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NEXT-GEN FUNCTIONAL FOOD



From seaweed-infused pizza and probiotic chocolate, to 'bump' water for pregnant women, inventive brands are rethinking functional food with new product launches that target specific consumer audiences, while neatly slotting into everyday consumption habits.

- Although the jury is still out regarding the true value of many functional food and drink products, the market's potential is enormous. Global sales of nutraceuticals (fortified foods that provide additional health benefits), estimated at \$150bn in 2011, are expected to grow to \$180bn by 2017, according to London-based professional services firm PricewaterhouseCoopers. "There is undoubtedly a growth in nutraceutical-type foods," Simon Stenning, foodservice strategy director at UK research consultancy Allegra Strategies, told Stylus. "It's very difficult to get any claims to stack up, so that's a limiting factor, but it's only going to continue growing."
- By infusing food staples with super-foods and protein-rich ingredients, brands are creating everyday consumables that pack a powerful nutritional punch. Meanwhile, niche edible products satisfy targeted needs and functions – from water designed for pregnant women, to an elixir that protects against ultraviolet sun damage.
- Indulgent and sweet products – like chocolate (**iQ Superfood Chocolate, Wellness Cacao**) and coffee – are being used as vehicles for vitamin delivery, providing consumers with pleasurable nutrition-rich options. Meanwhile, items often viewed as junk food, such as pizza, are being given healthy makeovers.
- Savvy product developers are tapping into the food and beauty categories with dual-format products that have both edible and topical applications.
- New formats for medicinal and wellness products could be game changers. On-the-go formats provide ease of use for busy consumers, while gargantuan supplement pills give way to user-friendly, vitamin-infused health bars and chewable products engineered for adult consumption.
- Functional food brands are looking beyond traditional female audiences with fresh product launches geared towards children and male consumers. For the latter, functionality often extends to aesthetic concerns, as well as optimised performance.

Pharma Food

A globally ageing population is fuelling interest in the preventative and healing properties of food. "Skyrocketing healthcare costs and changes to the healthcare system have made people nervous about their ability to address illness and disease, so they are taking better care of themselves," Jeff Hilton, co-founder of US branding and marketing agency Brand Hive, told Stylus.

- According to the US National Institute of Health (NIH), up to 70 million people suffer from digestive health disorders in the US. While probiotic dairy drinks are now prolific, inventive brands are integrating probiotic ingredients into more surprising formats. As reported in **Chocolate Innovation**, UK chocolate brand **Ohso** launched a probiotic chocolate in the UK last year, containing bacteria three times more easily absorbed than cultures in rival probiotic yoghurt drinks. Meanwhile, US food manufacturer **Tipton Mills** introduced a probiotic instant coffee this year. It utilises a new probiotic (developed by US healthcare company **Ganeden Biotech**) that can withstand extreme temperatures and contains 10 times as many cultures as probiotic yoghurts.
- In April 2013, Ukrainian manufacturer Vitamilk OOO launched a range of dessert products, called **Fitonika**, that integrate natural herbs known for their healing properties with amaranth and chocolate. The range includes an 'Anti-flu' bar with coltsfoot (known to ease chest congestion), heartsease (aids urinary system) and plantago (anti-inflammatory), and an 'Energy' bar that contains ginseng and green tea. Also using coltsfoot – an ancient remedy – British confectionery brand **Simpkins** has launched botanical glucose drops (free from gluten, GMO, fat and salt) as part of its new Botanical Collection. Other varieties include Honey & Hemp (high in Omegas 3 and 6 and linked to anti-inflammatory benefits) and Sarsaparilla (said to ease eczema).
- In June 2013, US healthcare brand **Goody's** introduced a Headache Relief Shot, which contains acetaminophen (paracetamol) and caffeine for fast relief, without the need for water. The single-dose drink comes in appealing citrus and berry flavours.

"While supplement activity and usage is at an all-time high, the bottom line is that people would still rather get added nutrition from the foods they eat if possible, and the marketplace is ripe with new functional offerings."

Jeff Hilton, co-founder of Brand Hive

Fitonika
© Fitonika

Ohso
© Ohso

Goody's headache relief shots
© Goody's



Beauty Boost

Moving on from the beautifying beverage trend – which spawned everything from fat-blocking Pepsi to Omega-3-infused water – beauty companies are now crafting edible beauty products that target specific issues and court new consumer audiences.

- In the US, 70% of men now purchase skincare products, says global researcher NDP. Experts predict that this enthusiastic uptake will soon extend to the edible beauty market, which generally targets female consumers. “Growth of the male grooming market in the personal care sector suggests that male-targeted food and drinks promoting anti-ageing benefits may soon proliferate,” Datamonitor senior analyst Katrina Diamonon told US news website FoodBev.com. UK nutri-cosmetic company **Minerva Research Labs** is innovating in this sphere with its anti-ageing drink Active Gold Collagen, launched earlier this year in the UK. The formulation targets fine lines and wrinkles and reduces hair loss (partly thanks to its zinc content), while repairing post-exercise muscle damage and boosting cartilage production. According to British newspaper the Daily Mail, prior to launch there was a 7,000-strong waiting list at UK pharmacy Boots. Another example targeting the Southeast Asian market is Thai-manufactured **Mansome**, a bottled soft drink containing collagen, vitamin C and zinc.

Omega Infusion
© Omega Infusion

Mansome
© Mansome

Active Gold Collagen
© Minerva Research Labs

Fat-blocking Pepsi
© Pepsi



- While a number of products claim to enhance a natural tan or fight sun damage, Spanish product development company **Monteloeder** partnered with food manufacturer **Nutrifur** to launch a new variant of the **NutroxSun** skincare product in September 2013. Taken orally to protect the skin against UV rays, the formula comprises compounds to provide antioxidant, anti-inflammatory and photo-protection qualities. In tests, results showed that consuming 250mg of the product daily increased skin protection by 34% within 57 days, and up to 56% within 84 days. Unlike traditional sun care, the oral product guarantees deep biological and uniform topical protection.

- Parisian tea brand **Kusmi** recently launched a BB Detox tea, modelled on the popular beauty trend for BB (blemish balm) moisturisers. The mate (an Argentinian herb) and green tea blend, flavoured with dandelion and rooibos, boosts toxin removal, resulting in a glowing complexion.
- Meanwhile, in August 2013, Canadian company **Miyu** launched a line of facial mists and tea blends to be used in tandem. Inspired by traditional Chinese medicine, the first product pairing – Hydrate Mi – focuses on skin hydration, while the second pairing – De-Stress Mi – employs a five-mineral formulation to soothe skin and provide a natural barrier. Miyu’s chief executive Connie Tai told Stylus: “Because good health is intimately correlated with healthy complexions, for long-lasting results, we can no longer rely on just topical treatments alone.”

Kusmi Tea
© Kusmi Tea

Miyu
© Miyu



Super-Supplement Formats

Nearly half of American adults take dietary supplements regularly, generating more than \$30bn a year in sales, according to the NIH. Furthermore, research published in September from US consultancy firm Frost & Sullivan suggests that by regularly using a targeted regimen of supplements as a preventative measure against certain chronic diseases, people most at risk could reduce their chance of contracting diseases and in doing so reduce healthcare costs by billions of dollars – as currently around 75% of US healthcare expenses are spent on preventable illnesses. Capitalising on this growing opportunity, savvy brands are developing new fortified products that emphasise easy consumption in convenient formats.

CocoaWell Longevity Supplement Bars
© Reserveage Organics



Vitamints
© The Winning Combination



- US food company **Reserveage Organics** launched a line of cocoa-based bars and powders at Whole Foods supermarkets this year, which combine naturally occurring flavanols (linked to circulation health) found in dark chocolate with added nutrients. The CocoaWell products include a Longevity Supplement Bar with 25mg of resveratrol (linked with anti-ageing effects) and an Omega-3 Supplement Bar made with algae and chia seed oil, which the manufacturers claim can support heart health.
- Canadian health product manufacturer **The Winning Combination** has created Vitamints – a range of flavoured vitamins that double up as breath mints, perfect for on-the-go consumers. Similarly, Danish medicated chewing gum manufacturer **Fertin Pharma’s** latest offering can reportedly be used as a preventative measure against the common cold. ImmuneGum contains Echinacea, vitamin C and zinc and should be chewed three times a day to obtain 33% of the recommended daily allowance of zinc, and 37% of the recommended daily allowance of vitamin C. Developed in the UK, **Blockhead** energy chewing gum claims to increase cognitive and physical performance, with a pack of 10 pellets providing the same boost as four energy drinks. The product is sugar-free, and contains caffeine, taurine and vitamins.

Blockhead energy chewing gum
© Blockhead



- Bump Water** is a beverage designed for prenatal and pregnant women that provides the recommended daily allowance of folic acid, vitamins A, D, B6, and B12, niacin, biotin, zinc and magnesium required for optimum nutrition. Available in five fruity flavours and still, sparkling and low-calorie varieties, the product received full funding on crowdfunding site Indiegogo in September 2013. Similarly, US nutrition bar **Credible Cravings** has been specially developed in collaboration with obstetricians, midwives and nutritionists to provide pregnant and nursing moms with generous amounts of omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids.

Bump Water
© Bump Water

Credible Cravings
© Credible Cravings



Functional Kids

With obesity recognised by the World Health Organisation as a massive threat to the health of the global population, consumers are growing increasingly concerned about the nutritional value of the food they eat. In particular, parents are looking for healthier foods for their children, and a plethora of opportunistic brands are offering them new products packed with health-boosting ingredients. By “unjunking” junk foods favoured by young children, brands will win over health-conscious parents, while staying sweet with savvy kids who want recognisable and familiar treats. We also see trends in adult food trickling down to younger counterparts, as a new generation of **gastrokids** develop more sophisticated palates.

Imunele for Kids

© Imunele for Kids

Kidz ZonePerfect Bar

© Kidz ZonePerfect

Go-Gurt

© General Mills

Green Wave Smoothie Pops

© Green Wave



- US health foods company ZonePerfect has introduced **ZonePerfect Kidz**, a new range of nutrition bars that combine 5g of protein, 23 vitamins and minerals and 3g of fibre. Available in familiar confectionery flavours, including Caramel Crunch, Peanut Butter Chocolate Chip and Yellow Cupcake, the product line was devised by children.
- In the dairy realm, American food giant General Mills has extended its **Yoplait** yoghurt brand in the US, with its Go-Gurt protein yoghurt aimed at kids, boasting twice the protein content of most regular kid's yoghurts, while Russian fermented milk drink **Imunele for Kids** took Best Children's Dairy Product at the Dairy Innovation Awards 2013. In Indonesia, SoyMilk brings soya milk to the kids' market in a stylish, child-friendly packaging solution.

- Recent studies have indicated that frozen fruit and vegetables contain higher levels of vitamins and anti-oxidants than their fresh counterparts, particularly after the fresh produce has been stored for three days (British Frozen Food Federation). **Green Wave Smoothie Pops** are the first popsicle product that incorporates leafy vegetables. Its Kalelicious range provides a fun way for kids to eat their greens. Flavours such as banana and orange offer antioxidant and energy-boosting properties, while mango aids digestion.
- Jumping on the massive trend for coconut juice, US brand **VitaCoCo** has introduced a gluten-free coconut juice for kids that contains less sugar than regular fruit juices.
- **Tingz**, from UK confectionery company Peppersmith, is a new sugar-free sweet brand that contains xylitol, which is said to reduce plaque and tooth decay. Confectionery containing xylitol is now endorsed by more than 15 dental associations worldwide.
- Tapping into a rise in vegetarianism and an interest in free-from foods, **Freedom Marshmallows** are gelatin, dairy and fat-free. Available in the UK, the launch flavour is vanilla, with strawberry to follow.

SoyMilk
© SoyMilk

Tingz
© Peppersmith

Vita Coco Kids
© Vita Coco

Vanilla Freedom
Marshmallows
© Freedom
Marshmallows



Everyday Optimised

Creative brands are repositioning staple foods with unexpected ingredients and unusual formats. Playing on the consumer perception that high-protein food is healthy and filling, protein-infused products – from **ice cream** to **breakfast cereals** – are being engineered for mass-market audiences.

- By reducing carbohydrate and boosting protein content, food companies are creating diet-friendly versions of popular foods. **LivLife** bread, launched in the UK in July 2013, replaces wheat flour with natural protein flour, seeds and grains, reducing 50% of the carbohydrate content per slice compared to regular loaves. Using protein isolates (a dietary supplement created by filtering milk protein), British food manufacturer **Dr Zak's** has also created a high-protein bread that provides 30g of protein in two slices (more than half of the 56g recommended daily allowance for men), as well as Omega 3 and amino acids. The company will also launch high-protein pasta this year, containing 50g of protein per 100g.
- UK-based sandwich delivery company **Plan Bread** creates sandwiches made from **broccoli-based bread**, which contains, on average, 50% fewer calories and 94% fewer carbohydrates than regular bread. The range will extend to broccoli pizza bases by the end of 2013. Along similar lines, Scottish company **Eat Balanced** has created a range of nutritionally balanced pizzas that incorporate natural or super-food ingredients, including seaweed, in the base. Each pizza provides a third of a person's daily nutritional requirements.

LivLife bread
© Livlife

Dr Zak's Protein Pasta
© Dr Zak's

Eat Balanced
© Eat Balanced

Broccoli Bread sandwich
© Plan Bread



- Beyond Eggs** – covered in **Global Food Love-In** – reinvents the humble egg using plant-based ingredients that mimic the texture, colour attributes and performance of the original article. Costing 19% less than a chicken egg, the product is naturally cholesterol free. Beyond Eggs' US developer Hampton Creek Foods has also launched an egg-free mayonnaise, called Just Mayo, that uses pea protein instead of eggs.
- Designed by US-based sports nutritionists, **Powerful Yogurt** is the first high-protein yoghurt (containing 20-25g per serving) targeted at men, and is formulated to help build muscle, burn fat and improve digestive health. Similarly, in July 2013, French dairy giant Danone launched a range of dairy products in Bulgaria for men. "There is certainly potential to grow the market by attracting new audiences, notably men," Peter Joubert, trade-marketing manager at Danone, told UK trade magazine The Grocer. "Penetration and frequency of purchase among 17 to 44-year-old men is low in the yoghurt category and offers huge headroom for growth."

Beyond Eggs

© Hampton Creek Foods

Just Mayo

© Hampton Creek Foods

Powerful Yogurt

© Powerful Yogurt

Danone yogurt for men

© Danone



Future Formats

Looking beyond expected forms of food and drink, a clutch of new products are reinventing the nutritional experience with edible and sprayable concoctions. These inventive products offer time-efficient solutions that don't require heavy-duty shopping, preparation or cooking.

- **Soylent** is a powder-based food substitute that – when combined with water – becomes a drinkable meal containing all of your daily nutrients. The product is made from powdered starch, rice protein, olive oil and raw chemical powders. After an initial \$1m of funding, the US developers have secured a further \$1.5m. It will become commercially available in December.
- US-based organic supplement company **Skoop** has launched a powdered blend of 41 nutrients and superfoods (including white tea, reishi mushroom and astragalus herb) that can be combined with any number of foods from oatmeal to cookies and even chocolate milk. One scoop equals 10 portions of fruit and vegetables.
- **Sprayable Energy** is a topical odourless liquid caffeine spray – equivalent to four Americano coffees – that is designed to be steadily absorbed into the bloodstream over many hours. This avoids the energy high and low that ensues with many caffeinated drinks.

Soylent
© Sam Kaplan

Skoop
© Skoop

Sprayable Energy
© Sprayable Energy



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Consumer fascination with functional foods is generating lucrative opportunities in retail and hospitality settings:

- **Stanley's Pharmacy** – a new wellness-focused retail space that opened in New York in late July 2013 – is set to further the trend for innovative healthcare retailing by combining traditional services with a bar area serving drinks with health-giving properties.
- UK health food chain Holland & Barrett is trialling a new protein-shake concept called the Shake-a-Whey bar in a revamped London store, offering customers functional food on the go. The 'mix-and-go' bar is aimed at fitness fanatics in the City, who can either mix their own protein drinks to take away in their own bottles, or purchase ready-made options.

Stanley's Pharmacy
© Stanley's Pharmacy

Peter Aldis CEO of
Holland and Barrett tries
a protein shake
© Holland & Barrett



- **Bien!** restaurant in Brazil offers functional, healthy food designed to give city dwellers a boost. The menu is structured with different outcomes in mind. Sports enthusiasts, for example, can choose a high-performance *Esportistas* menu, which includes carrot salad and aubergine lasagna.
- Swedish restaurant **Pharmarium** – established on the site of the country’s oldest pharmacy – serves signature cocktails and dishes created from traditional Nordic medicinal herbs. Among the flavours retrieved from the archives of the pharmacy’s vaults are quinine and benedictine, both of which are combined with natural and healthy ingredients to create enticing medicinal cocktails.

Bien!

© Bien!

Pharmarium

© Pharmarium



Future Insights

Target Men. An increased interest in personal grooming is creating a new market opportunity for functional products that address the needs and concerns of male consumers. Think about double-duty products that offer aesthetic enhancement and simultaneously boost performance.

Align with Existing Behaviours. Consumers want easy-to-consume functional benefits incorporated into products that they already enjoy eating and drinking. Ensure taste and flavour is never compromised, despite alterations in recipe or formula.

Nurture a Niche. Products such as Bump Water offer a targeted solution for a particular market group, solving a specific problem. How will you extend the brand/consumer relationship even when the core functionality has been achieved?

Unjunk Junk Food. In 2012, snacking made up 52% of all eating occasions in the US (The Hartman Group). Incorporate functional benefits into familiar junk foods to ease consumers' consciousness and, in particular, appeal to parents.

Cross Categories. The integration of drugs into food products can be a user-friendly way to deliver medication and vitamins, particularly to children. Less stringent Food Standards Agency regulations in the food sector may further prompt drug brands to pursue this line of product.

Leveraging the Opportunity. Health-focused retailers and hospitality brands should consider developing spaces that combine traditional healthcare facilities with functional food options.

TREND EVOLUTION

