

Reigning in **WEIGHT WITH WHEY**

Many consumers say satiety, the feeling of fullness after eating or drinking, is important when making food and beverage choices, according to a 2008 survey conducted by The NPD Group for Dairy Management Inc.™ (DMI). In addition, 67% of these consumers stated that feeling full was important to them, when trying to lose weight.¹ With U.S. obesity rates at an all-time high,² the opportunity for food and beverage manufacturers to target health-conscious consumers is greater than ever before.

“Helping consumers find new, natural ways to curb their hunger is a very appealing message,” said Laura Gottschalk, vice president, U.S. Manufacturing and Ingredient Marketing for DMI. “Using whey protein as an ingredient in products is a way for food and beverage manufacturers to reach out to these consumers.”

Research has shown that consuming a higher protein diet is an excellent way for people to feel fuller longer, and feeling full can help eliminate the desire to reach for unnecessary snacks between meals. In addition, calorie for calorie, consuming protein can increase the feeling of fullness more than carbohydrates or fats.³

“The feeling of fullness, or satiety, that comes with diets higher in protein may lead to a subsequent decrease in *ad libitum* caloric intake, which, over time, may help with weight management,” said Matt Pikosky, Ph.D., R.D., director of research transfer for DMI.

In the same NPD Group survey, many consumers said adding whey protein to a food would have a positive effect on their purchase interest.⁴

Food and beverage manufacturers already realize that including whey protein in formulations is an easy way to boost the protein content of their products. Over the last six years, more than 4,100 new food and beverage products containing whey protein ingredients were introduced on the U.S. retail market⁵. Today’s consumers can find ways to boost their protein intake throughout the day by enjoying protein-enhanced products, such as oatmeal, yogurt, nutrition bars, flavored beverages and water.

The Functionality of Whey Protein

Whey protein also has many valuable functional properties for formulators. This natural dairy protein works well in many beverage formulations because of its high solubility and stability in the pH range of 3.0-4.5. Whey protein has a clean, neutral taste and can be customized to create viscosity for thickening soups, dips and yogurt, and browning/sweetness for bars and confections.



© ISTOCKPHOTO/ELKE DENNIS

Whey protein has a clean, neutral taste and can be customized to create viscosity for thickening beverages, soups, dips and yogurt; it also contributes browning/sweetness properties to bars and confections.

According to Pikosky and Gottschalk, research is continuing to reveal the positive relationship between dietary protein and satiety. **NS**

—Mary Higgins, Dairy Management Inc.

References:

- ¹ Satiety and the Consumer, Dairy Management Inc.™ July 28, 2008.
- ² Obesity, Halting the Epidemic by Making Health Easier, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2009.
- ³ Institute of Medicine: Dietary reference intakes for energy, carbohydrate, fiber, fat, fatty acids, cholesterol, protein and amino acids. Washington D.C.: National Academies Press, 2005.
- ⁴ Satiety and the Consumer, Dairy Management Inc.™ July 28, 2008.
- ⁵ Mintel International Group, Ltd., database search, April 2009.

Mary Higgins is vice president of U.S. Manufacturing and Ingredient Marketing for Dairy Management Inc.™ Higgins previously developed value-added protein and hydrolyzed protein products for food and agricultural uses. For the latest information on whey protein and other dairy ingredients, and to learn more about related research, visit InnovateWithDairy.com or e-mail techsupport@innovatewithdairy.com.