



Consumers in Latin America are Cleaning up their Diets for Better Health

Parsippany, NJ – November 12, 2020 - A survey conducted by Haystack on behalf of BENE¹, a leading provider of functional ingredients, has shown that cleaner and natural ingredients with proven health benefits play a key role in consumers' purchasing decisions in Latin America. The quantitative survey was conducted in Brazil, Colombia and Mexicoⁱ. With three in five consumers screening the nutritional information and ingredients list before buying new food or drinks to make conscious food choices, a clear and transparent communication on pack is key for success.

It also became clear that Latin American consumers are aware of the importance of healthy nutrition: one in three consumers pays high attention to a healthy diet and almost four in five consider health aspects when buying food. These results show that healthy nutrition is a vital part of a healthy lifestyle and stresses the existing consumer awareness of the link between nutrition and health.

Controlled blood sugar levels support long-term health

This trend is also reflected by the fact that blood sugar management plays an important role to Latin American consumers: Three in four believe that foods and beverage products that cause a lower blood glucose rise are healthier. For more than one in three respondents, improved blood sugar levels have become more important over the last year. With Brazil and Mexico being in the top ten (5th and 6th) of countries worldwide in terms of diabetes casesⁱⁱ, it is no surprise that awareness of the importance of having balanced blood sugar levels for an overall health is becoming so important in the mind of Latin American consumers.

¹ BENE¹ Nutrition & Health survey LATAM 2020

Having healthy blood glucose levels is very relevant to health and the prevention of lifestyle-related diseases since high blood glucose levels - even for a short time - can harm immunity.

With the increasing number of Latin American consumers actively looking for products that help them to keep their blood glucose at a lower, more balanced level, food manufacturers need to formulate foods considering a reduction or lowering impact on blood sugar levels. And communication about the benefits through food labeling is vital. The survey results show that half of the consumer are convinced by the claim “lower, more gentle impact on blood sugar levels.”

Palatinose™ is a slowly digestible sugar that is utilized by the body in a slow and more balanced way compared to sucrose. Thus, it is effective to reduce the glycemic response of foods. It is derived from sugar beet and is BENEÓ's trade name for isomaltulose, which occurs naturally in honey. It has a mild sweet taste, sugar-like but less sweet, allowing flavors (instead of sweetness) to dominate. It is used in recipes in just the same way as sugar is normally used. It can also replace maltodextrin, a very high glycemic carbohydrate, in many food applications.

The beneficial effect of Palatinose™ on the blood glucose levels has been demonstrated in various human clinical studies.

Natural ingredients that meet technical challenges

The survey results also revealed that Latin American consumers are increasingly looking for foods and drinks that are free from artificial ingredients and minimally processed to improve their diet. Three in four say that foods with natural ingredients and/or cleaner label are healthier (and safer) for them and a large majority (80%) wants to know more about the ingredients in their products.

Answering Latin American consumer demand for cleaner labels can be a technical challenge, as new formulations may result in unsatisfying and undesired stability and texture. BENEÓ's functional native starch Rempure can help manufacturers tap into the rising demand for clean and transparent labelling. The company's clean label rice starches have proven successful as a texturizer in versatile applications that can be creamy, crispy, crunchy, soft or smoothy.

Juliana Hirata, Sales Manager South and Central America, comments: “The research results show that consumers in Latin America are looking for food and drink products

that support a healthier lifestyle in the long run. Clean and simple labels, natural and trustworthy ingredients are powerful purchasing motivators here. As the pandemic has underlined the importance of managing diets for better health, consumers want to make consciously healthier choices now, more than ever, so we expect this trend to increase even further. BENEО's versatile portfolio of plant-based and functional ingredients with proven benefits offers manufacturers various possibilities to develop healthier products with credible and transparent communication."

About BENEО

For further information on BENEО and its ingredients, please visit: www.beneo.com and www.beneonews.com or follow BENEО on Twitter: @_BENEО or LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/beneo

BENEО has long-term experience in developing and producing ingredients from natural sources for food, feed and pharmaceutical products. These plant-based functional ingredients help improve the nutritional and technical properties of a wide variety of products, by supporting health and optimizing taste and texture. The Company's portfolio includes functional carbohydrates from sugar beet, prebiotic chicory root fiber, plant-based proteins and speciality ingredients from rice. Through a unique chain of expertise, including the BENEО-Institute that provides decisive insights into nutrition science and legislation, and the BENEО-Technology Center that consults in application technology, BENEО supports customers by providing ingredients that promote a healthy lifestyle in a holistic way.

Formed in 2007, **BENEО** is active in over 80 countries, employs more than 1,000 people and has five state-of-the-art production sites in Belgium, Chile, Germany and Italy.

www.BENEО.com

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ⁱ This survey was done before the Covid-19 pandemic.

ⁱⁱ IDF Diabetes Atlas 2019