

## Confectionery Fortification

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As today's consumers want limitless access to snacks and confectionery, product stability throughout the supply chain is crucial. Choosing the right ingredients helps in preventing stickiness and loss of flavor over time, thereby guaranteeing the quality of the product during its shelf life. Sweets with functional and health benefits remains popular, and is particularly focused towards children. It provides a suitable delivery system for minerals, which can be used to differentiate as an added-value product. An obsession with sweets, alongside a seemingly antithetical focus on health and wellness, has led to the evolution of the functional confectionery category.

Herbs in particular are of rising importance to the confectionery industry. They have been used traditionally in throat-soothing candies and sweets for decades. Herbs add flavor to all food forms, including confectionery, and with their healthy image, they can also be considered "trendy" ingredients. The use of herbs in confectionery products range from throat, cough and sinus remedies, to digestive, dental/gum care and immune stimulation products. In addition, newly discovered benefits of traditional ingredients, such as the antioxidant power of the flavanols contained in chocolate, increase consumer appeal and move the segment away from its image of guilty indulgence and unhealthy calories. Other culinary herbs combine taste with functionality, such as mint, sage, thyme, rosemary, cumin, anise, fennel, coriander and the aforementioned ginger; they all have some in vitro anticancer effects. Herbs like rosemary, sage, oregano, thyme, onions and garlic act as antioxidants and protect from LDL oxidation, reducing the risk for cardiovascular disease. Lemongrass, fenugreek, linseed and garlic help lower cholesterol, and ginger helps fight motion sickness.

Vitamins and minerals. As the global market for sugar confectionery offering functional health benefits has expanded, so too has the range of products that are enriched with various vitamins and minerals. While demand for sugar free sweets continues to increase in many parts of the world (largely as a result of factors such as health concerns and pressure from the authorities to reformulate), some manufacturers are also looking towards the functional foods category as a way of improving the nutritional profile of their respective products.

One of the largest and most well developed sectors is the market for sugar confectionery enriched with additional vitamins (eg vitamin C) and/or minerals (eg calcium). These products have emerged in sectors of the sugar confectionery market such as boiled sweets and chewy/gummi products.

**Conclusion.** Ongoing health concerns mean that confectionery manufacturers are likely to keep seeking ways to improve the nutritional qualities of their products. However, for the time being it seems that confectionery is likely to remain a niche within the global functional foods industry, at least until scientific research is sufficiently developed to allow definitive health claims to be made.

## References

1. [www.candyindustry.com/articles/new-functional-confectionery-products](http://www.candyindustry.com/articles/new-functional-confectionery-products)
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