

Opportunities to Provide Wellness and Vitality

Modern lifestyles and poor diets are linked to an overweight population with chronic inflammation and a lack of wellness and vitality. Consumers react to potential paths of improvement in a number of ways and food companies seek to provide products to address shoppers' interests in new offerings.

The belief that current raw materials and farming practices are related to the problem has led to the resurgence of ancient grains (e.g., quinoa, chia seed), heirloom vegetables grown without pesticides, and pasture-fed

to the discoveries of polyphenols, peptides, oligosaccharides, lipids, fibers, and bacteria that can be marketed. However, a health claim on a bioactive chemical or food extract typically involves a requirement to consume more than what you would need if you received the benefit from numerous bioactives coming from a variety of whole foods in the diet. Thus, a supplement approach stimulates research that generates questions about the safety of bioactives, creating consumer confusion and limited appeal. Supplements are valued as people seek to bring their

heterocyclic amines, acrylamide) and lack gut-protective nutrients relative to fresh vegetables and berries.

Studies of healthful populations and experiences of people who maintain healthy weights and wellness support a diet of fresh, minimally processed, mostly plant-based whole foods (fruits, berries, vegetables, legumes, nuts, grains, spices, and herbs). Thus, there is an opportunity to make these foods more convenient and delicious. This can be seen in the growth of plant-based beverages, seasoned salads, and oatmeal

consumers to make good choices, while scientists continue to discover all of the intrinsic and process-generated compounds responsible for the benefits and limitations of various options that were verified over time.

Consumers want to know food providers and the experiences of other people, as evidenced by the rapidly growing use of social networking via the Internet—the new “word-of-mouth.” Questions are asked about the producers’ and retailers’ records of quality, impacts on the environment, and the impact on the health and emotional well-being of their consumers. Companies that are good stewards of the intrinsic value of foods, water, land, and communities of people with a multi-generational view can be an attractive source of well-being.

The frontiers of the aforementioned efforts to provide wellness and vitality are wide open for discovery and satisfaction as the value of foods and meals are continuously uncovered and as they are combined in elegant fashions in formats that offer a valued experience. It is a privilege for us to participate in these endeavors and we should support them with our resources and encourage young people to apply their gifts to such a noble adventure. **FT**

animals lacking antibiotic treatment. A challenge is to verify benefits to motivate consumers to pay more for food.

People do not easily change from an overconsumption of convenient, low cost, and sensual diets (e.g., fried potatoes and soda). A strategy for improvement is to supplement the diets with nutritional beverages and bars enriched with micronutrients, probiotics, fiber, or food fractions having a claim backed by scientific studies (e.g., DHA, sterols, bifidobacteria, cumin, beta-glucan, vitamin D, calcium, soy protein). Medical foods and pills also are created to help address specific issues associated with a poor diet such as declining mental and physical functions.

There appears to be no end

body back into balance after a signal of pain alerts them to the beginning of a potentially serious problem. A challenge is to move people away from the need for supplements and achieve sustained wellness and vitality.

It can be beneficial to replace some of the sugar and fat of processed foods with lower calorie sources of functionality (e.g., non-caloric sweetener, fiber). However, this approach may encourage a habit of regular indulgence of foods that may be better reserved for limited occasions (e.g., grilled/fried meat, processed cheese, cakes, cookies, chips, and crackers). Reduced-calorie versions of some foods may still contain significant levels of pro-inflammatory compounds (e.g., bacterial endotoxins,

with nuts and berries in grocery stores and foodservice outlets.

Brands of foods and meal providers can gain credibility by having high standards for seed varieties, prepared foods and meals through certification services, culinary expertise, bioactivity and nutrient indexes, and clinical verification that the health-related properties of the products result in improved physical and mental well-being. Challenges include the ability to predict exceptional clinical results among numerous possible formulations/meals, limiting development costs. In this regard, it will be useful to apply improved scientific tools to select products based on healthful bioactivities. Brands backed by these new levels of standards can help make it easier for

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