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CALCIUM FORTIFIED HEALTH DRINK

The combination of solubilised calcium and oligofructose offers the opportunity to market a unique product of non-dairy origin, targeting a broad group of consumers that would benefit from increased calcium and improved intestinal health.

Very recently ANZFA changed the ruling on soluble dietary fibres such as oligofructose and inulin so that they can now be included as fibre on nutritional labels. They were previously disallowed because the test method for fibres did not detect them as such. However industry groups have argued for many years that the body recognises them as fibres and provision should be made in the regulations to allow them as fibres. Most other developed countries have recognised them as fibres for some time and now the Australian regulators have finally agreed that their previous ruling was too rigid. One argument put forward was that Australian consumers were being denied the benefit of soluble dietary fibre because in many cases manufacturers were reluctant to use it on the basis that it did not enhance the value of their product. Previously soluble dietary fibres were incorporated under the broad banner of carbohydrate. Why would consumers buy a product that cost more and contained extra carbohydrate? Fortunately this has now changed and manufacturers are presented with a wonderful opportunity to nutritionally enhance a variety of products.

We have chosen oligofructose for this product because it substantially adds to the overall impact, increasing calcium absorption and providing valuable soluble dietary fibre. The combined message of these two ingredients is very complimentary and should have strong appeal to the target audience concerned about osteoporosis and intestinal health.

Dietary fructans are fermented in the large intestine, resulting in bifidus stimulation and production of short chain fatty acids. This leads to better resistance to pathogens, reduction in blood lipids and the risk of coronary heart disease, antitumor properties, hormonal regulation and immune stimulation. There is also an increase in the absorption of calcium and magnesium in the large intestine, as well as an increased calcium uptake into the bone tissue, resulting in improved bone mineral density.

At the moment there is little or nothing on the market of non-dairy origin that contains oligofructose and calcium. This combination in a fruity background produces a highly desirable healthy drink that should appeal to a broad audience from teenagers through to the elderly.