

## "India comes across as a protein deficient country"

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*Snack bar is still a niche category in India, and accounts for less than 1% of global snack bar market. But India snack bar sales recorded a historic CAGR of 20.1% during the past five years. This market is expected to reach \$185 million by 2023, witnessing a double digit CAGR during the forecast period, 2018-2023.*

*Very recently, a new player Wholesome Habits Pvt. Ltd who sells snack bars under the brand name EAT Anytime raised \$500,000 (Rs 3.43 crore) in seed funding from early-stage investment firm Sprout Venture Partners and a few high-net-worth*

individuals. NuFFooDS Spectrum interacted with **Rishit Sanghvi**, Founder, Wholesome Habits to get to know more about the company's plans and the potential the Indian snack bar market holds in the future. Edited Excerpts-

**Congratulations on the recent fund raise. How do you plan to utilize this investment?**

The funding would be primarily used for marketing, branding, increasing the distribution network and launching new innovative products in the healthy snacks category. Right now, we have a presence in more than 500 stores in Mumbai, Pune, Bangalore, Chennai and Hyderabad. We are planning to launch our products in Delhi and Ahmedabad very soon.

**What is so unique or innovative about your products that can make a difference in the snack market?**

We are the first ones to come out with savoury bars in the market. We are constantly coming up with new ideas in order to generate flavourful products for the consumers. Our nutrition bars are healthy energy bars which are wholesome and healthy snacks made of 100 per cent natural ingredients such as dates, nuts, oats, etc. We make sure that each product is carefully blended under the supervision of a Nutritionist. Next, we are planning on launching protein category. We believe that India is a Protein deficient country (mainly in Vegetarian) and there is a huge myth that protein is only meant for people who do regular workouts and exercises. We want to get protein as a part of our casual snacking and hopefully we will be able to make a difference through our innovative products.

**With different flavors in your products, how do you ensure to maintain appropriate levels of sugar?**

We believe that Diabetes is a very serious issue currently and if not managed right, it will turn out to be more fatal than any other disease. Hence we do not add any Sugar in our products. We use all natural ingredients for imparting the required flavours in our products. Our ingredients typically have a low glycemic index (GI).

**What are the current challenges being faced by the snack bar industry in India, and how can these be addressed?**

Everyone has a different definition of health nowadays. So it is difficult to mark a standard criteria of health. That is the main challenge. We are trying to create a certain boundary for defining health in a better way through our snack bar products. This market, typically referred to as alternate meal market, has a wide range of products associated with it including chocolate bars, protein bars etc. People prefer to consume items which are cheap and easily accessible. At times, people compromise with their health as a result. So, there is a need to fill this mindful snacking space in people's mind with the correct ingredients. We need to create awareness and help people understand this gap between healthy and unhealthy snacks. Of course, distribution is another challenge we face today. Although e-commerce has brought about a lot of convenience, there is still limitation in awareness and accessibility. Nowadays, government is also playing an active role in emphasizing upon good health. The snack bar market has a lot of potential in store and it will keep growing exponentially in the coming years.