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NUTRITIONAL FORMULATION

Marketing Target Group Specific Beverages

A new micronutrient beverage premix is just one example of a concept addressing different life phases of specific consumer target groups at SternVitamin.

Health has been a megatrend in the food industry for many years now. That is not going to change any time soon. On the contrary, according to the latest market surveys, a healthy lifestyle remains important to all age groups. Along with various other components, healthy nutrition plays a central role. SternVitamin gives beverage manufacturers tools to address the demand for health and turn a profit. Its new premix for healthy bones and heart is just one example. This micronutrient mix picks up on one of the top trends in the beverage market - water-based enriched products. Worldwide, this is the beverage category with the highest growth potential, even higher than other categories. The vegan premix contains vitamins B1, B12, C, K2 and D. Organic agave syrup powder gives it a slight sweetness, while natural flavors give the drink a "dark berry" taste. It dissolves clear in water and leaves no turbidity.

Individual Lifestyle Concepts

This new micronutrient beverage premix is

just one example of many concepts that address different life phases of specific consumer target groups, starting from couples trying for children and continuing through pregnancy, childhood, education, professional life and senior years. A targeted micronutrient mix for vegans with higher vitamin B12 content is also on offer.

B12 is a nutrient that occurs in meaningful amounts only in animal products, with currently no significant plant source. To prevent deficiencies the German Nutrition Society (DGE) advises all vegans to take vitamin B12 supplements. The SternVitamin Premix for Vegans is one way to improve the nutrition profile of people who eat only plant-derived foods. Along with vitamins B12, B2 and D, it provides the appropriate amounts of iron, zinc, calcium, iodine and selenium. It also contains the amino acid lysin, which occurs in only small amounts in plants.

The US Food & Drug Administration (FDA) goes a step further and recommends that all best agers (50 and older) take supple-

ments or eat foods with added vitamin B12. Women of childbearing age are advised to eat foods naturally rich in iron or with added iron. Simultaneous intake of vitamin C is necessary to help the body absorb the iron. This is easy to do with tailored micronutrient mixes.

Profitable Marketing

To accompany target-specific premixes, SternVitamin also offers marketing support. With all enriched beverages the benefits of EU health claims can be used for targeted communications.

"The EU-approved health claims for vitamins, minerals and trace elements cover a wide range of application areas," said Dr. Hildebrandt, Head of Research & Development at SternVitamin.

"If you take a close look at the list, you can find something for many parts and functions of the body. For our customers, this opens up enormous marketing potential, especially if you supplement the micronutrients with health-boosting plant extracts and the like." For example, if the product contains enough of the respective micronutrients, there can be statements on the packaging that vitamin D is important for growth and bone development in children, or that vitamin B1 contributes to normal heart functioning.

Raw Material Choice

Without a doubt, the enrichment of beverages has a high value-addition potential, but is often a challenge. For clear drinks, the question is how to disperse a fat-soluble vitamin. Another problem is the solubility of minerals. If they are not soluble, they can cause clouding or even sedimentation. Dr. Hildebrandt: "Selecting the right ingredients is very important in new developments. It is vital that the ingredients dissolve well and not react with each other. They must have no negative effects on flavor, color, pH or mouthfeel."

Stable, high quality raw materials are also important for high product quality. The nature of the premix plays a key role. Here, SternVitamin uses modern techniques like fluid-bed drying. "Our fluid-bed processor enables us to convert powders that don't dissolve well into agglomerates with a porous structure that dissolve much more readily in water," noted Dr. Hildebrandt. "Another factor is the naturally less appealing flavor of the plant extracts. This can be counteracted with flavorings and bitterness blockers." ▼

