

FUNCTIONAL CANDY & SNACKS



Candy and snacks with added benefits are getting a lot of notice. Are they a fad or do they have a future?

What Lies Ahead In Fortified Food?

FROM CARAMELS WITH CALCIUM and chewy vitamins to probiotic chocolate and protein-enhanced jerky, fortified or functional foods — foods with added vitamins, minerals and nutrients not normally part of their formulation — are getting a lot of attention in the media and on shelves.

Adding nutrients to foods has been common practice in the U.S. during the past century: iodized salt, breads and cereals fortified with B vitamins and folate, vitamin D-enriched milk and orange juice enhanced with calcium are everyday examples. (See sidebar *Fortified, Functional, Nutraceutical Or Just Food?*)

The FDA's current policy is that candy and snacks should not be fortified; however, the agency has established specific rules about fortification of snack foods that are not candy: The food must have a nutritional profile that includes meaningful contribution of nutrients to the diet and a balance of nutrients relative to its caloric level, according to Institute of Food Technologists Fellow Catherine Adams Hutt, PhD, RD, head of RdR Solutions and Food Regulatory Solutions. She explains: "Ideal nutrients for fortification of appropriate snack foods are those that are under-consumed by population groups, such as children."

However, Adams Hutt says with changing eating habits and lifestyles, the impetus toward enhanced snacks is both science and market driven: "People are looking for food-based sources of nutrition, as opposed to supplements,

and we've increasingly become a snacking culture.

"As more of the diet becomes snacks, consumers will look for the broad spectrum of nutrient intake to be from them. This will help drive the market for fortified and better-for-you snack foods," she says.

In fact, Euromonitor International reports global sales of sweet and savory snacks carrying a health halo comprised 21 percent of all snack sales in 2013, and market analysts at Packaged Facts estimate retail sales of yogurt will reach \$9.3 billion by 2017, suggesting healthier options have reached the mainstream.

A MARKET IN A GROWTH MODE

Overall, the market is estimated to reach \$45 billion in three years at an annual growth rate of 10 percent between 2012 and 2017, according to marketsandmarkets.com. More important, the Institute of Food Technologists lists among the top food trends for 2014 the shift by consumers from structured weight loss programs to a healthier, balanced diet that includes foods rich in fiber, antioxidants, omega 3 fatty acids and vitamins, and eschews supplements in pill form.

For evidence, one need look no further than the U.S. market for probiotic foods, beverages and supplements. According to Ganeden Biotech, Inc. Vice-President Business Development Michael Bush, sales of these items are expected to soar to an estimated \$50 billion

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