

BIG in Barcelona

A compelling conference programme, focused exhibitor base and world class venue served as a powerful magnet for this year's SNACKEX. Lynda Searby reports.



FROM 3-5 June, snack industry professionals from all over the world made their way to Barcelona for the 12th Savoury Snacks Exhibition and Conference, and whether industry veterans or first-time visitors, they weren't disappointed with what they found.

Dr Hermann Meng, food safety and quality systems manager with **LU Snack Foods** (Germany), has visited the show many times before. He said: "I come to SNACKEX every two years to see what's new, meet up with old friends and learn about developments in the snack business. I've seen some interesting new things this week."

Olga Muraviova, brand director with **Bridgetown Foods** (Russia), said she found the show really useful for monitoring new trends. "Russia is probably about two or three

years behind Western Europe so by coming to SNACKEX we get to see where the new trends are. The Mintel and Nielsen presentations in particular were key for us."

Nazan Ugur from **Procter & Gamble** (Switzerland) described the event as a 'useful congress' with a 'lively show floor', while Dmytro Kopylov, project engineer with **Kraft Foods** (Ukraine) said that seeing so many savoury snack related products and companies under one roof was a highlight for him.

With 120 exhibitors, by food industry standards SNACKEX isn't a large show, but for many participants, much of the show's appeal lies in its tightly defined focus.

"It's a specialist show, so we get to see the right people - the decision makers and the quality control people," said Bjorn Thumas, area sales manager with sorting equipment specialist **Best NV** (Belgium).

John Boutsikaris, senior VP sales and marketing with conveyor supplier **Key Technology** (USA), told how initially, they were concerned about the size of the show, but that it had in fact turned out to be to their benefit rather than detriment: "People are here for a reason rather than to walk round and collect goodies, so we've generated some really strong leads," he said.

With much

industry growth taking place in the developing markets of

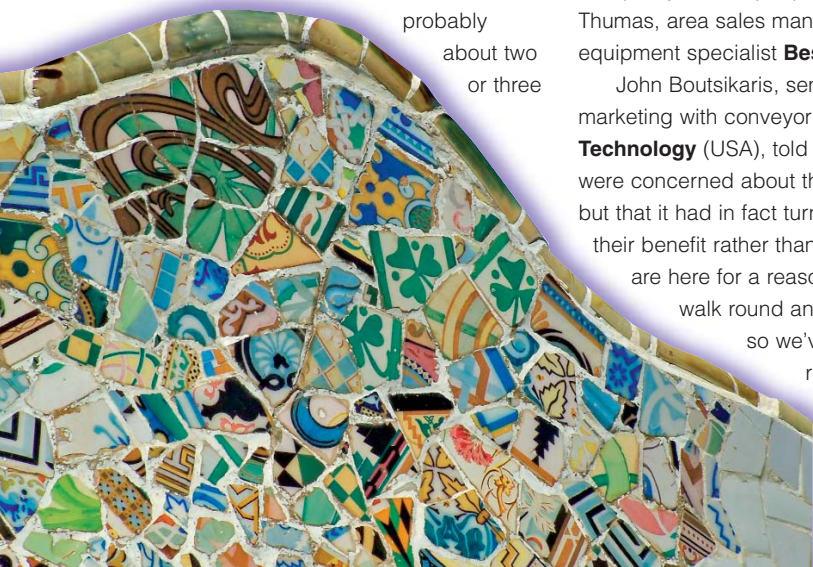
Eastern Europe, North Africa and the Middle East, many exhibitors were pleased to see strong visitor representation from these regions.

Barbara Campbell, co-director at new and rebuilt equipment supplier **Extrusion Link** (UK), said: "There were lots of interesting countries represented - Iran, Jordan and Lebanon - which is good as there isn't any real growth in the European market."

This view was echoed by Goran Wadsten, sales and marketing director with snack processing equipment supplier **FMC Foodtech** (Sweden), who said: "There are a lot of people from different countries, and a lot of newcomers to the industry, from the Middle East, North Africa and Eastern Europe, which is good."

The ESA Snacks Pavilion returned to SNACKEX 07, with a 50% bigger footprint than in 2005, providing an interactive forum for addressing industry trends and issues. This year, the pavilion was divided into three zones, focused on ESA's three working groups.

Sponsored by **PepsiCo International**, the Communications Working Group zone gave members the opportunity to learn more about how ESA is communicating with





stakeholders on issues like obesity and labelling. Advice on regulatory issues such as nutrition and

health, mycotoxins and acrylamide was sought at the Regulatory Working Group area, sponsored by **Givaudan**, while snack nut manufacturers discussed regulatory, trade and communication issues relating to nut processing on the Nut Processors' Working Group Zone, sponsored by **Lorenz Snack-World**.

In the World of Taste & Trends, visitors tucked into a wide selection of bagged snacks sourced from around the world by **Kerry Snack Flavourings**, gleaning insight into different approaches to labelling, packaging, flavouring and base materials.

"This was really useful as we got to try lots of different flavours, see different styles of packaging and understand the trends at large throughout Europe," said Olga Muraviova.

Obesity, health, NPD and the new nutrition and health claims regulation were recurrent themes throughout SNACKEX, featuring prominently in the two-day conference programme which ran alongside the exhibition.

Robert Madelin, Director General, Health & Consumer Protection, **European Commission**, kicked off the proceedings

with a presentation on tackling obesity, in which he commended the snacks industry for its efforts to reformulate its products, improve consumer information and act as

responsible advertisers.

Madelin stressed the importance of engaging business in an open and tolerant way to make the Commission's recently drafted White Paper on Nutrition a success for society.

On a similarly positive note, in his presentation on the nutrition and health claims legislation, Herman Koëter, deputy executive director and director of science with **EFSA** (the European Food Safety Authority), hinted that it was likely that nutrient profiles would be drawn up on a category by category basis - an approach that would be welcomed by the snack industry. He told delegates that work on nutrient profiles had already started and that by the end of the year, the panel should have formulated a draft approach.

With the International Peanut Forum now fully integrated into SNACKEX, nuts commanded a significant share of the exhibition floor space as well as the

conference schedule. Presentations explored health and nutrition aspects as well as hot industry topics such as supply forecasts and import / export controls.

"SNACKEX 07 provided a great opportunity to meet people in the nuts business, from farmers and shellers to equipment suppliers and snack nut manufacturers," said Louise McKerchar, European marketing director with the **American Peanut Council**.

She noted that there had been a lot of interest from crisp manufacturers looking to move into nut snacks because of their healthy image.

The President's Dinner and Closing Party at the Codorniu Winery rounded off the three-day programme. A well deserved evening of entertainment in stunning surroundings sent visitors and exhibitors home on a high note.

On the show floor....

Processing equipment



2007 HAS certainly been the year of the popper, with Paul Gamble, managing director of hot air processing equipment manufacturer **Torbed Services**, reporting that demand for their poppers has rocketed to the point where they are now asking customers to put down a 10% deposit to secure a delivery date.

Demonstrating that it is possible to have commercial success with a baked snack, Torbed had on stand sample packs of Kettle Crispy Bakes and Estrella Pop Delight - both of which are processed on Torbed systems.

SNACKEX represented the world premier for Netherlands-based **Lalesse Extrusion's** new single screw extruder. Unlike many systems on the market, the all

stainless-steel constructed 90E machine incorporates a direct drive system, so no motor sticks out on the back of the machine. Lalesse says it is also 30% more efficient than competing extruders as the absence of drive pulleys means that all energy goes straight to the shaft of the extruder.

The feeding system is 'closed', in contrast to 'open' design extruders, preventing foreign bodies from entering the extrusion process and making cleaning easier. Easier operation is achieved

through a lower working height and better position of control cabinet. **Extrusion Link (UK)** has branched out from its core used machinery business to offer a brand new flexible blade cutting system. The company says the main advantage of this system is that it is very easy to change the blades, which means more consistent product quality and less downtime.

With environmental responsibility coming to the fore, **Flo-Mech** is focusing more heavily on systems for energy recovery and has recently launched Flo-starch - a starch recovery and water reclaim system designed to separate non-gelatinised starch from process water. Starch water from the potato slice washer is sent to a parabolic screen where debris and fines are removed and transferred into either a bin or a compactor where additional water can be recovered and the fines compacted for animal feed.

The starch water less fines is pumped into a centrifuge where the starch solids are separated to a dry state. The recycled water can be pumped back into the process line.



Above: Flo-Mech's Flostarch
Left: Lalesse's new 90E extruder



Above: Torbed reports rocketing demand

Seasoning systems

SNACKEX was the first outing for **FMC FoodTech's** Libra Seasoning Control System.

The system is said to combine precise product weighing and seasoning functions, enhancing yield, eliminating wasted seasoning and delivering evenly seasoned snacks.

At the heart of the system is a vibratory feeder mounted on load cells that continuously weighs the base product flowing into the seasoning drum. As the product weight flow rate fluctuates, the seasoning controller continuously adjusts the seasoning rate to maintain the optimum product-to-seasoning ratio at all times. This enhances product yield and quality, and eliminates costly waste stemming from over-seasoning products.

Peter King, managing director of **Spice Application Systems**, said the show generated over 50 enquiries about its Cloud Cover electrostatic coating system. The seasoning system does away with the traditional drum and instead, snacks pass along a vibratory tray and

through an electrostatically covered chamber where flavourings are electrostatically applied, a process which King says ensures they adhere automatically to all product surfaces.

"This is the only system offering 100% control of powder usage, which translates into huge potential savings because there's less wastage and at the same time the consistency of coatings is vastly improved, so customers get a much better quality product," he said.

"The drive towards healthy eating means manufacturers have to be ever more vigilant when it comes to the quantities of salt, sugar and other seasonings and flavourings that go into their product."

Flavour systems specialist **Arccall** agrees that accuracy is becoming



FMC's Libra system reduces seasoning wastage

increasingly important as more and more manufacturers want to make front of pack claims about fat and salt levels.

It says this is a trend that works to its advantage, as it offers a closed loop oil application system which uses a mass flow meter rather than a volumetric flow meter.

"This means that changes in oil density have no bearing on the application rate," explains senior sales manager John Franklin.

VISITORS

How was it for you?



Charlotte Poulsen,
product developer,
KiMs, Denmark

Q Why did you come to SNACKEX?

A I attended SNACKEX to be updated with the latest news from the market and see/hear about future trends in snacks, also to meet new and existing suppliers and colleagues.

Q How useful did you find it?

A I found it very useful because the seminars gave me a good update on news/trends and I saw new processing techniques and products.

Q What were the highlights?

A New varieties of low fat snacks.

Q Anything that could be improved on?

A "It could have been made clearer in the pre-event publicity that visitors didn't have to arrive in time for the opening reception in order to register - that we could in fact register at any time during Snackex."

Ingrid Amundsen,
marketing manager
Nordic snacks,
Kraft Foods Norway



Q Why did you come to SNACKEX?

A I attended SNACKEX to get updated on what's new in the snacking world, as well as to meet potential new suppliers.

Q What were the highlights?

A The lectures. Also meeting people from the snacks industry in other parts of the world is very inspiring.

Q How useful did you find it?

A I can't say that I saw any real news. However, I did learn that we are heading in the right direction with our latest launches of healthier snacks. There were some interesting flavour suppliers presenting new ideas on potato chip seasonings. I found the lectures of great interest - good, informative presentations of trends in the European snacks market as well as changing consumption habits across the globe.

Q Anything that could be improved on?

A The show is very technical in that there are lots of packaging machines and other equipment being displayed in the exhibition hall while the actual snack products are more in the background. I would prefer more attention to be given to the product itself and for there to be a wider selection of new products on display.

Quality control equipment

ANOTHER means of ensuring accurate fat levels is through off-line analysis. **Oxford Instruments** demonstrated how its MQC benchtop system, which works on the NMR (Nuclear Magnetic Resonance) principle, can measure fat levels in snacks without the need for liquid solvents or sample preparation.

NDC Infrared Engineering, meanwhile, has launched a new version of its InfraLab analyser which incorporates an integral operator interface. Previously, the analyser - which is used for measuring moisture, fat, oil and protein content - had to be used in conjunction with a PC. With the new model, measurements can be viewed via the touchscreen which also incorporates data storage and has the ability to download measurement record files to a PC.

Staying with the quality control theme, **Mettler Toledo Safeline** demonstrated its Profile metal detector. Key features include a colour touchscreen control panel from which operators can view real time histogram displays of product data, and a Change Free Running mode which allows numerous products that exhibit a product effect to be inspected without changing the detector settings. **Satake** was pushing its new UltraScan for removing glass, sticks and

stones etc from nuts. Multi Wavelength Technology uses the infrared and visible spectrums to target all types of foreign material and colour defect.

Orders have already been secured from the Spanish almond industry.

Another sorter manufacturer, **BEST NV**, reported that it had just sold one of its Genius sorters to a Spanish potato chip company. With the Genius, different inspection technologies, such as colour, black and white, laser and fluo lasers, can be combined with various kinds of illumination, like LED, infrared and UV, to give colour, structure, shape and fluorescent sorting.

The highlight on **Ishida Europe's** stand was the iTPS - Ishida Total Packaging System - the world's only snack packing system with all key elements - multihead weigher, metal detector, printer, bagmaker, seal tester and checkweigher - from one supplier. Key features include a twin rotary jaw system, which facilitates handling, and variable seal time and pressure.



**NDC's new
InfraLab analyser**

Seasonings

ASIAN influences were also present in some of the seasoning concepts. **Fromatech**, for example, demonstrated a number of seasonings including pudine (an Indian dish), chilli and lime, masala and five spice BBQ.

First time exhibitor **Biotrek** came up with a novel way of presenting unusual seasonings that was welcomed by thirsty visitors. Passers by were invited to stop for a glass of santorini sangria (BBQ wine) and oregano, lemon and pepper potato crisps, which the Greek firm says are high in antioxidants and part of a range of no added salt flavours.



Conveyors

GOUGH Engineering presented a new bucket liner for its bucket elevators. "Cleaning is always an issue with bucket conveyors," said MD Stephen Harding. "If you want to change between flavourings, the liner is easy to take out and put back."

Another conveyor company, **Wire Belt**, used SNACKEX as the launch-pad for its Compact Grid conveyor.

The open-mesh stainless steel conveyor belt is intended for transporting delicate, small products through an oven or fryer, or for cooling freshly baked or fried products in high-volume, high-throughput processes.

Over 70% of the surface is open, allowing maximum airflow through the belt. This not only cools product quickly, but makes cleaning easier. The belt's stainless steel construction stops product from going soggy, as the belt, rather than the product, retains the heat.

Wire Belt says less frequent belt replacements are needed than with other conveyor belts, but when a belt does need to be replaced, the Compact Grid's design enables the belt to be joined or spliced onto the conveyor simply by hooking the belt ends together and crimping to close.

Pellets and raw materials

IT WILL come as no surprise to learn that the focus for raw material, ingredient and pellet exhibitors was firmly focused on health. Pellet makers demonstrated how alternative raw materials - many of them Asian influenced - and 'in-built' seasonings and inclusions could hold the key to developing snacks that are both healthy and tasty.

"Low fat and low salt - everyone wants it," said **Quality Pellets** MD Bente Drifte. "Shape is not so important, it's all about getting the pellets to taste good."

She explained how Quality Pellets had developed pellets with herbs mixed into the dough

to reduce the amount of topical seasoning required, and presented a pellet made with 50% oat - an ingredient that is increasingly earning a reputation as a 'superfood' owing to its heart health benefits. "Oat is a very good ingredient," said Drifte. "It's linked with cereals in people's minds and it can take either sweet or spicy seasonings."

In a variation on the same theme, Italian pellet firm **V.AL.IN** sampled hot air expanded rice and tapioca chips, infused with anchovy, which it said could just as easily incorporate red pepper or olives to give a different 'hit'.

Demonstrating the array of raw materials that can be used as a basis for low or no fat snacks, product development company **Steam Chip Co** offered visitors fat-free sweet corn, shrimp, purple sweet potato, pumpkin and yellow sweet potato chips.

Italian pellet maker **Mafin** showed new pellets for popping based on rice, potato and wheat, including fat-free pellets, while potato pellets with spinach, tomato and carrot were on-show on **Palmex**



Alimentos' booth.

Spanish firm **Liven** offered visitors microwave popcorn and two types of toasted corn pellet snacks with natural cheese, salt, chilli and BBQ seasonings.

Italian exhibitor

Bag Snacks

believes it could have found the holy grail of snack making with a fibre-rich baked snack (with either a corn, rice or potato base) that contains 0% salt, minimal fat (up to 2.1g) and less than 100 calories per serving, yet still delivers on taste. A commercial snack based on this recipe is already on sale in the USA under the Italos brand. Bag Snacks hoped that by presenting the recipe at SNACKEX it might find

a European snack producer interested in buying the 'know-how and machinery' to bring such a product to market.

French firm **Limagrain Céréales Ingrédients (LCI)** and its functional flour business **Westhove** are gearing up for the wholegrain movement to spread to Europe.

"In the US, sales of wholegrain products have increased by between 10 to 18% per year over the last three years and it is now well understood by consumers that it is very important to have wholegrain in a balanced diet," said marketing manager Patricia Panel.

LCI claims to be the only pellet maker to offer a wholegrain pellet. "Wholegrain doughs can be difficult to extrude because of the fibre content," explained Panel.

Visitors to the stand were invited to sample both oil expanded and hot air expanded Whole Maize Quadritos, with 30% and 2% fat respectively. The snacks contain 72% wholegrain after expansion - more than enough, said Panel, for manufacturers to make 'wholegrain' claims.

Continuing on the wholegrain theme, Westhove previewed its new range of functional wholegrain flours made from maize, wheat, barley, oats and rye. It says these are particularly suited to Tex Mex Products like tortilla chips, which are currently enjoying popularity in Europe.

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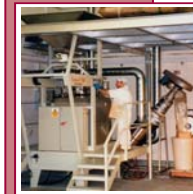
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EXHIBITORS

How was it for you?



John Franklin, senior sales manager, Arcall (Wright Pugson), UK

Q How useful was SNACKEX for you?

A SNACKEX was useful to Arcall in that we made a number of new contacts from companies we had previously not dealt with other than at a very junior level. We were also able to progress a number of enquiries already in hand but with new and much improved information.

Q What were the highlights?

A The highlight was undoubtedly the sheer number of key people we met and discussed our product range with and the enquiries received for after show follow-up. We were very

surprised at the numbers as we had visited previous shows which we are sure were much quieter. We definitely plan to exhibit at the 2009 show.

Q Anything that could be improved on?

A A significant number of exhibitors started to break their stands down before the official end of the show. This gave a negative impression to those visitors still left. As we had our final good quality visit at the very end of the show we feel the organisers should force the issue to ensure that stands are not dismantled until after closure.



Peter King, managing director, Spice Application Systems, UK

Q How useful was SNACKEX for you?

A It was extremely good; this was our fourth time taking a stand and I felt the quality of both fellow participants and the profile of visitors attending was higher than ever. It provides a great opportunity to network with existing contacts, and make new ones, all under the same roof in a short space of time. The show was very successful for us and I came away with an excellent number of new leads.

Q What were the highlights?

A Securing two large orders

worth several thousands of pounds! It's not just about the money though, it's about seeing the latest trends in the market and being able to talk to key people about what they want to do to improve their products. Personally, I found the quality of the people attending, and the fact they were decision makers, excellent.

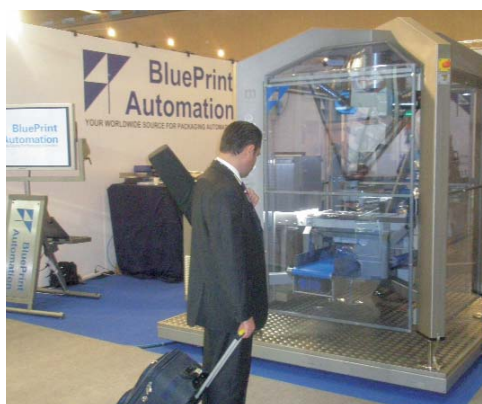
Q Anything that could be improved on?

A I would like to have seen more publicity for the event and for it to have been better organised in terms of media attendance.

Packaging equipment



Above: Nor-Reg's fully automatic case packer



Left: Blueprint's answer to multi-flavour case packing

Below: TNA shows off its integration capabilities

A FULLY integrated packaging line with a robag 3 fx 180 Rotary Triple Jaw (RTJ) vertical form, fill and seal (VFFS) bagger demonstrated tna's ability to integrate a complete snack packing line. The robag 3 fx 180 RTJ VFFS bagger was integrated with a tna 320 delta scale, a tna Intelli-date 53T date coder and a Safeline metal detector to produce small pillow bags at speeds of up to 300bpm.

In end of line packaging equipment, innovations centred on packing mixed cases.

Norwegian firm **Nor-Reg** demonstrated its fully automatic case packer which features a double in-feed, so two bagmakers can supply one case packer. "In the past you would have needed two case packers," explained the company's Jan Willem van Nieuwenhuyzen. The system has a footprint of 1.70 x 4.5m and can run two 400 x 600 or 300 x 400 boxes at the same time. Nor-Reg hopes to achieve operating speeds of 160bpm by the end of this year.

On **Blueprint Automation's** booth a case packing cell was up and running to show visitors how Blueprint can build a system capable of packing up to four flavours in one case - usually a manual operation.

Product is manually 'dumped' into the system, which then singles the bags and checks their orientation with a camera. Bags are picked and placed into a carton and the part-filled carton is transported to the next flavour cell. The demonstration cell was picking 170bpm using a triple pick up.



Conference highlights

Madelin sets out three 'health' priorities



IN HIS key note presentation 'Snacks for health?' Director General, Health & Consumer Protection, **European Commission**, Robert Madelin, urged snack manufacturers to make corporate social responsibility, targeted information efforts toward under 12s and monitoring of progress their key 'health' priorities. His comments came hot on the heels of the presentation of the Commission's White Paper on Nutrition,

Overweight and Obesity on 30 May.

He stressed that every company in the food sector should act as, and be recognised as, a local leader and partner for health, and highlighted the importance of monitoring the progress of health initiatives versus targets.

"You need to make a small but adequate investment of resource in execution, monitoring and engaging with partners," he said.

Lastly, Madelin emphasised the importance of engaging strategically and not defensively on the issue of children. "12 is the new six," he told delegates. "Advertising to children under 12 is considered risky corporate behaviour."

He commended the snacks industry for its efforts to reformulate products, improve consumer information and act as responsible advertisers. He encouraged continued partnership building and extended networks as the way forward and stressed the importance of engaging business in an open and tolerant way to make the Commission's White Paper on Nutrition a success for society.

"Rules are necessary," he said, "but more important are the extended networks around legislation, building partnerships from farmers to food and drink companies and national authorities in order to develop and spread best practice."

Mathias Adank, president of ESA, welcomed the Commission's emphasis on partnership and on the continued role of the EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical activity and Health. He said: "ESA is honoured to be thanked by the Commission for its efforts. As a part of our commitments to the EU Platform our industry has significantly reduced salt and fat in its products while also adopting voluntary nutrition labelling and promoting healthy lifestyles. We in turn thank the Commission for its open attitude which has allowed us to play a constructive role as a part of the solution in facing up to the obesity challenge."

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Tough times ahead for snack makers



JONATHAN Banks, business insights director with **AC Nielsen**, predicts that conditions will get tougher for snack manufacturers, with growing competition from private label and the retailer drive towards non-food expansion.

According to Nielsen figures, snacks grew by 6% in Europe between 2005 and 2006. But while this looks like a healthy performance on paper, he pointed out that inflation has grown at about the same rate, so in reality, the market is standing still.

The star performers continue to be nuts, which are experiencing double digit growth in 11 of 26 European countries, in particular 'noble nuts' and mixes. The

exception to this is peanuts, which are, said Banks, 'struggling to keep going'.

Going forwards there are three global mega trends shaping the food industry: convenience and snacking, health and wellbeing and pleasure and indulgence.

Banks said manufacturers who can develop concepts that tick all three mega-trend boxes can command a premium, but the key to this is ensuring that products deliver on their concept promise, and taste good.

"There are few examples of products that don't taste good but are healthy and do well," he told delegates.

Also vital to success is sustained

investment in advertising and distribution. "Only 24% of successful launches are worth more in year two than year one, which demonstrates the importance of investing in advertising and distribution for two to three years."

Another issue for manufacturers which is not going to disappear is private label. Banks believes the supermarket drive towards non-food means that anyone other than private label manufacturers and brand leaders may have problems getting listed in future.

Weight management and heart health future of nut NPD



IN his presentation 'Health Benefits of Nuts', Victor Fulgoni, vice president of **Nutrition Impact LLC**, predicted that the benefits of nuts in regulating weight and protecting against heart disease could be big areas for the future.

He presented the results of two meta-analysis studies - one on almonds and one on all available nuts - on the heart health benefits of nuts. These concluded that almonds have a

positive effect on blood lipids, reducing total cholesterol, LDL cholesterol and the LDL / HDL cholesterol ratio. All nuts have a beneficial effect on lipid levels and may therefore reduce the risk of coronary heart disease by about 7-12%.

He also cited research which found that consumers do actually believe the link between nut consumption and heart disease.

This combination of scientific evidence and credibility with consumers could, he said, present a marketing opportunity for nut snack makers. "Manufacturers should focus on the issues that resonate with consumers such as heart health," Fulgoni told delegates.

He went on to chart the latest research on the link between nuts and weight management, in particular a recent study carried out by the Universidad de Navarra which found that nut consumption two or more times a week resulted in less weight gain. He offered several explanations for this effect: consumers may naturally compensate for the calories and because they have eaten nuts may not eat something else, there may be an increase in resting metabolic rate or all the fat in nuts may not be readily available.



Action on marketing to kids?



NEVILLE Rigby, Director of Policy & Public Affairs, **International Obesity Taskforce**, called for 'a set of recommendations to govern the current intense marketing to children'.

Childhood obesity levels are at just under 20% in Europe, with the UK the nation with the highest prevalence.

He praised the efforts so far of ESA in developing an advertising self-regulation charter and of multi-national food firms like PepsiCo and Kraft. However, he stressed the need for more

co-ordinated action on marketing, particularly marketing on the internet, saying 'there is growing international consensus for action'.

He discussed how this may be achieved at an EU and global level.

Following a call for a WHO (World Health Organisation) Food Marketing Code made by the Norwegian government, in May, health ministers agreed to include marketing issues in the form of a 'set of recommendations' in a new resolution on the WHO strategy

FOOD for thought



GLUTEN-FREE, wholegrain, colour foods and 100 calorie packs are some of the NPD ideas that could inspire new snack products, according to **Mintel's Global New Products Database (GNPD)** director, David Jago.

Gluten-free is 'one to watch', he said. It has featured as a 'top five minus claim' (Mintel divides claims into 'plus' and 'minus' claims) since 2005, representing its move into the

mainstream, with products like Quaker's Snack a Jacks adopting a gluten-free sell.

"The number of people intolerant to gluten is growing, but that doesn't account for the growth in product sales. People are buying gluten-free because they think it aids digestion and makes them feel well," he told delegates.

Low fat, on the other hand, despite accounting for 10% of all snack introductions, is in danger of becoming a negative message.

"Instead, consumers want to hear positive messages like 'baked not fried'," said Jago, citing Walkers Baked in the UK, Kettle Bakes Pretzel Chips Fully Loaded in the USA and Sunbites Mini Palitos baked wheat snacks in Spain.

Added fibre is falling from favour as a claim, while wholegrain is rising in popularity, with introductions like Kraft Foods' Estrella Grain Delight in Scandinavia and Ryvita Minis made from wholegrain rye in the UK.

100 calorie packs have taken off in the USA (with products like Kraft Foods' Nabisco 100 Calorie Packs assortment), Australia (with Kettle Foods' Less Than 100 Calories potato crisps) and the UK (with KP Snacks' Skips tapioca and corn snack with less than 100 calories per pack).

However, he questioned the positioning of KP Snacks' Space Raiders, which are now marketed as a 100 calorie pack and sold at 10p a bag, saying this positioning generally works best with more sophisticated products.

He warned manufacturers that it can be a dangerous strategy for indulgence products, citing the example of the disastrous Dairy Milk 100 calorie packs. Tayto Advantage Oven Baked Whisps, baked crisps with less than 5g fat and 100 calories a bag, and Asda Good For You Pretzel and Bagel Selection with less than 3% fat and 100 calories a bag, are examples of snacks that he believes have established strong positioning.

One trend that has as yet been confined to the adventurous Japanese market is 'colour foods'. Circle K Sunkus sweet purple potato chips, for example, are marketed as rich in antioxidant polyphenols, and Meiji Seika Kaisha's Red Vegetable Copan are bite-sized bread pieces with red vegetables.



for the prevention of non-communicable diseases.

Then on 30 May, the Commission presented its White Paper on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity. However, while industry favours coordinated single market action, Rigby argued that 'one set of co-ordinated actions at the EU level is considered, by the concerned economic operators, preferable to numerous, individual actions at Member State level.'

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