



Press Information

South Koreans serve up soy soup in carton packs

Soy soup snack in *combiblocMini*: a new product for modern nomads

July 2006. Soy has been an essential part of the Asian diet for hundreds of years. Now the most protein-rich of all cultivated plants is enjoying growing popularity on the global market, too. Worldwide, soy has developed into one of the most in-demand products in the nutrition and beverages sector. Hanmi Whole Soymilk Co. Ltd has recently launched a new concept in soups on the South Korean market. Rich in valuable fibre, KongGukMul brand soy soup is served hot with noodles for breakfast.

This innovative concept in ready-meals appeals particularly to the health-conscious consumer, a growing segment in marketing terms. Due to its preventive action against numerous illnesses – particularly cancer, osteoporosis and coronary blood vessel diseases – soy is hailed as a 'natural functional food'.

Since the health-promoting properties of soy products were confirmed by the US Food and Drugs Administration in 1999, manufacturers have been queuing up to profit from the growth in the soy products market, with a forecast volume for the 2007 year of USD 8 billion. The biggest growth is expected in the market for milk, yoghurt and ice cream substitutes. Soy milk alone generates annual worldwide sales in excess of USD 800 million. Experts predict a yearly growth potential for the market of 13 to 20 per cent. This equates to more than four billion litres of packaged and ready-to-drink soy milk in 2007.

On everyone's lips

The Western European market is recording steady growth in sales of soy products, especially soy drinks, despite per capita consumption remaining at a fairly low level: 28 per cent of Europeans consume soy or soy drinks one or more times a week. For North and South America, the world's largest soy producers (the US share in the world market is 30 per cent, followed by Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay), at an estimated 19 per cent, the predicted growth rate is six percentage points above global market growth. Estimates are based on a forecast consumption increase of ten to 20 per cent in the USA.

In Australia, where more than 80 per cent of ready-to-drink soy products in aseptic carton packaging are sold, the market is growing at an annual rate of ten per cent, and is expected to reach a volume of 99 million litres in 2007.

In most parts of Asia, demand for soy products remains high. The Asian palate is accustomed to the 'beany' taste of soy beans, and appreciates this distinctive flavour. Unlike in other countries, therefore, no additives are necessary to disguise the natural flavour of the soup. The strategic microsegmentation of markets is nowhere so obvious as in Asia, where 76 per cent of all soy products are sold and consumed. Markets in which consumption is traditionally high, such as Korea and Malaysia, offer soy products in innovative forms, thereby developing new target groups. Faced with growing demand for increasingly sophisticated products in what is per capita the world's biggest sales market, it is particularly important for Asian manufacturers that their products be geared to appeal to the right consumer groups at the right time.

Given the incredible ongoing growth of this market, manufacturers are having to use innovation and differentiation to make themselves stand out from the competition. The optimal combination of product and packaging will continue be of crucial importance in enabling manufacturers to take full advantage of the potential of this largely untapped market.

The new Hanmi soup snack, which has the consistency of a light broth, is packaged in the slim, aseptic combibloc *Mini* carton pack from SIG Combibloc. The packaging makes it possible to transport the product easily and securely. Consumers who are very hungry, and anyone who is in a rush, can also drink the soup snack directly from the carton using a straw. It is also suitable for use as a meal replacement and as a supplement to a balanced, nutrient-rich diet. So Hanmi soy soup is the perfect alternative for the 'modern nomad' – working people who have less and less time at their disposal and do not want to squander this precious commodity with time-consuming cooking.

Caption:

Hanmi Whole Soymilk Co. Ltd has launched a new concept in soup on the South Korean market. Rich in valuable fibre, KongGukMul brand soy soup is served hot with noodles for breakfast.

Photo: SIG Combibloc

SIG Combibloc is one of the world's leading systems suppliers of carton packaging and filling machines for beverages and food. Employing approx. 3,940 people, the company recorded sales of EUR 1,097 million in 2005. SIG Combibloc is a division of SIG Holding AG, Neuhausen am Rheinfall.

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