

# Nutrition Knowledge - China - October 2020

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“While consumers’ demand for healthy eating remains high, their nutrition knowledge is also increasing. To further help consumers learn nutrition knowledge efficiently, brands could visualise their products’ key-featured ingredients via front-of-pack design.”  
- Catherine Liu, Research Analyst, 23 October 2020

This report looks at the following areas:

- Evaluating consumers’ current healthy eating habits.
- What nutritional attributes are sought after on packaged food and drink products and special dietary concepts.
- Consumers’ attitudes towards food processing techniques.
- How brands, companies and manufacturers could react to market opportunities and threats after the COVID-19 outbreak.

Consumers’ demand for healthy eating has grown significantly. Solutions to fit more detailed occasions in healthy eating are expected to increase their pace of growth, since most consumers think that they have not done enough when it comes to specific dietary choices (eg eat enough coarse grains, maintain a light diet, calorie control, etc). In addition to expanding product offerings targeting specific occasions, consumers’ high interest in personalised nutrition solutions (eg health surveys or diagnostics paired up with healthy food and drink products or diet plans) will become important in helping them achieve greater effectiveness in nutritional intake.

Consumers will invest more time in seeking nutrition information on product packaging. They are more interested in paying attention to special ingredients that deliver health functions (eg protein, ingredient lists) than just the correct intake of nutrients needed (eg the nutrient reference values). Moreover, they will invest more money in products with safety claims (eg organic certification) and fortification features (eg “added” claims). This provides favourable market conditions for packaged food and drink products to include more visualised nutrition information (eg usage of “front-of-pack” labelling for special ingredients, or offering transparent supply chain information to prove organic claims) to boost products’ healthy image as well as increasing value perception.

Consumers also have diverse opinions when it comes to their perspective on special diets. Chinese medicinal diets need to be made more trendy, and this might be particularly driven by COVID-19, with young consumers the key demographics in increasing usage frequency of TCM. Meanwhile, consumers prefer more localised flavours and desire more specific healthy-boosting benefits in western-style meal choice. The foodservice sector is therefore expected to see a rise in modernising Chinese medicinal diet concepts (eg highlight the added values of specific botanicals and nutrients that fit with TCM theories, or crossover with Western light meal concepts), taste innovations aiming to suit Chinese consumers’ palate (eg use advanced technology to maintain the flavour or aroma of certain healthy ingredients), as well as exploring more ingredients or ingredient combinations that fit consumers sophisticated health needs (eg light meals paired up with health supplement drinks targeting specific health improvement).

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## Table of Contents

### Overview

What you need to know

Key issues covered in this Report

Report scope

Subgroup definition

Figure 1: Definition of low/mid/high MHI groups, by monthly household income and city tier

### Executive Summary

The market

The issues

The opportunities

Future outlook considering the impact of COVID-19

Figure 2: Short, medium and long term impact of COVID-19 on consumers' demand for nutrition and its impact on the market, October 2020

The consumer

More detailed solutions to healthy eating are in demand

Figure 3: Dietary habits, August 2020

Nutrition label understanding needs improvement

Figure 4: Nutrition information, August 2020

Safety and fortification features are most appealing

Figure 5: Trading up features, August 2020

Heavy oil/seasonings and preservatives are techniques more related to decreasing nutritional values

Figure 6: Attitudes towards food processing, August 2020

Perceptions of special diets become more sophisticated

Figure 7: Correspondence analysis of perceptions of special diets, August 2020

Highly-educated consumers are more attracted to personalised diet solutions

Figure 8: Attitudes towards nutrition (A healthy diet varies from person to person), by education, August 2020

Young consumers have a new definition of junk food

Figure 9: Attitudes towards nutrition (Eating junk food occasionally will not affect health as long as the amount is controlled), by age, August 2020

What we think

### Issues and Insights

Modernising Chinese medicinal diet in next step applications

The facts

The implications

Figure 10: Examples of food and drink products that get a modern makeover through featuring specific botanicals and nutrients that fit with TCM theories, China, 2020

Figure 11: Chinese-medicinal-style light meal set offered by Soup Master, China, 2017

Nutrition gets personal

The facts

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## The implications

Figure 12: MeumGummie by MeumSrping, China, 2019

Figure 13: Greenspoon's personalised smoothie subscription service, Japan, 2020

Figure 14: Kolibri Strawberry & basil sparkling drink, UK, 2019

## Decoding consumer demand for understanding food labels

### The facts

### The implications

Figure 15: Examples of food and drink products highlighting fortified nutrients front-of-pack, China, 2020

Figure 16: Examples of packaged food and drink products and supermarket receipt that offer easy-to-quantify information on nutrient contents, Global, 2017-2020

## The Market – What You Need to Know

Healthy eating is facing "hidden" challenges

Government regulations promote nutrition awareness to healthier growth

Making efforts to raise awareness of food labelling

Stepping up to get rid of deceptive nutrition claims

Spotlight on packaged food and drink sector

Spotlight on foodservice sector

## Market Overview

The current nutritional problems among Chinese

Healthy eating is facing "hidden" challenges

Figure 17: Examples of campaigns and product applications targeting "hidden hunger", China, 2019-20

Chinese consumers' understanding of nutrition labels is yet to develop

Figure 18: Health education competition hosted by NHC, China, 2020

2019-2020 marks a major change regarding government regulations

Industry evolution in nutrition labelling to promote rational eating

A step towards healthier choices by getting rid of deceptive nutrition claims

Reduce food waste to promote ethical eating

Spotlight on packaged food and drink sector

Gaps for brands to fulfil in detailed nutritional claims

Figure 19: Gaps between product claims and features that consumers are willing to pay more for, food\* and drink in China, 2020

High-tier and highly-educated consumers look for low sugar over sweeteners

Indulgence does not contradict healthy eating amongst young consumers

Figure 20: Misszero's 14 days calorie control meal subscription service, China, 2020

Figure 21: Examples of indulgent food products that balance between taste, price and nutrition, Global and China, 2020

Aging population will drive nutrition innovation

Healthy food and drinks should not limit themselves to "trade up"

Figure 22: Examples of affordable healthy food product innovations, Global and China, 2019-20

Spotlight on foodservice sector

The emergence of "trendiness" in medicine food homology diet

Figure 23: Chinese-medicinal-style light meal set offered by Soup Master and Rollersfree, China, 2016-17

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Western diet concepts are localising to adapt to Chinese consumers' taste

Figure 24: Example of cooking oil innovation that adopts Mediterranean diet concepts as well as suiting Chinese taste preference, China, 2017

The competitive marketplace of light meals

Figure 25: Examples of light meal brands educating consumers by making food interesting, China, 2019-20

The age of the flexitarian

Figure 26: Examples of products that embrace the idea of flexitarianism, Global and China, 2019-20

Future outlook in the wake of COVID-19

The past (January to today)

Short-term future (12 months from now)

Mid-to-long term (2-3 years from now)

Figure 27: Short, medium and long term impact of COVID-19 on consumers' demand for nutrition and its impact on the market, October 2020

### The Consumer – What You Need to Know

More detailed healthy eating solutions are in demand

Understanding of nutrition labels still to develop

More willing to trade up for safety and fortification features

Chinese medicinal diet is nutritious but less trendy

Tier one cities consumers demand light meals to manage specific health issues

Heavy oil/seasonings and preservatives are techniques more related to decreasing nutritional values

Personalised diet is appealing to highly-educated consumers

Young consumers view junk food healthy as long as amount is controlled

### Dietary habits

Solutions for less processed, light taste and calorie control are desirable

Figure 28: Dietary habits, August 2020

Low-educated consumers could be key audience for less-processed and calorie control products

Figure 29: Select dietary habits – important but I have not done enough, by education, August 2020

Light diet becomes a mass consumer demand

Figure 30: Dietary habits (maintaining a light diet\*) – important but I have not done enough, by age, August 2020

Young males look for meat with high quality protein

Figure 31: Dietary habits (controlling meat consumption) – important but I have not done enough, by gender and age, August 2020

Mid-west consumers demand dairy and fresh produce

Figure 32: Select dietary habits – important but I have not done enough, by region, August 2020

### Important nutrition information

Consumers' understanding of nutrition labels still to develop

Figure 33: Important nutrition information, August 2020

Lower tier city consumers tend to pay attention to ingredient lists

Figure 34: Important nutrition information (ingredient list), by monthly household income and city tier, August 2020

Figure 35: Select verbatim regarding ingredient lists amongst lower tier city consumers, August 2020

Nutrition reference value (NRV) is still niche to mass consumers

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Deep dive into specific nutrients

Parents seek more than just protein

Figure 36: Examples of kids' food products offering more than extra protein, Global, 2019-20

Trans-fat content is more sought after by high-income earners

Figure 37: Important nutrition information (trans fat content), by monthly household income, August 2020

Vitamins and minerals most sought by females aged 30-49, while information on sodium most popular among their male counterparts

Figure 38: Select important nutrition information, by age, August 2020

Figure 39: Examples of products designed for males and females, Global, 2019

### Trading up features

Safety and fortification features are most appealing

Figure 40: Trading up features, August 2020

Figure 41: Trading up features – TURF analysis, August 2020

Tailor trading up features to suit different life stages

Figure 42: Select trading up features, by age, August 2020

Young people, tier one consumers and calorie counters are key audiences for low/no sugar feature

Figure 43: Trading up features (low or no sugar), by age and city tier, August 2020

High-income earners embrace "good fat"

Figure 44: The percentage distribution of consumers with different monthly household income, by fat-related trading up features, August 2020

Parents show great interest in trading up for plant protein

Figure 45: Trading up features (containing plant protein), by family structure, August 2020

Botanical ingredients are more welcomed as natural sweeteners

Figure 46: Trading up features (using natural sweeteners), by consumers considering using botanical ingredients as a trading up feature, August 2020

### Perceptions of special diets

Perceptions of special diets become more sophisticated

Figure 47: Correspondence analysis of perceptions of special diets, August 2020

Chinese medicinal diet concept is not seen as trendy

Figure 48: Select trading up features, by consumers who perceive medicine food homology as being "trendy", August 2020

Tier one city consumers associate light meals with improving health issues

Figure 49: Perceptions of light meals (Can improve health issues\*), by city tier, August 2020

Figure 50: Collaboration between Swisse and Element Fresh, China, 2020

Consumers of different ages have different purposes for adhering to flexitarian diet

Figure 51: Select perceptions of flexitarian diet, by age, August 2020

Mediterranean diet is perceived as expensive

### Attitudes towards food processing

Fried, salted and using preservatives are more related to decreasing nutritional value

Figure 52: Attitudes towards food processing, August 2020

"No fat" is less nutritious than "low fat"

Freeze-dried is more nutritious than air/sun-dried

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Pasteurisation is more nutrition-friendly compared to UHT sterilisation

Figure 53: New Hope improved 24-hour fresh milk, China, 2020

### Attitudes towards nutrition

Attitudes towards customised nutrition

Highly-educated consumers are more interested in personalised diet solutions

Figure 54: Attitudes towards customised nutrition (A healthy diet varies from person to person), by education, August 2020

Tailoring diverse consumers' needs in subscription packages

Figure 55: Little Tummy's paediatrician-approved fresh baby food subscription service, UK, 2019

Figure 56: Examples of meal planning kits, Global, 2020

Setting up relevant information channels for a defined audience

Figure 57: Attitudes towards nutrition (various information sources), August 2020

Nutrition opinions

Indulgence does not contradict healthy eating amongst young consumers

Figure 58: Attitudes towards nutrition (Eating junk food occasionally will not affect health as long as the amount is controlled), by age, August 2020

Consumers of a wider age still perceive healthy eating as expensive

Figure 59: Attitudes towards nutrition (Healthy eating is always high-price), by age, August 2020

Highly-educated consumers put more thought into healthy eating and emotional wellbeing

Figure 60: Attitudes towards nutrition (Healthy eating makes people feel good), by education, August 2020

### Meet the Mintropolitans

More likely to trade up for special functioning ingredients

Figure 61: Select trading up features, by consumer classification, August 2020

More likely to see vegetarian diet as easy to adhere to

Figure 62: Trading up factors, by Mintropolitans who perceive a vegetarian diet being "easy to adhere to", August 2020

More likely to see Mediterranean diet as nutritionally complete and tasty

Figure 63: Perceptions of Mediterranean diet (nutritionally balanced, suits my taste), by consumer classification, August 2020

More interested in obtaining nutrition knowledge from offline events

Figure 64: Attitudes towards nutrition (information sources), by consumer classification, August 2020

Intrigued Mintropolitans crave more healthy meal subscription services

Figure 65: Attitudes towards nutrition (healthy meal subscription package), by consumer classification, August 2020

### Appendix – Methodology and Abbreviations

Methodology

Abbreviations

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