

THE WORLD OF **food ingredients**

FOR THE PRACTISING FOOD TECHNOLOGIST

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**The Nutrition
Leader**

JUICE PROCESSING TECHNOLOGY

The rise of alternative, non-thermal techniques.

THE OTHER SIDE OF "NATURAL"

Can there be too much of a good thing?

DESIGN TRENDS

THE LATEST BEVERAGE
PRODUCT LAUNCHES

TOP 10 **SOFT DRINK TRENDS**

The application of "raw" ingredients is a key trend.



VITAFOODS
EUROPE
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PREVIEW

Jerome Diaz

Labeling and consumer education may make the difference for the success of individual ingredients.

Moira Hilliam

Health must run alongside convenience, refreshment, rehydration, indulgence and novelty in soft drinks NPDP.

Maartje Geraedts

A whole world of opportunity has opened up for ingredient makers and sports drink manufacturers.

Formulation Challenges

"Taste, value and availability simply remain the key pillars to any successful, medium to long term, product launch," says Adam Pedley, Commercial Manager at Grenade and member of the ESSNA.

Shotton agrees: "The taste of a product is just as important as its quality and efficacy." Within the sports nutrition industry this can present its own unique issues, as some products, by their very nature, can have a somewhat interesting taste and aroma. "Furthermore, the difference in taste acceptability within different markets can also throw up significant challenges," Shotton continues.

Where products tend to have a particularly strong taste or odor, this can present issues of acceptability, especially where products are new to the market. "A perfect example of this are FBCAAs," says Shotton. "This product does tend to have a strong flavor

and smell associated with it. In order to overcome this potential detrimental feature, many products such as this will be offered in unflavored and flavored versions, offering customers the choice," he adds.

A further key area is to make consumers aware in advance of any potential unfamiliar tastes or smells, so that their first experience of a new product is not a completely surprising one.

Shotton continues: "When launching products within new territories, it is imperative to undertake a review of taste expectations. If we use the Asian, European and US markets as an example, our research shows that the Asian market tends to find typically acceptable European flavorings to be overly sweet and as such specific, more rounded flavor profiles are required. Conversely, the US market tends to find European flavorings not quite sweet enough and as such more intense fla-

voring systems tend to be required. This research is critical to ensure market acceptability across new territories."

Formulation Reflections

"As sports nutrition continues to enter the mass market space, becoming even more widespread with consumer demand/awareness, the formula for new products is often overcomplicated and misrepresented with marketing and sales jargon," says Pedley. Neville agrees: "Sports nutrition has extended their target audience beyond its core. This has opened the door for sub-optimal, but 'good enough,' high protein foods to enter the sports nutrition market, blurring the lines between performance nutrition and health & wellness."

Simon Jurkiw, Product Director at Bulk Powders and member of ESSNA adds: "There are a number of ways to ensure consumers are well informed. The first of which is

not to mislead the consumer on the benefits a product may have. Appropriate on-pack information, educational content on brand websites and in-store training for staff, all contribute to helping consumers make appropriate choices."

For Jurkiw, consumers should stick with reputable companies. "Avoid those that promise the world. If a sports nutrition product is claiming benefits that are too good to be true, then they are." Manufacturers also play a crucial role. "It can be tempting to seek advantages over competitors," Jurkiw continues. "For sustainability, these advantages should be efficacious and beyond all else, truthful."

"With protein and exercise maintaining the charge as the platform for health, there is plenty of room for growth by tapping into the generational shift from sports nutrition into healthy aging, which is the true essence of going mainstream," concludes Neville. ▼

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