



Tony Rollo—Newsweek

STICKING TOGETHER

There's a new wrinkle in ice-cream-on-a-stick these days: the stick has gone mod. Beginning this summer, Borden, Inc., will replace nearly all its wooden ice-cream sticks with brightly colored plastic staffs called "Elsie Stix." The new plastic sticks are said to be more sanitary than the wooden variety. They also hold the ice cream more securely and don't splinter or leave the bitter aftertaste of wood. What is apt to appeal to the kids the most, however, is the fact that the plastic sticks have interlocking edges and can be stuck together to make various toys and games.

Borden itself expects to use about 7 billion plastic sticks this year in the U.S. and Canada, and General Mills is planning to offer sets of Stix as premiums in 10 million boxes of cereal. "In two or three years," predicts a Borden official, "plastic sticks will completely replace wooden ones in the ice-cream industry." That will spare a lot of trees, but even so, ecologists may not be delighted: unlike their wooden predecessors, the plastic sticks don't burn.