

38 Functionality figures

What are people looking for in functional food and drink? Kantar has the key indicators

40, 43 Innovations

Grab a bottle of Botanic Lab Reset+ to accelerate lactic acid removal, and check out the NPD



Beauty food: the next big thing in functional?

Bloggers have been raving about eating yourself beautiful. Just how functional can food, aided by the likes of collagen, become?

Rob Brown & Alex Wright

To think food & drink was once for filling you up or slaking a thirst. Now it's for much more: waking you up, building muscle, immune system support, aiding concentration... some even say beauty will be the next big thing.

Granted, beauty isn't yet a common motivation for choosing healthier food & drink (see p38), but there has been a spate of beauty-orientated launches and growing chatter online about the trend. Most centres on one key substance: collagen, the main protein in skin.

Bloggers have been raving about collagen ice cream, smoothies, crêpes and coffee (to name a few). Now brands have launched collagen-fortified products, including a gin. So could mother's ruin also be her ticket to better skin? Does beauty food & drink really have legs? And what else is going on in functional?

"We started trading in March, expecting it to be a soft launch. It turned into a worldwide media frenzy," says Liz Beswick, co-founder of Collagin, a gin distilled with collagen and sold as 'the elixir of youth'. "We had to rip up our business plan. We thought we'd be making 1,000 bottles a month. That's gone up to 4,000. There's huge demand, not just for this product but for a whole new category."

It's not just gin. Low-calorie, high-protein sports drink ProWater claims to use collagen proteins in its recipe and last year

"There's huge demand, not just for this product but for a new beauty food & drink category"

health shakes brand ÜFit launched Collagen+ Beauty Milk, containing 5,000mg of 'skin firming' collagen per 200ml bottle.

Tea brands are also taking note. Last July, loose leaf brand We Are Tea launched a trio of functional teas, comprising Glow 'for skin radiance' (with red berries & calendula petals) and products aimed at easing stomach pain and 'maintaining body balance'. In November health & wellness brand The Niche Co launched a range of teas with a variety of functional claims, including one designed to 'hydrate and luminatate' skin and another aimed at 'nourishing and stimulating' hair.

Others are making health & beauty claims off the back of the probiotics they say their products contain. Probiotic milk drink brand Bio-tiful Dairy says sales of its gut-friendly bacteria-filled kefir are booming as a result of growing awareness of the wide-ranging benefits of probiotics. "Thanks to the high ↗

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THE AWARD WINNING SUPER TEA RANGE IS GROWING



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Tetley is the fastest growing brand in Green tea **

*Kantar 20.5.17 ** Delivering over £1m of growth YoY, Tetley Supers range is the biggest contributor to growth in the green category AC Nielsen Value Sales 22.4.17

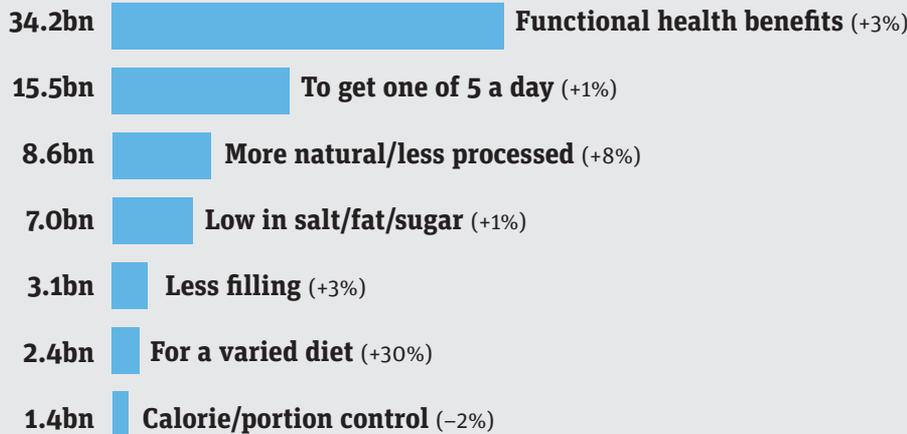
Awards for Tetley Supers include: Tetley Super Teas 2017 Product of the Year in the hot beverages category, in a survey of 11,637 people by TNS; Great Taste Awards 2015: Tetley Super Green Lime, 2016: Tetley Super Green Heart Forest Fruits

When do Brits eat for health reasons?



■ servings (billion) — average over 12 months

What are the principal health considerations?



When it comes to deciding what to eat, health matters to Brits. The top graph shows the number of food servings motivated by health on a monthly basis between March 2014 and last February. The second breaks those choices down to reveal that functionality is the most cited consideration for consumers.

The pattern is one of peaks and troughs, according to Kantar Worldpanel. The troughs come at Christmas, followed by a rise in the

New Year and a slight dip at Easter. As summer approaches, food & drink choices motivated by health start to rise as Brits look to get beach ready. The peak comes in September and then, as the nights draw in, the cycle begins again.

Choices motivated by health have been steadily rising for a number of years now; in the year ending 26 February, the

average number of servings motivated by health jumped from 29.9 billion every 12 weeks to 30.7 billion, a rise of 2.7%.

Brits are also adopting a more positive approach to healthy eating, with choices motivated by a desire for a more varied and natural diet on the rise. Calorie and portion control, meanwhile, is losing its importance to consumers.

KANTAR WORLD PANEL

This snapshot was produced by Kantar Worldpanel. Kantar Worldpanel monitors the grocery retailer take-home purchasing habits of 30,000 demographically representative British households. Call 020 8967 0007 or visit www.kantarworldpanel.com for details

“It’s harder for people to get their protein in the morning in a way that’s quick and easy”

“quality milk and authentic live cultures, it is an excellent source of calcium, phosphorus and B vitamins,” says MD Natasha Bowes. “These help our bodies, our digestive system and skin in particular, and deal with the daily stresses of life, helping us to look as youthful as we all feel.”

There’s some evidence to suggest that food & drink with beauty benefits could have mainstream appeal. After all, what has undoubtedly been the biggest functional food trend of recent years, protein, has in part been fuelled by consumers’ desire to develop bigger muscles and look good with their kit off.

Take Maxinutrition, the sports brand that last year ran its second ever 30-day Ibiza Challenge, a marketing push that attracted more than 900 entrants who submitted before and after pictures of their missions to get buff for the beach to be in with a chance to win an all expenses paid trip to the party island. The brand says it was one of its most successful campaigns ever.

Protein

Of course it’s not just posers who have driven the protein trend. Everyone from sports nuts to people with a more general interest in health have been key, as brands have capitalised on the belief that higher protein food can keep you feeling sated for longer, as well as aiding muscle recovery after exercise.

Weetabix has tapped the trend with the launch of Protein Crunch in 2016 and Weetabix Protein this year. Driven by in-store promotions and TV ads, the brand says it now accounts for more than half of the protein cereal category with sales of £7.3m. “It’s much harder for people to get their protein sources in the morning (compared to lunch and dinner) in a way that is quick and easy to prepare and eat, so we wanted to create a product that offers all of those credentials as well as being a strong fibre source,” says head of brand Kevin Verbruggen.

Weetabix has also benefited from strong sales of breakfast drink Weetabix On The Go. The brand, which launched an added protein spin-off last year, says the range is now worth £24m. To date, the brand has shifted 40 million bottles with 75% year-on-year growth. In March it added a new chocolate flavour to its Weetabix On The Go Protein range.

Bread brands are also paying protein attention. Warburtons, for example, launched

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Botanic Lab Reset+

Launched: July 2017 **Manufacturer:** Botanic Lab

Botanic Lab makes some bold claims about its latest launch. Reset+ is a hypertonic sports recovery drink, meaning it's packed with salts and carbohydrates to top up muscle energy after exercise. A few things set the electrolyte-rich concoction apart from its rivals: it contains no refined sugar or synthetic ingredients and is based on citrulline-rich cold-pressed watermelon to accelerate lactic acid removal; green tea gives a 30mg caffeine boost. Such claims come at a price: £3.99 for just 250ml.

“Functional teas are important to our strategy to reignite passion in tea”

☞ a range of protein-packed baked goods last September. The lines are baked with a blend of pulses and grains, and include high protein bread, wraps and sandwich thins. According to Nielsen, the range had racked up just over £2m by the end of the year.

Bread with benefits

“It became clear to us that there was real demand for a protein-packed option that tastes like normal bakery,” says innovation & product marketing director Darren Littler. “The protein range was introduced as a direct response to this, making it easy and convenient for today’s consumers to consume more protein as part of their daily routine.”

It makes sense that bakers should go down this route, given that bread has suffered partly from the current vogue for low-carb, high-protein diets. Hovis, meanwhile, has added more wheat protein and fibre, it claims, to replace 30% of the carbohydrates normally found in bread. The new Lower Carb range, launched last month, comes in White, Wholemeal and Seeded.

Added functionality is increasingly seen as a way of rekindling consumer interest in struggling sectors. Bread, after all, suffered the third greatest sector loss in grocery last year [The Grocer’s Top Products 2016]. Milk is another sector that could cash in on the functionality trend, says Scott Wotherspoon, CEO of the A2 Milk Company, whose product is derived from selected cows that produce milk containing A2 beta casein protein for people who have difficulty digesting regular milk.

“Our key aim is to bring Britain back to one of the most nutritionally beneficial products – for growth, bone health and sports recovery,” he says “Currently, one in five Brits do not get on with dairy, and milk has been in long-term, per capita decline.

Functionality could also help rescue tea, which has been in decline for years, as a growing number of the sector’s biggest names, including Tetley and Clipper, market their products on their additional benefits. Tetley followed up the 2015 launch of its Super Everyday Tea range, which includes a line with added caffeine to aid concentration and another with added vitamin C to boost the immune system, with the introduction this month of Tetley Super Green Sunshine, a green tea with added vitamin D to help in the fight against bone and muscle disease. ☞

Linwoods Hemp Protein+

Launched: March 2017
Manufacturer: Linwoods

Linwoods Hemp Protein+ blend (rsp: £16.99/360g) provides a natural source of protein, helping fuel the body with essential energy-boosting nutrients and heart-healthy compounds. The new range consists of three nutritious hemp protein blends with added-value ingredients such as flaxseed and chia seed.



Little Miracles with Mate & Baobab

Launched: May 2017
Manufacturer: Little Miracles

Capitalising on the growth of ice tea, Organic Little Miracles with Mate & Baobab (rsp: £1.59/330ml) draws on the functional benefits of its three core ingredients. Mate combines the strength of coffee and the health benefits of tea, while ginger is packed with antioxidants and baobab and is rich in nutrients, fibre and vitamin C.



Tetley Super Green Sunshine tea

Launched: July 2017
Manufacturer: Tata Global Beverages

With vitamin D sales booming after warnings that one in five Brits are at risk of deficiency, the Tetley Tea Folk have spotted an opportunity, blending green tea with lemon, orange and an extra hit of vit D. On pack, it features approved health claims about helping to support healthy bones and teeth. Rsp: £1.79/40g.



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“Functional teas are important to our strategy to reignite consumer passion for tea,” says director of customer and shopper marketing Peter Dries. “With health being the overriding trend in consumer demand for the past two decades, tea is now a valuable offering and teas with functional benefits have double the impact.”

Soft drinks

One of the biggest beneficiaries of growing interest in functional food & drink has been the soft drinks sector. By adding exotic new fruit and vegetable blends and using techniques such as cold-pressing, brands such as Innocent and PepsiCo’s Naked Juice, which launched Naked Pressed in April, have tapped this burgeoning market.

“Our brand is all about the latest ingredients, convenience and premium taste, so we’re delighted to be introducing Naked Pressed into the chilled fruit juice category,” says senior innovation manager Sally Grout. “We also know that consumers have their finger on the pulse when it comes to new juice trends, so it’s important that we are continuing to offer the latest innovation, while putting our own ‘trendy’ twist on it.”

Following on from the 2014 launch of Innocent Super Smoothies – a range claimed to ‘energise, recharge and invigorate’ – the brand launched Super Juices in February. The trio contains mixes of fruit, veg and trendy ingredients such as goji berries and spirulina.

“The success of functional drinks with added benefits within chilled juice is particularly exciting for us,” said Innocent head of marketing Stephanie Case at the time. “We’re confident this will inspire growth back into the not-from-concentrate juice sector. The three delicious recipes, boosted with vitamins C & E – two of the best known antioxidants – and vitamins B1, B2, B3, B6 to help reduce tiredness and fatigue, are perfectly positioned to reinvigorate the category.”

There’s no shortage of smaller players looking to cash in, either. Chia-based drinks brand Wow Food & Drinks, which last year won Europe-wide approval to use chia seeds in its cold-pressed fruit & veg juices, says its products deliver on protein, fibre and omega-3. Functional water brand POW, meanwhile, uses caffeine from guarana to energise its products and capitalise on the sugar backlash that’s impacting the wider sector.

“Consumers are definitely starting to question the levels of sugar in products that are perceived as natural,” says founder Ed Woolner. “So for us it’s really a matter of distinguishing yourself from those products that are stacked full of sugar and don’t actually have any functional benefit at all.”

With shoppers increasingly asking for more from their food & drink than mere satiety, this will be a growing concern for others, too. ●



Nurture Fruity Water+ Apple & Blackcurrant

Launched: September 2017 **Manufacturer:** Natural Immune Products

Targeted at young children (from one year) with added nutrients to support immunity and lower naturally occurring sugar, Nurture Fruity Water+ Apple & Blackcurrant (rsp: 99p/200ml) is made with 45% natural juice and 55% water, as well as nutrients that support immunity, bones and teeth (scientifically proven with EU health claims). The drink includes Wellmune (a natural food and beverage ingredient used to boost the immune system and help keep the body healthy) as a key added ingredient.



Wild Trail Carrot Cake snack bar

Launched: September 2017
Manufacturer: Wild Trail

Wild Trail is set to launch its new Carrot Cake fruit, vegetable and nut snack bar (rsp: £1/46g individual bars; £2.50/4x30g multipack cartons), adding a fourth flavour to its range of bars. Made with cashews, raisins, gluten-free oats, dried carrot pieces and ground cinnamon, the bar is also gluten and dairy free, with no added sugar.



Kefir Strawberry & Grapefruit

Launched: June 2017
Manufacturer: Bio-tiful

Bio-tiful Strawberry & Grapefruit Kefir Smoothie (rsp: £1.60/250ml) is made from British whole milk and authentic live kefir cultures. Naturally packed with billions of gut-friendly bacteria, it is high in protein and calcium. It is a source of essential vitamins that contribute to the immune system and lactose digestion.



LighterLife Chocolate Mug Cake

Launched: January 2017
Manufacturer: LighterLife

LighterLife Chocolate Mug Cake (rsp: £2.25/42g) is the latest addition to the brand’s range of fortified nutritious products. At 153 kcal, this rich and indulgent cake is high in protein, is a source of fibre and contains one quarter of the reference intake of essential vitamins and minerals including calcium, iron, magnesium and potassium.