

Missed Macronutrient Opportunities

The widespread misconception that consumers have lost interest in macronutrients including fat, carbohydrates, calories, and cholesterol is causing many food marketers to overlook some of the fastest-growing opportunities in the healthy foods sector.

The Nielsen Co. reports that sales of foods/drinks with a low-fat/reduced-fat claim reached \$46 billion in 2009, and sales of reduced-calorie products totaled \$11.7 billion. In 2010, 25% of the

soar. The Dietary Guidelines also advocate consumption of liquid vs solid forms of fat, and consumers seem to understand this concept; according to the FMI survey, hydrogenated oils are among the ingredients that consumers frequently check for on the label.

The Hartman Group reports that 40% of consumers ages 18–33 were very concerned about their cholesterol level in 2010, and 65% of Gen Xers and 67% of Baby Boomers had similar concerns. “Lowers cholesterol”

calorie products.

In 2010, 39% of adults tried to manage their weight, according to Packaged Facts’ *Weight Management Trends in the U.S.* 2010 report. One in five adults counts calories; this includes 48% of dieters and 23% of those trying to maintain weight. The percentage of moms in Gallup’s 2010 survey who say they are making a strong effort to cut calories in their kids’ diet is nearly the same as those trying to increase their calorie level (14% vs 17%).

Council (IFIC).

Protein has a healthy halo. More than half of Gen Yers, 64% of Gen Xers, and 65% of Baby Boomers tried to increase their protein intake in 2010, according to the Hartman Group. Just over one-third (37%) looked for high protein on the nutrition label in 2010, IFIC reports.

Eating a lot of protein is the fifth most important component of healthy eating for adults, right after vegetables, fruit, less processed foods, and less saturated fat, according to a 2009 Mintel

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best-selling new foods/drinks carried a low-calorie claim, and the same percentage made a lower-fat/fat-free claim, according to SymphonyIRI’s 2011 *New Product Pacesetters* report.

Saturated fat content is a key consumer concern. Asked about what they seek out on the nutrition facts label, 59% of those polled in the Food Marketing Institute’s *U.S. Grocery Shopper Trends* 2011 survey said saturated fat was a very important consideration, up 4% over 2010. In addition, 58% consider *trans* fat content to be very important, up 3% over 2010.

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is tied with “weight loss” as the most desired functional food benefit, according to Mintel research data.

With 23% of teens having cholesterol levels over 200 mg/dL and pediatricians conducting lipid profiles on children as young as 2 years of age, expect a proliferation of low-fat kids’ products to be a marketplace reality. One-third of moms are making a strong effort to limit their children’s intake of cholesterol, 24% limit *trans* fats, and 22% total fat, according to the 2010 *Gallup Study of Children’s Eating Behaviors*.

In 2011, calories ranked fifth in terms of food label information consumers considered very important, according to FMI; 40% of shoppers polled for FMI’s 2010 study regularly sought out low-

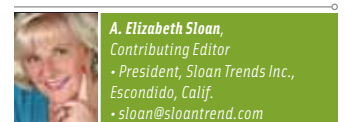
The advent of nutrition labeling in restaurants has also spurred interest in calories. According to foodservice research company Technomic Inc., 61% of diners chose lower-calorie menu items after seeing posted nutritional values.

In 2010, 41% of grocery shoppers sought out low-sugar foods/beverages, and 27% looked for low-carb products, according to FMI. Those making a strong effort to limit carbs stayed relatively steady—23% of adults in 2007 vs 21% in 2010, but declined among dieters (39% vs 33%), according to the 2010 *Gallup Study of Weight Management*. One in five consumers believes calories from carbs cause weight gain, according to the 2010 *Food & Health* survey from the International Food Information

report titled *Attitudes Towards Food: Weight and Diet—U.S.*

Consumers link protein to a wide variety of health benefits: 68% believe protein builds muscle, 40% think it helps you feel full, 37% say it aids weight loss, and 35% find it beneficial as people age, according to IFIC.

A Gallup study found that among current dieters, those making a strong effort to increase their protein intake rose from 50% in 2007 to 55% in 2010. And about one-third of moms surveyed by Gallup in 2010 say they made a strong effort to increase protein in their children’s diet. **FT**



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