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Formulation Trends Showing Breakfast Foods Aren't Just for Morning Anymore

The breakfast category is growing with tasty, better-for-you entries that blend nutrition and convenience. And they're not just for breakfast.

By Lauren Hartman, Product Development Editor

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People love breakfast foods, and not just in the morning. Research from the National Restaurant Association shows 72 percent of adults want restaurants to offer breakfast items throughout the day, and 54 percent of consumers enjoy eating breakfast at nontraditional times, according to a 2015 Technomic report.

The Hartman Group (www.hartman-group.com), Bellevue, Wash., lists the top three morning foods as eggs and egg dishes (at 29 percent), followed by cold cereal, bacon/sausage/ham and waffles/pancakes/French toast (26 percent) and breads and bread-like products like bagels and croissants (22 percent).

The top three beverages are coffee/espresso (36 percent), milk and other dairy beverages (20 percent) and fruit juice and nectar (17 percent).

We're written often about snacking replacing meals. It's happening at breakfast, too. Welch's Global Ingredients Group (www.welchsgig.com) says 92 percent of American millennials it surveyed snack instead of having breakfast, lunch or dinner, at least once a week. "More than a quarter (26 percent) replace a meal at least seven times a week," notes Wayne Lutomski, vice president, international, at WGI. "The [findings] demonstrate there is a big opportunity to develop snack products suitable for the breakfast occasion."

WGI sees more breakfast foods focusing on nutrition, especially in the cereal aisle. "Manufacturers who use the right ingredients – like real fruit ingredients with provenance, for example -- stand to gain an edge in this competitive market. This trend will only accelerate, as manufacturers try to reintroduce the millennial consumer to the most fundamental of all meals, breakfast," Lutomski says.



WGI's FruitWorx fruit inclusions for snacks, bakery products and breakfast items are made from dark purple Concord grapes, which have a sweet, bold flavor and natural polyphenols, he explains. While Concord grapes have been used for years mostly for juice, FruitWorx pieces serve various new breakfast food applications, such as snack bars, cookies, biscuits, baked goods and more.

Grab-n-go world

One reason why breakfast foods are favored at various times is because of their portability. Hurried lifestyles are prompting more people to eat breakfast on-the-run. Euromonitor finds that nearly 60 percent of U.S. consumers claim to eat breakfast during their morning commute. In addition, the Hartman Group (www.hartman-group.com) says breakfast is mostly eaten alone (about 53 percent of Americans).

Future Market Insights (FMI, www.futuremarketinsights.com) pegged the global on-the-go breakfast products market at \$1.198 billion in 2015, and projects it to be valued at \$1.853 billion by 2026. Sales are expected to grow at an annual growth rate of 4.2 percent during the same period.

Ready-to-eat cereals will continue to dominate the global on-the-go breakfast segment, FMI found, accounting for 70 percent of all breakfast food sales at the end of 2016. Mintel Group (www.mintel.com), however, predicts cereal sales will decline through 2020. "Consumers are avoiding indulgent cereals in favor of healthier options [or] turning to more natural cereals with fiber and protein. Manufacturers should consider focusing on cereals people are eating more of: less-processed; better-for-you cereals such as granola, high-fiber cereal and oats (quick-cooking or regular), as these products tend to provide more sustenance and are less processed and sugar-laden."



excellent source of calcium."

The current health and wellness trends point to a demand for healthier, portable breakfast options with high protein and fiber, that provide satiety and the ability to be personalized, says Jeff Smith, director of marketing at Blue Diamond Almond's Global Ingredients Div. (www.bdingredients.com), Sacramento, Calif. "Foods in the form of bars are portable and easy to prepare. We work with many manufacturers to formulate breakfast bars with protein-packed almonds, which provide the important satiety factor consumers want. When it comes to breakfast nutrition bars, many [customers] want to replace an actual meal with the bar. Almonds add texture and crunch, are high in protein, copper, riboflavin, phosphorus, magnesium and vitamin E and an

Even spices and seasonings leader McCormick & Co. (www.mccormick.com), Sparks, Md., is adding a breakfast line this year. The Good Morning line will feature 18 clean-label products, including slow-cooker breakfasts, smoothie boost flavor and nutrition packets, breakfast topper ingredient add-ins and breakfast seasonings, such as apple cinnamon. They're meant to "boost the flavor and nutrition of breakfast staples and solve the consumer pain points of variety, healthy, convenience," the company says.

Consumers are looking for products that can enhance their oatmeal, yogurt, eggs, weekend pancakes and even smoothies, said Brendan Foley, president of McCormick's global consumer business and North America. All of the McCormick Good Morning items are "clean label and most will be gluten-free," he says.

Cold-brewed coffee is taking the hot coffee breakfast mainstay to other times of day. Cold brews are proliferating in refrigerated cases across the country. La Colombe Coffee Roasters (www.lacolombe.com), Philadelphia, which operates cafes in select locations throughout the U.S., recently unveiled a 10-oz. retail can for its distinctive Draft Latte cold brew. The can is ringed with a custom designed plastic lip guard top "to give an elevated experience similar to a to-go cup," according to the company, with a froth-making valve device on the bottom, similar to those



on some cans of beer. Merchandised in dairy cases, the rich Draft Latte, made mostly of milk and cold-pressed espresso, comes in four flavors.

Tyson/Hillshire's Jimmy Dean brand (www.jimmydean.com) is waking up the frozen hand-held breakfast category, which Mintel says is the only growth category in the freezer, with an innovative take on hand-held hash browns stuffed with meat and cheese. Launched early this year, the product is crispy and hot from the microwave, courtesy of a crisping sleeve that prevents sogginess. Varieties include Bacon & Veggies, Sausage & Cheese and Meat Lovers (potatoes with sausage, ham and bacon as well as cheddar & mozzarella cheeses).

"Our research told us that consumers want a warm, crispy hash brown and are eager for new flavor varieties," explains Tracy Fadden, director of marketing for the Jimmy Dean brand. "We filled a void in the market by taking an American breakfast staple and reinventing it. They're great for breakfast or as a snack. Consumers want portable options that are delicious, fast and filling."

And Jimmy Dean Delights Frittatas have been a hit. Sales are so good IRI named them a Rising Star, meaning they're likely to make the market data firm's top selling new products list next year.

Drinkable yogurt made a splash in 2016, as Chobani and Dannon's Oikos brands expanded into dairy-based yogurt drinks in single-serve bottles for busy multi-taskers. Yoplait will reportedly introduce a new yogurt smoothie this year, while Siggis (www.siggisdairy.com) added a single-serve, whole-milk, drinkable Icelandic yogurt (with no artificial preservatives, thickeners, sweeteners, flavors or colors) in January.

Probiotics are being incorporated in yogurt and infused into juices. Tropicana's (www.tropicana.com) new Essentials line of juice blends with probiotics were shown at Natural Products Expo West in strawberry banana, pineapple mango and peach passion fruit flavors. The beverages are formulated with Bifidobacterium lactis HN019, which adds 1 billion live and active cultures per serving, according to PepsiCo's Jeff Zachwieja, senior director of global R&D-Nutrition Sciences. "Typically probiotics are found in dairy-related products such as fermented milk or yogurt. We've been able to find ways to safely and confidently put probiotics into a juice drink in order to provide that functional benefit." The juice blends have no added sugar or artificial flavors and plenty of vitamin C.



Put an egg on it

McDonald's, White Castle and Golden Corral have added all-day breakfast items to their menus, and eggs are segueing into other meal occasions -- in veggie side dishes and topping grain bowls, pizza and hash. Dishes being topped with eggs probably began with burgers and salads, but has migrated to cheese grits, casseroles and veggie/grain combination bowls, says the American Egg Board (www.aeb.org), Chicago. Using eggs as an add-on allows restaurant operators to capitalize on the breakfast trend with an economical protein that helps increase check totals and contributes to positive profit margins, says Elisa Maloberti, AEB's director of egg product marketing.



"Eating eggs or pancakes for dinner at home is quite common," Maloberti points out. "Breakfast bowls and sandwiches make satisfying meals anytime of day. This renewed focus on breakfast opens the door for more creativity and flavor options within prepared breakfast foods."

To complement the eggs, Jack Link's (jacklinks.com), Minong, Wis., is also expanding into the breakfast product category with four new savory on-the-go bacon and sausage items under the AM label. "Adding breakfast items to our portfolio for the first time is an exciting step for Jack Link's as we continue to push the category forward, reaching new consumers and expanding into new day parts," says Tom Dixon, chief marketing officer. Available in March, Jack Link's Original Breakfast Sausage hand-held has the sweet

and smoky flavor of pork, sage and black pepper, finishing with a savory twist. A hot and spicy version of the sausage also was developed, as well as applewood and brown sugar breakfast bacon and maple flavored bacon.

Formulators know consumers are adding more plant proteins and plant-based foods to their diets today. Frozen waffles from Garden Lites (www.GardenLites.com), Jamaica, N.Y., are 23 percent vegetables, containing butternut squash and carrots as primary ingredients. The company also makes muffins, souffles, veggie bakes and other entrees. The waffles contain "only clean ingredients" and are gluten-free and come in Blueberry and Homestyle varieties, each with about 210 calories per two-waffle serving, 18g of whole grains, 2g of fiber and 2g of protein. They're also free of dairy, peanuts and tree nuts, says Andy Reichgut, executive vice president, who notes they offer the health benefits of vegetables, fiber and nutrients.

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