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THE CONSUMER MAGAZINE

Buy the the Right Kitchen Aid **p6**

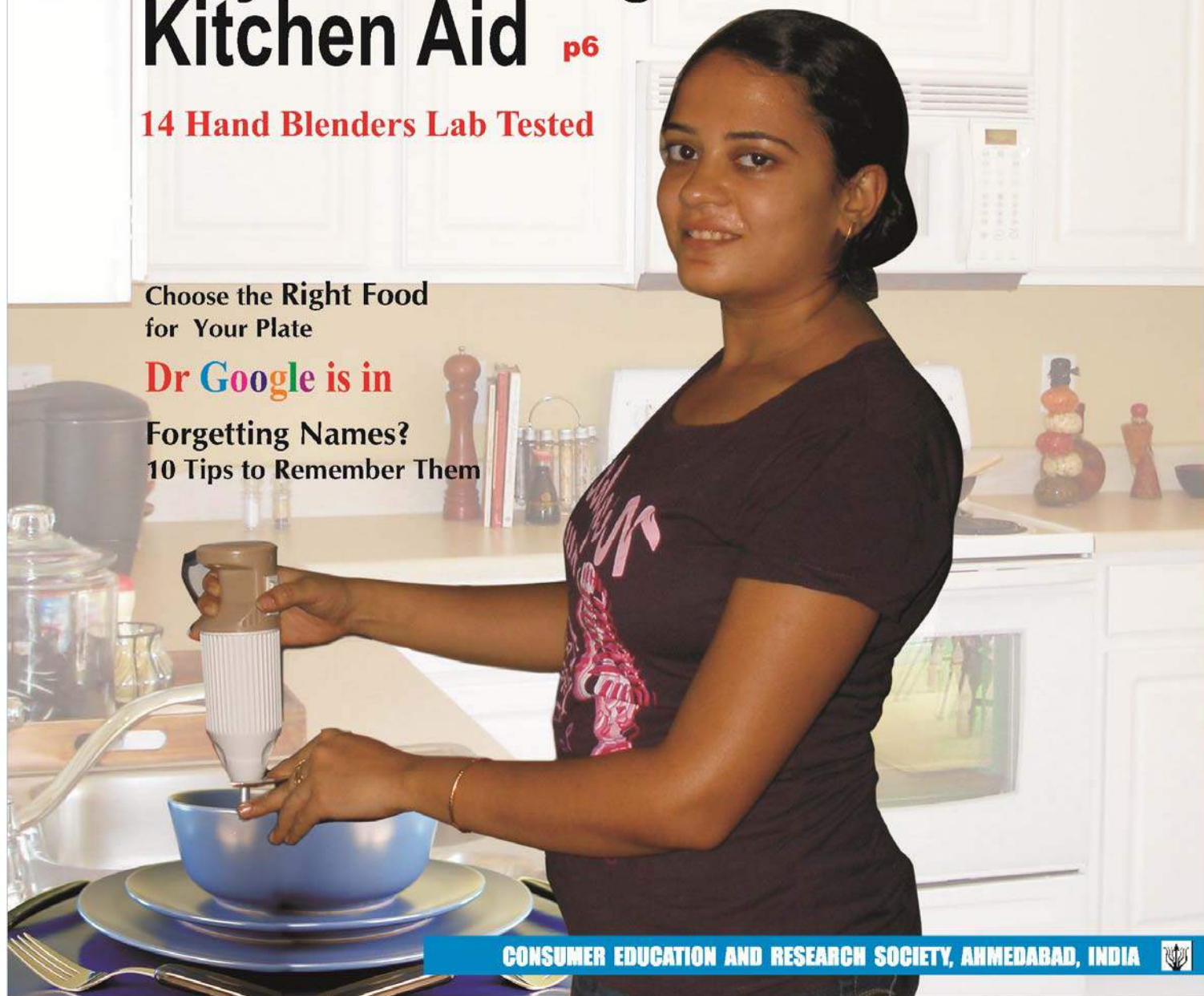
14 Hand Blenders Lab Tested

**Choose the Right Food
for Your Plate**

Dr Google is in

Forgetting Names?

10 Tips to Remember Them



CONSUMER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH SOCIETY, AHMEDABAD, INDIA



INSIGHT is Independent

The tests on hand blenders reported here were carried out in our independent in-house test laboratory – the only of its type in the country. The samples purchased for testing were bought incognito from authorised dealers and reputed shops. No samples were accepted from manufacturers.

Buying a Hand Blender?

We Can Tell You Which & Why

14 Hand Blenders Lab Tested

From making soup and fruit shake to chopping onions and whipping eggs, you'll be surprised to know how much else it can do to help you make delicious and healthy food in a fraction of time. Yes, hand blender is one of the most versatile appliances that many kitchens just can't do without.

In a user survey we found that a large number of homemakers and cooks preferred hand blenders to food processors or mixers. To help consumers make

an informed choice, INSIGHT decided to do a comparative testing of hand blenders. We invested around 2,800 man-day-hours and Rs. 70 thousand (cost of samples) to test a total of 42 samples of 14 widely sold models of hand blenders. Approximately 3 kg of curd, 7 dozen eggs, 5.5 kg onions, 3 kg bananas and 3.5 litre milk were used to test the performance of blenders. A total of 23 tests were conducted on each sample of hand blenders.

INSIGHT
Quick
Picks

Model	Price (Rs.)*	Purpose
Braun MR-120	3,182	Blending, whisking and chopping
Kenstar Champ KHC 30 W1B-HCF	850	Blending and whisking
Prestige PHB 6.0	1,435	Blending, whisking and chopping

*Bill price at Ahmedabad

Test Findings

INSIGHT recommends three 'Best Buys'— **Braun** MR-120, **Kenstar** Champ KHC 30 W1B-HCF and **Prestige** PHB 6.0, as they were overall best in terms of performance, quality, convenience, general requirements and environmental criteria.

We don't recommend five models — **Jaipan** Lassi Maker, **Boss** B-125, **Anjali** Silver Touch, **Orpat** HHB-137-E/WOB and **Softel** Turbo. The electric wires inside their external power supply cord were of poor quality, which may cause overheating and fire. Moreover, when using **Softel** and **Orpat**, their power cord may get strained or twisted at the point where it is connected to the blender. This may affect the insulation of conductors, resulting in short-circuit and fire.

Here are the other findings of our tests:

Performance

- All the 14 hand blenders took almost equal time (12-15 seconds) in making 6-7 glasses of buttermilk. However, for small quantities (1-2 glass using 50g of curd) **Black & Decker** and **Maharaja** took a little longer time (15-20sec.), as their blades were mounted deep in the blade guard not easily making contact with the small quantity of curd.
- **Braun** was the fastest in making banana shake. For equal quantities, **Philips** took the maximum time (21 sec.) which was almost double than that of **Braun** (10 sec).
- **Maharaja** and **Black & Decker** were the slowest in whisking eggs (both models took 10 sec. while the other models took 5-7 sec.)
- 5 models — **Braun**, **Softel**, **Prestige**, **Philips** and **Croma** — were provided with separate blade and bowl for chopping, they took only 10 seconds in chopping 100g of onions. Remaining models can also do chopping but they may take more time.

Convenience

It includes functions, cleaning and storage.

- 4 models — **Anjali**, **Boss**, **Jaipan** and **Orpat** — had removable blades, thus easy to clean, however, **Orpat** did not provide blade removal spoon.
- 3 models — **Braun**, **Croma** and **Prestige**, had a separate attachment for whisking and chopping.
- The switch operation in **Croma** and **Philips** was difficult. You will need to press and hold a button continuously during entire operation.
- 4 models — **Boss**, **Softel**, **Jaipan** and **Anjali** — had non-

detachable stem. They needed an extra precaution while cleaning under running water, as water may seep into their electrical parts or wirings.

- At one stretch, **Orpat** can be used for the longest time (6 minute); **Black & Decker**, **Kenstar**, **Croma** and **Philips** had the minimum operating time of 30 seconds only.
- **Philips** had the longest stem (21.2cm) followed by **Black & Decker** (19.8cm) and **Braun** (19cm). **Jaipan** had the shortest stem (12.8cm).
- **Philips** and **Orpat** had the longest power cord (1.9m approx.); **Kenstar** had the shortest (1.09m). The length of cords of most of the models was approximately between 1.0 and 1.7m.
- In **Morphy Richards**, it was a little difficult to understand how to separate and fix the stem from the blender.

Environment Criteria

- Though the rated wattage of **Braun** (i.e. 300 w) was greater than 9 other models, it consumed the least energy. **Philips** (rated wattage- 250 w) consumed almost four times that of **Braun**. (For annual energy cost, see results on eco- friendly criteria)
- In the 'user test' **Maharaja**, **Boss** and **Anjali** produced the most acceptable sound compared to other models.
- 3 models — **Kenstar**, **Braun** and **Black & Decker** — provided information on recycling/ disposal.
- The manual of **Bajaj** said that the company dedicates itself to the cause of environment protection, however, information on recycling/ disposal was missing.
- None of the models provided any information on packaging material used.





General Findings

- **Kenstar** was the lightest among the 14 models tested by us; it weighed 498g. **Boss** was the heaviest (853g).
- The power indicator — which helps the user to know the availability of power supply — was provided only in **Anjali**.
- The speed was not marked on the push buttons in **Maharaja** and **Morphy Richards**. Hence, it was difficult to select between the two speeds.
- None of the hand blenders tested by us carried the ISI mark. Hand blenders are covered neither under the mandatory certification by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) nor the Quality Control Order 2003.


Markings

- Only **Braun** and **Philips** had legible and durable markings.
- Rated operating time was marked only on samples of **Boss**, **Softel**, **Orpat**, **Anjali** and **Jaipan**.
- **Softel**, **Anjali**, **Kenstar** and **Maharaja** did not mention the country of origin.

Hand Blenders: Test Results

Models	Rank	Overall Weighted Score %	Price # (Rs.)	Overall Quality	Performance	General requirements	Environment Criteria	Convenience	Attachments (Refer to Key)	Performance Time (Seconds)				Guarantee	Warranty
										Buttermilk making	Egg whisking	Milk shake making	Onion chopping		
Braun MR-120 	1	97	3182	*****	*****	*****	*****	*****	A, B, C	12	5	10	10	2y	
Kenstar Champ KHC 30W1B-HCF 	2	93	850	*****	*****	*****	*****	*****	A	12	5	15	NA		1y
Prestige PHB 6.0 	3	83	1435	*****	*****	****	***	*****	A, B, C	12	5	17	10		1y
Bajaj Majesty HB-06	4	82	1050	*****	*****	****	***	*****	A	13	7	11	NA	2y	
Croma CRK-4094	5	80	1590	*****	*****	****	**	*****	A, B, C	12	5	15	10		2y 
Morphy Richards HB-05	5		1550	*****	*****	****	***	****	A	13	7	12	NA	2y	
Philips HR-1350 -51/ 9C	5		1475	*****	*****	*****	**	****	A, B	12	5	21	10		2y
Black & Decker SB-2000	6	76	1425	*****	****	****	***	****	A	15	10	17	NA		2y
Maharaja Whiteline Elegance 2504	7	75	700	*****	****	****	***	****	A	15	10	17	NA		1y
Jaipan Lassi Maker		69	550	***	*****	****	***	****	D	12	5	12	NA	6m	
Boss Type B-125		68	850	***	*****	****	***	****	D	12	5	14	NA		2y
Anjali Silver Touch		67	747	***	*****	****	***	****	E	12	5	16	NA		2y
Orpat HHB-137-E /WOB		63	700	**	*****	****	***	*****	D	12	5	17	NA		1y
Softel Turbo		63	1200	**	*****	****	***	*****	A, B	12	5	13	10	1y	
Weightage				30%	30%	15%	15%	10%							

Key

A = 1 fixed multipurpose blade
 B = Chopping bowl and blade
 C = Whisking attachment
 D = 3 removable blades for blending/mincing, whipping and beating
 E = 3 removable blades for bleeding/mincing, whipping and cutting
 = Provided by a stamp on warranty card
 y = year
 m = month
 # Bill price at Ahmedabad
 NA: Not applicable as chopping attachments are not provided
 Models in **Red** did not conform to safety standard; 'Not recommended' models;
Performance Time : **Red** shows the worst performer;
Green shows the best in that parameter
 Chopping performance has not been considered in overall score



Best Buys: Based on the overall score, **Braun** MR-120, **Kenstar** Champ KHC30 W1B-HCF and **Prestige** PHB 6.0 are our Best Buys.



Using the Table: Interpretation of Stars

The stars are derived from the 100 point score of the parameter concerned and not

	Overall Quality & Performance	General requirements & Environment criteria	Convenience
Stars	Score range %	Score range %	Score range %
*	0-6	0-3	0-2
**	6-12	3-6	2-4
***	12-18	6-9	4-6
****	18-24	9-12	6-8
*****	24-30	12-15	8-10

Overall Weighted Score: This is independent of price and is based on:

Overall Quality (30%): indicates overall construction, wiring, and resistance of power cord and anchoring of external flexible cord.

Performance (30%): indicates time taken in blending and egg whisking function; lower the time, the more the stars.

General Requirement (15%): indicates weight of the blender and the length of the power supply cord; lower the weight and greater the length of the cord, the more the stars.

Environment Criteria (15%): indicates energy consumption, sound and disposal/recycling suggestion; lower the energy consumption and sound, the more the stars.

Convenience (10%): indicates availability of features and ease in switching operation, cleaning; length of stem and detachability; availability of blade guard; etc.

How to Use it Well

- ★ Clean properly; wash the attachments in warm soap water and dry well. Don't use harsh and abrasive cleaning agents or solvents.
- ★ If you use the blender with oily food, fill up the jar with lukewarm water, add a few drops of liquid detergent and run the blender for ten seconds. Repeat the operation with plain water and then wipe gently.
- ★ Use safely; keep the power cord away from heat, oil and sharp edges. Never use the blender in boiling hot liquid or with any vessel that is on the direct heat.



Not Recommended: INSIGHT does not recommend brands which do not conform to the safety Standards. They are *Jaipan, Boss, Anjali, Orpat* and *Softel*.



Choose Your Model

Braun MR-120



Wattage Rating: 300W **Price:** Rs. 3,182 **Overall Score:** 97%

Good

- Excellent overall performance
- Separate chopper bowl and blade provided
- Most convenient; easy to handle and clean
- Lowest energy cost
- Information on disposal/ recycling provided
- 2-yr guarantee; list of service centres provided with guarantee card

Bad

- High price

INSIGHT: Good for blending, whisking and chopping, but high in price.

Kenstar Champ KHC 30 W1B-HCF



Wattage Rating: 300W **Price:** Rs. 850 **Overall Score:** 93%

Good:

- Excellent performance in blending and whisking
- Easy to handle and clean
- Low energy cost
- Information on disposal/ recycling provided
- Contact numbers of Kenstar branch offices provided

Bad:

- Length of power cord is short
- Chopper attachment is not provided

INSIGHT: Good for blending and whisking and low in price.

Prestige PHB 6.0



Wattage Rating: 200W **Price:** Rs. 1,435 **Overall Score:** 83%

Good

- Excellent overall performance
- Most convenient chopper blade and bowl
- Easy to clean
- Contact details of regional service centres provided in the user's manual

Bad

- Storage stand is not convenient
- A little higher energy cost than other best buys
- Disposal/ recycling information not provided

INSIGHT: Good for blending, whisking and chopping, and priced moderately

Orpat HHB-137-E/WOB



Wattage Rating: 250W **Price:** Rs. 700 **Overall Score:** 63%

Good

- Good blending and whisking performance
- Length of power cord is good

Bad

- High resistance of power cord may cause overheating and fire
- Chopper attachment not provided
- Weight is comparatively more

Softel Turbo



Wattage Rating: 125W **Price:** Rs. 1,200 **Overall Score:** 63%

Good

- Good overall performance
- Chopper attachment is provided

Bad

- High resistance of power cord may cause overheating and fire
- Weight is comparatively more

10 Things You Need to Know to Buy the Right Hand Blender:

1. For mixing, preparing shakes, blending and pureeing, a basic model having a single multipurpose blade can be a good choice.
2. For chopping onions, ginger, tomatoes, garlic, etc. go for a blender with chopper attachment; it will do the task faster and more uniform than a basic model.
3. If you frequently make omelet, cake and desserts, prefer a hand blender with a separate whipping/ whisking attachment.
4. Blender with big and clearly labeled control buttons will be easy to operate.
5. Detachable stem will be easy to clean under running water; no chance of water sipping into the electrical parts.
6. Blender with a long stem can be used with any shape of vessel.
7. Detachable blade with blade removal spoon will be easy to clean; it avoids injury to fingers when cleaning. Look for blade guard; it prevents accidental contact with sharp edges.
8. A light-weight blender will be easy to handle and operate.
9. A hand blender with around 2m long power cord will be convenient to use at your kitchen platform.
10. Wall mounting of hand blender with a facility to store blade/s saves space on the kitchen platform.

For people with disabilities: Choose a lightweight hand blender having single speed push button switch. A single multipurpose blade can be the best option.

How We Tested

INSIGHT tested 14 models of hand blenders for safety, as per Standards [IS: 302-2-14(1994) & IS: 302-1(2008)]. There are, however, no Standards for performance, quality, durability, convenience, and environment criteria, i.e. energy consumption and sound. So our testers devised methods for testing those parameters from the consumers' viewpoint.

Durability: Blenders were tested for regular use over an extended period, say 10 seconds daily for a year, by operating them at ± 5 per cent of the rated voltage for 122 cycles of 30 seconds each, with a OFF time of 2 minutes between two consecutive cycles. Then we checked them for any damage and also whether they can be used further.

Performance: Their chopping performance was tested by taking 100g of onion pieces in the test bowl and chopping them with the blade provided for this purpose. The time taken to chop the onions well was noted. This test was applicable to those models which were provided with a chopping bowl and blade.

The ability of preparing icing, soufflés, cakes, deserts, omelets mayonnaise, etc., was tested by whisking 2 fresh eggs in a bowl using the whisking blade.

We took 100g of curd (*Amul Masti Dahi*) and 50ml drinking water in a bowl and blended them using the blades provided for this



purpose. The blending results were checked for consistency by sieving the buttermilk through 355-micron sieve and compared against the consistency of *Amul* Buttermilk.

We also prepared banana milkshake by blending 100g of banana pieces with one cup of milk with sugar in a test bowl. Using the blending blade a homogenous milkshake was prepared. The time taken and energy consumed by each model was noted to know which model is more environment friendly.

Safety: Several safety tests were conducted on each hand blender, as per the BIS Standard. They were tests for: protection against electric shock, starting of motor, input (wattage), and temperature rise during normal use, electrical insulation and leakage current, moisture resistance, electrical insulation and high voltage test, abnormal operation, overall construction and supply connections and external flexible cables and cords.

Eco-friendly Criteria: Results

Models	Rated Wattage (W)	Energy Consumption (Wh)	Energy Cost (Rs.)	Sound ♪	Recycling/Disposal Suggestion
Braun	300	0.1755	5.76	M	P
Kenstar	300	0.2051	6.74	M	P
Prestige	200	0.3392	11.14	M	NP
Bajaj	300	0.3983	13.08	M	NP
Croma	220	0.4208	13.82	M	NP
Morphy	400	0.3620	11.89	M	NP
Philips	250	0.6402	21.03	M	NP
Black & Decker	200	0.5000	16.42	M	P
Maharaja	300	0.2650	8.70	L	NP
Jaipan	125	0.3147	10.34	M	NP
Boss	125	0.2676	8.79	L	NP
Anjali	125	0.2962	9.73	L	NP
Orpat	250	0.3890	12.78	M	NP
Softel	125	0.3280	10.77	M	NP

◆ Considering preparation of ten glasses of banana milkshake (twice daily) throughout the year with a tariff of Rs. 4.50 per KiloWh.

♪ Results are based on a 'user test'

W: Watts (unit of power) Wh: Watt hour (unit of energy)
 ■ Minimum energy cost ■ Maximum energy cost
 M - Moderate L - Low P - Provided NP - Not Provided



After-Sales Service

Information on after-sales service centres are normally provided in the manuals and/or guarantee/warranty cards of the products. We found that **Anjali** didn't provide information on service centres, however, dealer from which you purchase this model can provide spare parts. **Black & Decker** provided only one contact address and number at Delhi. Contacting them over telephone was also difficult. Only **Kenstar**, **Morphy Richards**, **Philips**, **Croma** and **Bajaj** provide 'Toll-free number' for consumers. For other brands consumers have to make calls at their own cost.

Manufacturers' Response

As a policy, we convey the test results to all the manufacturers, irrespective of whether their brands have passed or failed. The results are posted to their registered offices by Registered A.D. / courier. All the manufacturers receive the results of their own products only and are given one week from the date of receipt to respond.

Softel Machines said that it will immediately take steps to rectify the non conformity of the power supply cords.

Boss Electricals commented on the test result on eco-criteria that whenever a proper system is framed the company will give information on recycling procedure in their instruction manual.

Annapurna Manufacturers, said that they purchase the external flexible cable from standard manufacturers, however, if anything is lacking as per the norms the company will improve the quality of their product (**Anjali Silver Touch**)

Bajaj Electricals Limited said that the marking on its hand blender is durable and will not come off on its own. However, "in future, we will look at printing the information on the body itself", it added. On providing recycling information, Bajaj said that it will look at this positively.

The manufacturers of **Braun**, **Philips**, **Prestige**, **Kenstar**, **Croma**, **Orpat**, **Jaipan**, **Maharaja**, **Morphy-Richards** and **Black & Decker** didn't respond till the time of going to press.

After You Purchase

- Retain the guarantee/warranty card, bill/cash memo and the manual/ booklet provided with the blender. Information on after-sales service and contact details of service centres is provided on these papers.
- Read the instructions in the manual before you use the blender. Keep the manual at a convenient place, so that you can refer it when needed.
- If your blender does not work or has any problem, don't try to repair it yourself. Complain at the address/ phone number provided by the company.
- If the problem is not solved or you are not satisfied with the company's service, take the help of a consumer group.

Warranty and Guarantee

Guarantee is a contract to perform a promise or discharge the liability of a third person in case he fails to do so. Warranty is a stipulation, the breach of which allows a party to recover damages on account of the said breach and consequent loss suffered.

In the world of consumer durables both these terms are used interchangeably and loosely. Check whether the manufacturer offers a guarantee or warrantee and also its duration. Read and understand the terms and conditions; get the card/paper signed and stamped by the dealer and keep it for any future use.

Areas of Action

To ensure the performance and safety of hand blenders, CERS has:

- requested the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Government of India, to cover hand blenders under Quality Control Order '2003';
- represented to the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) to cover:
 - the provision of overload protection device under the scope of safety standard;
 - the environment criteria under the scope of IS 302-2-14 (1994)
 - the marking of 'operating time' on the models, and
 - develop norms for performance evaluations of hand blenders.

See page 38 for Manufacturers' Addresses.

INSIGHT Concludes

Our tests revealed that though all the 14 models tested can perform the basic functions of mixing, blending, whisking and chopping, those provided with a separate chopping bowl and blade were faster in chopping hard materials like onions. You cannot correlate the rated wattage of hand blenders with their performance or energy consumption. Also, more number of blades does not mean a great performance; instead a hand blender with a single multipurpose blade can also perform very well. Don't ignore your need and budget; they will help you in making a good buying decision.

This project was implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Government of India, and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, (GIZ), a German agency that promotes consumer awareness for sustainable consumption through professionally conducted

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