

News monitored for: Frito Lay - Brands

'PepsiCo's affordable fruit juice products boost growth'

MEENAKSHI VERMA AMBANI

New Delhi, October 27

From offering Quaker Oats at an affordable price point of ₹10 to bring new consumers to its fold, to introducing locally-sourced juice innovations, PepsiCo India is working on dialling up nutrition in its product portfolio. PepsiCo India Vice-President - Nutrition Category, Deepika Warriar, spoke to *BusinessLine* on how the company's brands Tropicana and Quaker Oats are working to meet consumers' evolving needs. Excerpts:

The juice segment has been one of the fastest growing categories in the beverages space. How is Tropicana capturing these growth trends?

India is just hitting the tipping point as the per capita consumption of juices is increasing. Tropicana is one of our fastest growing brands and nearly 70 per cent of the brand's growth this year has come on the back of innovations.

Local sourcing is key to our

strategy and we now source nearly 60-65 per cent of the fruits for our juices locally. This has helped us launch successful innovations such as Tropicana Slice Alphonso and Tropicana Mosambi Delight. Besides, focusing on our juices range, we have now also widened our portfolio with the introduction of a range of

our juice drinks in flavours such as litchi and apple. While products such as the 100 per cent juices see more in-home consumption, fruit juice drink products tend to be more for the on-the-go consumption and offer the goodness of juices at more affordable prices. So, all these innovations have helped us add new consumers to our fold as well as widen our distribution.



Are you seeing an uptick in demand for juices from rural consumers? What are the new products you are looking to launch in the juices segment?

We serve the rural segment more through our mango-based drinks like Tropicana Slice.

Our 200 ml packs have seen a lot of growth in the smaller towns.

There is clearly a big opportunity to drive penetration of juices at the right price points in smaller towns and rural regions and we will focus on this in the coming years. We are looking at an exciting new launch in the functional nutrition space in the juice format.

Several companies have entered the beverage space and finding success in offering ethnic and traditional flavours.

There is clearly a big opportunity to drive penetration of juices at the right price points in smaller towns and rural regions and we will focus on this in the coming years. We are looking at an exciting new launch in the functional nutrition space in the juice format

DEEPIKA WARRIAR
Vice-President - Nutrition Category, PepsiCo India

Do you see any shift in consumer trends?

Locally-sourced fruit juices and ethnic beverages is one of the segments that has witnessed growth.

Consumers are open to experimenting and are looking for innovations that will deliver fruit nutrition in a tasty format. On one hand, Indian consumers are rooted in tradition, and on the other, they are also aware about the glob-

al trends and are looking for a great deal of functionality.

The oats segment is still largely under-penetrated. How are you looking to grow this?

The oats category has now reached a certain scale in the country. However, the penetration levels are still low. One of the reasons is the unfamiliarity with the taste. As the category leader, the onus is on us to grow this category. We believe the market is right for us, to drive the next level of penetration for oats. So, we are trying actively to get new consumers to the fold with initiatives such as the launch of our new pack priced at ₹10 for Quaker Oats. As we are building on local relevance and taste, we are also driving education among the consumers about the goodness of oats. We hope to generate a lot of trials and extensive sampling and wider distribution through this pack.

Quaker Oats has

roped in Chef Vikas Khanna as the nutrition brand ambassador. How are you leveraging on this association to co-create new products?

We recently launched two new flavours of *Chaat* style and *Curry Magic* flavours, co-created with Chef Vikas Khanna. These were inspired by some of the recipes short-listed from the recently concluded "Quaker Bring Your Tastiest Bowl" contest. We launched these flavours just in time for the festival season.

In Kolkata, for instance, Puja Pandals served these new flavours as part of the traditional Bhog thali. Now, we are working on establishing a pan-India distribution of these new flavours. In the second phase, in collaboration with Chef Vikas, we are working on making some of the familiar Indian breakfast recipes healthier with the addition of oats. This is also an example of how we want to have a larger play in the breakfast space. We will launch a range of products later this year, which will look at addressing nutritional gaps in Indian diet such as increasing the consumption of whole grains.

