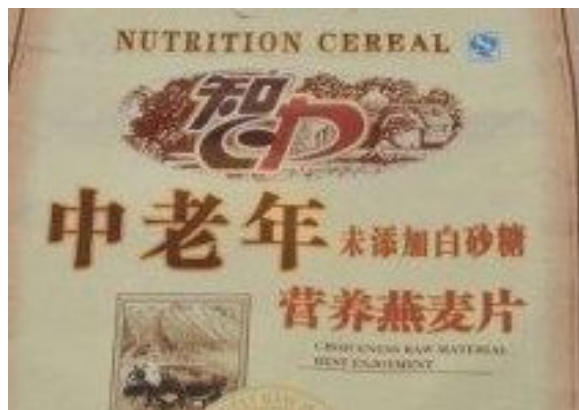


## Ingredient Trends - China - January 2013

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“Food and beverage products have regional differences in raw ingredients, flavours and cooking methods, resulting in noticeably different local food cultures. With local flavours remaining popular among consumers, awareness of and the ability to adapt to local tastes remain important for food and drink manufacturers.”

– Lui Meng Chow – Senior Research Analyst

In this report we answer the key questions:

- What role do the traditional concepts of food therapy and Traditional Chinese Medicine play in modern Chinese diets?
- What do the Chinese perceive as key factors in maintaining a healthy lifestyle, and what role does food play?
- What are the main health concerns that the Chinese have across the different age groups and between the two genders? And how can functional food and drink products target different segments of Chinese?
- What can the operators in the market and governments do to support uptake by helping Chinese consumers to believe and understand the functional ingredient benefits to their health?
- What role do natural claims play in the food and drink market, and how can the market leverage the lasting popularity of fruit and vegetables as a healthy ingredient?
- Flavour also plays an important role in Chinese diet. What are the common flavours in Chinese food?
- Seasoning is famous in China, what is the potential in seasoning innovation in China?

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) relies mainly on the consumption of natural foods to heal the body and this theory has been passed down for thousands of years, with food widely perceived not just as providing nutrition, but as playing a central role also in healthy lifestyles. This tradition of food as functional creates a strong platform for the growth of modern functional food, but also poses strong competition to it.

Hectic lifestyles due to the rapid modernisation after China's economic reform, unbalanced diets and lack of exercise amongst the Chinese, as well as pollution, have caused the majority of Chinese to experiencing sub-health problems, with issues like indigestion and minor illnesses now common.

TCM has traditionally been seen as effective in treating sub-health problems; the current health trends are fuelling demand for products to address these issues. In response, numerous health foods and better-for-you products have been launched containing TCM ingredients that claim that they will help ease certain health conditions. Chinese consumers still have quite low awareness of various functional ingredients, especially the modern ones, partly reflecting the complex regulatory environment and the lack of enforcement over unsubstantiated claims. Helping consumers better understand and verify the claims made by various modern functional ingredients will be much needed to cultivate demand.

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