupt legacy players.
- In response, competitive monitoring of in-market products is essential to understand how these claims are perceived by caregivers, and what other elements contribute to a ‘clean’ infant formula perception.

This study offers a comprehensive, consumer-informed perspective on what “clean” truly means in this space.

METHODOLOGY

Combining desk research, qualitative exploration and expert sensory analysis. The stages were run sequentially, allowing insights to be integrated and combined into successive stages of research.

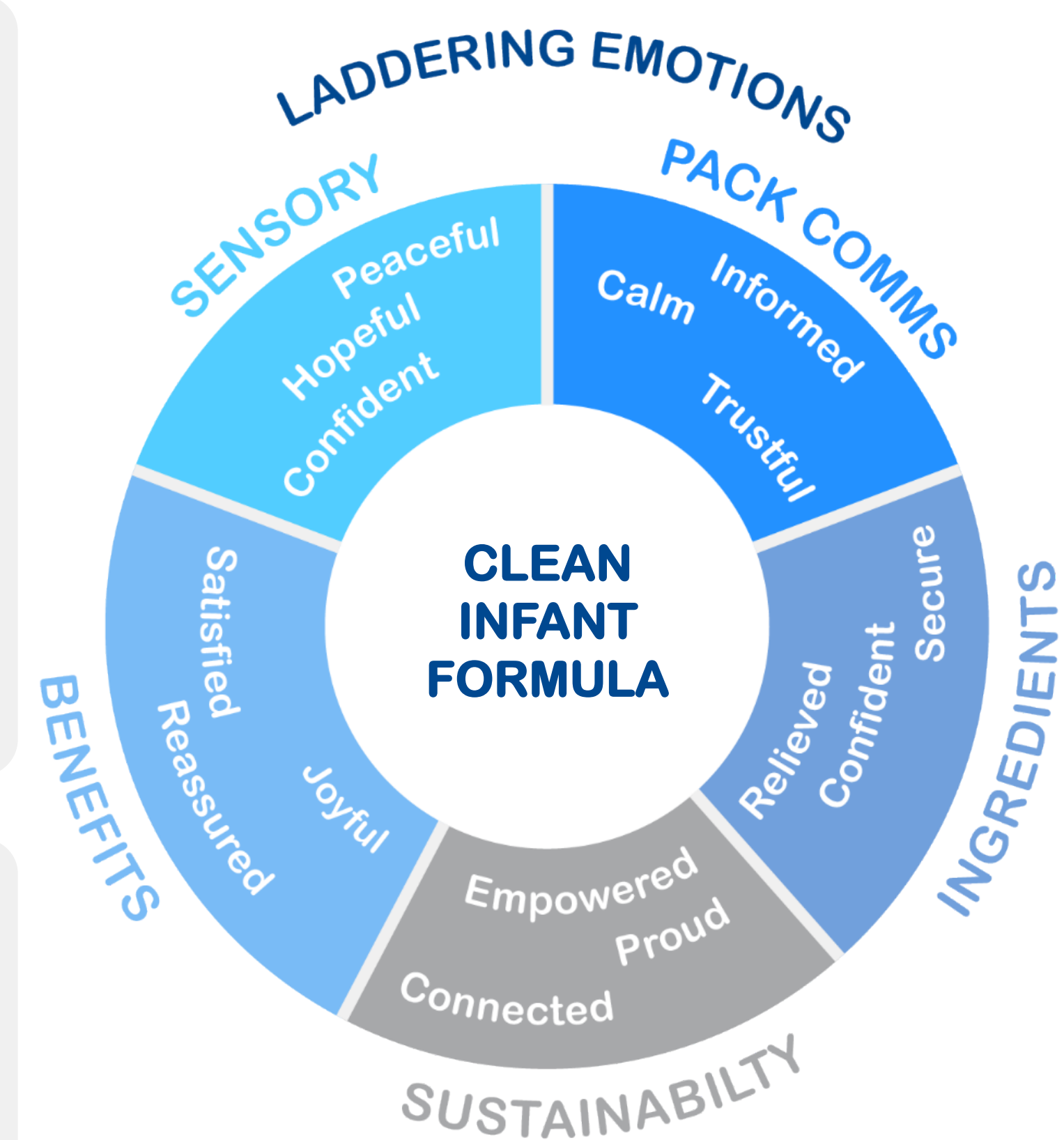


RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. Define what “clean” means to moms in the infant formula category from consumer, sensory, and marketing perspectives to align with evolving parent expectations.
2. Identify actionable opportunities across product formulation, graphic design, and communication strategies that can strengthen MJN’s competitive positioning.
3. Establish sensory and consumer-informed guardrails by benchmarking MJN’s portfolio against key competitors to guide innovation and optimization efforts.

KEY RESULTS

- 01** The ‘Clean’ Consumer is a highly conscientious parent who seeks formula options that are both healthy and good for the planet.
- They are super dialed in – with social media and word of mouth, they know when a product is the real deal... and when it’s not.
- From ingredients to the sensory experience, our clean parent desires a baby formula that is simple and natural; without sacrificing its inherent nutritional qualities.
- 02** “Clean” Label extends beyond mere labeling: it is multi-faceted – encompassing sensory characteristics, packaging, ingredients, claims, and sustainability aspects



- 03** A usage journey has been established for infant formula, creating a foundation for packaging and sensory cues within the touchpoints
- START** Pours water into bottle → Opens formula package → Pour formula into bottle → Shakes up bottle → Gives baby formula **END**
- 04** Not all product sensory cues are perceived equally—moms prioritize specific attributes like powder aroma, liquid appearance, and preparation experience as key indicators of “clean,” making it essential to optimize these high-impact moments to reinforce trust and product quality.
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- 05** A clean pack design strikes a balance between essential consumer information and simple, nurturing visuals. Key benefits, claims, and ingredients should be clearly shown, with organized imagery that blends scientific credibility and emotional appeal.
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- *Physical packages were not evaluated, only images of packages

CONCLUSION

In an increasingly competitive infant formula market shaped by the clean label movement, understanding what “clean” truly means requires more than surface-level claims—it demands a holistic, evidence-based approach. This research combined trend analysis, in-home sensory journey observations, descriptive analysis, and consumer co-creation to uncover how parents interpret and experience the concept of “clean” across every touchpoint. By mapping a clear sensory hierarchy and benchmarking against

in-market competitors, cues have been identified that matter most to parents and the emotional drivers behind their choices for “clean” infant formula. Critically, this work elevates the voices of an underrepresented population—infants and their caregivers—offering a robust foundation of consumer and sensory guardrails to guide innovation, renovation, and communication strategies in a rapidly evolving category.