

# Choosing the right fibre ingredient – The Five C's

In today's food and beverage marketplace, manufacturers are navigating through an ever-changing tide of consumer demand for better-for-you options. Digestive health. Less sugar. Fewer calories. Cleaner labels. Low cholesterol. The list goes on and on. So how can we meet these demands for health and wellness without sacrificing the great taste and texture consumers expect?

While there are many ingredients that can help achieve specific claims and functionality, there's an unsung hero in the food science toolkit that can help achieve most, if not all of it – fibre. Not only do fibres help manufacturers market better-for-you products, they can also help solve significant formulation challenges. But not all fibres are created equal. Tate & Lyle helps manufacturers determine the best fibre option using criteria it calls 'The Five C's': consumer sentiment, digestive comfort, clean labels, nutritional claims and cost in use.

## Consumer sentiment

While consumers are interested in health and wellness, taste continues to be top of mind for consumers. In fact, 90% of consumers in the United States say taste is their top purchase driver. Other sensory attributes like colour and texture will also make or break consumers' eating experience. Fibres with a clean taste, neutral colour, and texture without grittiness will increase overall consumer acceptance of finished products.

## Comfort

Manufacturers are challenged to deliver the enhanced nutrition benefits of fibre that consumers demand, but some fibres, particularly at high inclusion levels, can cause digestive discomfort. However, Tate & Lyle's soluble corn fibre, for example, provides over two times the digestive tolerance of inulin. Research shows up to 65 grams per day can be consumed without discomfort, which is well above the daily recommended intake of fibre.

## Clean labels

Around the world, there's a growing trend for foods and beverages made with ingredients consumers understand and recognise. In APAC, nearly 25% of new product launches were positioned as label friendly in 2013. Depending on your target audience, selecting a fibre that offers consumer-friendly labelling options may provide additional appeal needed to boost product sales.

## Claims

As mentioned previously, fibre can help food and beverage manufacturers achieve much more than a front-of-pack fibre claim. Fibre's inherent nutritional benefits combined with versatile functional benefits make a variety of claims possible. From 'maintains healthy blood cholesterol' with oat beta glucan to 'sugar free' with polydextrose, choosing the right fibre can provide that extra advantage on the store shelf.

## Cost in use

Fibres differ in stability level, which may impact cost in use. When formulating using fibres with poor stability, manufacturers have to overcompensate for fibre lost due to high heat and shear during processing, acid in low-pH systems, and long shelf life. Choosing a fibre with superior stability can result in manufacturing efficiencies.

While fibres are extremely versatile, they aren't all created equal. Manufacturers should partner with a supplier with a full portfolio of fibre options in order to effectively walk through 'The 5 C's' and determine the best fit for their application and target audience.

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