

GUMMIE REPORT

'It's the fastest growing segment in the category because it adapts to whatever is hot in the marketplace.'

SAL FERRARA
Haribo USA, Inc.



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Watermelon Sharks — have focused on fun flavors and shapes,” she explains. “We have repositioned Black Forest as better-for-you: It’s made with real fruit juice and natural colors and is fat- and gluten-free.”

Aiming to leverage novelty, Verburg is breaking ground in the U.S. with automotive-themed Wacky Racers liquid-filled items, half-licorice-half-gummi Double Deckers, Pink Cadillacs, and Monster Truck double-deposit foam gummies with jelly on top. They pack in reclosable 9.5-ounce flip-top boxes with laminated interiors that eliminate the need for an inner bag — another innovation.

IGNITING EXCITEMENT IN THE SET

“Gummies continue to be one of the fastest growing segments within non-chocolate,” says Lewis. “One of the biggest challenges for the category is the limited space available within retail as new products launch. The space is dominated by chocolate. However, if gummies continue to grow and eventually outpace chocolate, we will earn additional space.” She notes the strong sales of Ferrara

Candy’s peg bags in the segment is being rivaled by significant growth in bags in the two-pounds-and-higher range, establishing a significant presence in the set’s tight real estate.

Haribo’s Ferrara points out additional shelf space is available in retail as a result of lagging sales in other non-chocolate segments. “Buyers feel safe adding gummies — and they are right,” he observes.

Taking gummi sales to the next level puts the onus on retailers to leverage the spectrum of colors, textures, shapes and flavors by emphasizing differentiation within and across brands, being creative with planograms and displays and promoting the better-for-you attributes.

Variety in the set is critical, agrees Verburg, particularly for younger consumers, who are becoming accustomed to broad assortments. “Knowing they have a choice, even if they buy their usual items, is important to them. No matter how good and how different the flavors are, it won’t matter if you aren’t showing differentiation.”

Mixing core items with edgier ones allows shoppers to experiment, and offering temporary price reductions adds excitement and encourages multiple purchases by lowering the risk of trying something new.

Focusing entirely on the variety, Nestle USA’s Wonka Randoms are an assortment of seven fruit flavors, 70 shapes and three textures — traditional, jelly filled and with a whipped marshmallow backs — with new shapes being introduced on a continuous basis, according to Wonka Marketing Manager Daniela Simpson.

While sophisticated fusions in texture and flavor are pushing the envelope in the U.S., Verburg says its imported items also capture consumers who have tried them in Europe, perceive the flavor as authentic and seek them out in the stores they frequent. He cites the fact that of the eight SKUs his company merchandises in Cost Plus World Market’s candy aisle, five are on the lowest tier. “That’s normally the kiss of death, but we’re adding three items to the set every day,” he says.

Bernstein urges retailers across all channels to rethink space allocation and replace slow

GUMMIES: JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED

THE THRIVING MARKET for gummies is growing in an unexpected quarter: the health and wellness sector. The qualities that define this segment: visual appeal, authentic flavors, satisfying chewiness and slow dissolution have carried them into the pharmaceutical world as an increasingly popular delivery vehicle for medications and supplements for children and adults.

According to Sai Hanuman Sagar Boddu, PharmD, assistant professor of pharmaceuticals at the University of Toledo, OH, gummies have a number of advantages as a vehicle for medication delivery. “They have lots of sucrose, so they’re very sweet; they come in a variety of shapes and colors; they’re easy to make and the drug can be added directly into the solution, along with a stabilizer, before moulding and curing,” he says.

“Also, unlike a tablet or capsule that has to be swallowed, gummies dissolve slowly and gradually release the medication,” which, he says, is particularly desirable for drugs that could irritate the esophagus and stomach and those that require controlled release for effective absorption in the digestive tract.

Beyond vitamin applications, Boddu reports gummies are being tested as carriers for analgesic, anesthetic, antimicrobial, decongestant and antiseptic formulations. In addition, he says gummies made with a novel sweetener that has cavity-fighting properties is in development. Although heat-sensitive medications are poor candidates for gummi delivery, those potentially sensitive to citric acid flavorings can be buffered with pH modifying agents to prevent degradation.

Outside the pharmaceutical realm, gummies are moving into the sports nutrition market. RAP Nutrition, LLC has launched a rapid-acting protein delivery product in the form of a fruit-flavored gummi. The company claims the carbohydrates replenish workout-depleted glycogen levels and amino acids in the whey protein isolate build lean muscle and promote post-exercise recovery. **CST**

