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Study shows US consumers prefer natural products

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By **Guest** | February 24, 2015



study-shows-us-consumers-prefer-natural-products

> WordPress post #5549

BENEO, a leading manufacturer of functional ingredients, announced the results of its latest research, which demonstrates consumer perception of fiber, its natural functionality and health benefits. The research produced by Health Focus International quantified insights that directly link to today’s consumer focus on eating healthier foods made with natural and non-GMO ingredients. In fact 67 % of the 1,000 consumers interviewed found “high in natural fiber” as a very appealing fiber claim for food and beverage products. The research results show a clear preference for natural products - with as many as 47% of respondents actively seeking natural fibers - and 45 % considering non-GMO products as “better.”

In terms of product designation, 62 % of respondents prefer chicory root fiber as the most natural soluble fiber. In contrast, only 42 % and 3% of consumers, respectively, perceive soluble corn fiber and polydextrose as natural fibers. Interestingly, the research results mirror actual ingredient production methods. Unlike other fibers, for example soluble corn fiber and polydextrose that are artificially or chemically made, chicory root fiber is naturally sourced and produced by a gentle hot water extraction method. Additionally, chicory root scores best - with 57 % of the respondents not linking chicory root fiber to GMO. Chicory root fiber is non-GMO and a natural source of dietary fiber. It can also be found in artichokes and onions.

Results show that consumers are particularly concerned about the sugar content in food and drinks, with 63 % of respondents indicating they try to avoid or limit sugar. Only artificial sweeteners are avoided even more. This goes hand-in-hand with the fact that consumers look for the calorie, fat and sugar content of a product before purchasing it (69 %, 65 % and 62 %, respectively). Chicory root fibers have a natural mild sweetness and only 1.5 kcal/g, making them highly suitable when replacing sugar and calories in formulations.

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