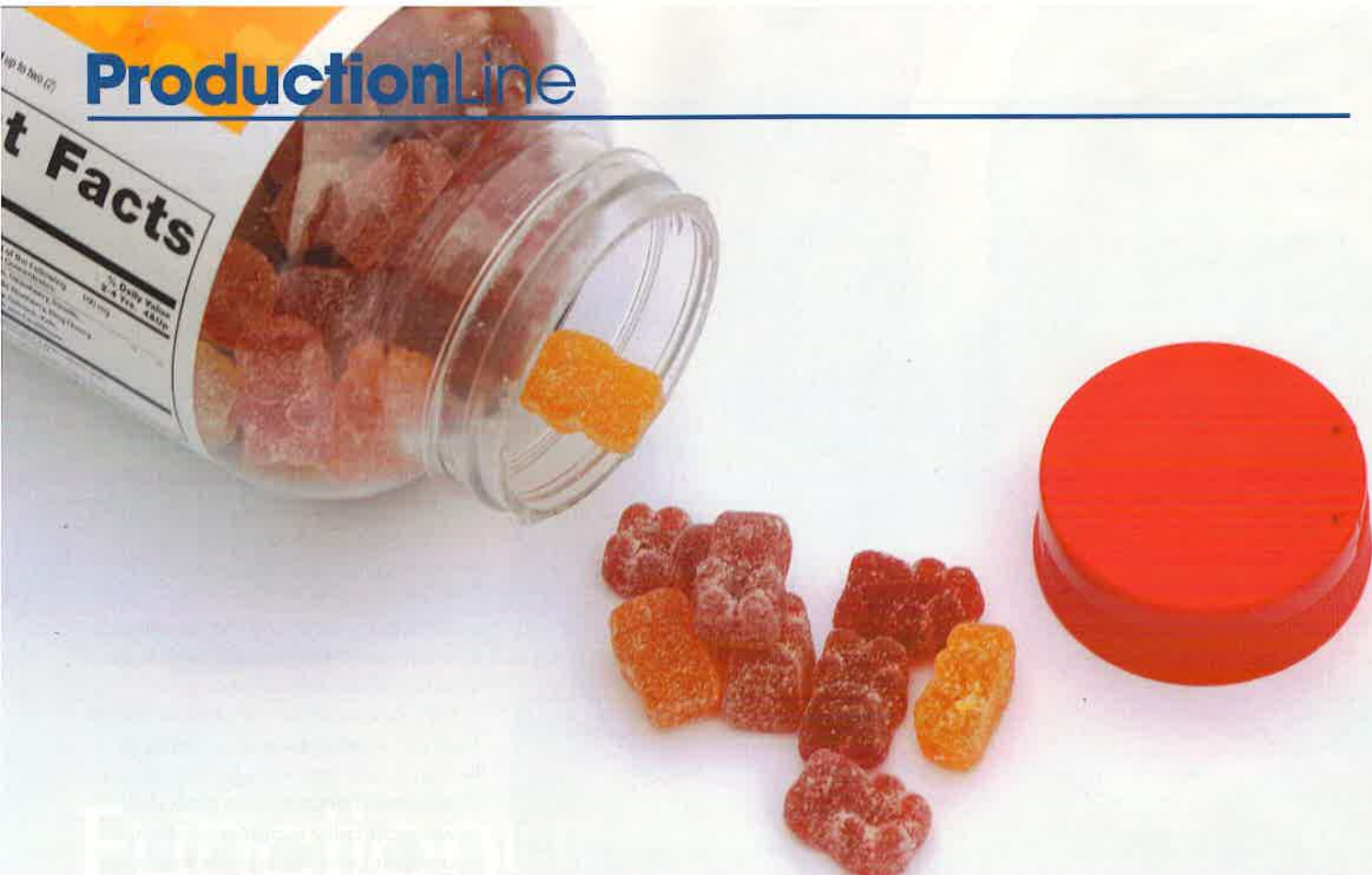


Fact Facts

Net Weight 100g (3.52oz)
Daily Value
% Daily Value
Total Sugars 10g 20%



Gummy-ing Up the Works

Having long since moved out of the candy aisle, gummy formulations now cross over into adult usage.

By Paul Bubny

Multivitamins as gummy formulations are ideal for (blank) because (blank) don't like the taste and texture of conventional capsules or tablets, find them difficult to swallow, need the motivation of a little candy-coating on their nutritional supplements to take them regularly, welcome

the convenience of being able to chew on a multi while commuting to work or driving the kids to school ...

Hold on. That last factor almost makes it sound as though the correct word to fill in the blanks would be "adults." This is in fact correct: although not all adults are as picky about swallowing pills as chil-

dren are, manufacturers have determined there's enough of a potential market to introduce gummy vitamins for big people.

As Doug Hopkinson, executive vice president of sales and R&D at contract manufacturer Santa Cruz Nutritionals (Santa Cruz, CA), put it, "The gummy delivery system is an alternative to pills and tablets. It is preferred by a rapidly increasing number of consumers who appreciate the convenience of taking a supplement without the need for a glass of water or the difficulty of swallowing a large tablet." Jeff Hilton, partner and co-founder of the Integrated

Marketing Group (Salt Lake City, UT), has hailed the crossover from children's to adult formulas as a prime supplement industry example of innovative thinking.

At their core, gummy supplements for children and adults share the same basic stuff. Call it an enlightened version of the same manufacturing process that brings gummy bears to candy stores and movie theater concession stands, without the artificial colors, sweeteners, preservatives or flavors. The ingredients list of a gummy supplement might include—as do the gummy supplements of Rainbow Light Nutritional Systems (Santa Cruz, CA)—glucose syrup, cane sugar, water, gelatin and agar agar.

Where children's and adults' gummies differ is in their nutrient content. Gummy supplements for adults may be formulated for specific concerns such as heart health or joint function—matters that aren't nearly as important to kids. It's not as simple as popping two or three children's gummies to get an adult dosage—tempting as that may be for some consumers.

In April 2008, branded manufacturer Hero Nutritionals, maker of Yummi Bears products for children since the 1990s, launched its Slice of Life line for adults. The line was introduced with five different products; a sixth was introduced earlier this year. Included in the line are Multivitamin with Lycopene; Vitamin C with Pomegranate; a fish oil-free complex of omega-3, 6 and 9; CoQ10; Energy with B12; and the newest, Vitamin D3.

"Our customer care team reported that mom after mom would rave about how easy it was to get their kids to take vitamins thanks to Yummi Bears. They would invariably end conversations by inquiring about a similar product for themselves," Jennifer Hodges, founder and CEO of Hero Nutritionals, said last year when the Slice of Life line made its debut. "This direct demand from the market ideally matched our corporate culture."

A Family Gathering

Not all gummy formulations represent an either/or proposition—some have been devised for both children and

adults. In October, for example, Rainbow Light introduced Gummy Get Well Soothing Herbal Drops and Fiber Garden Gummies Fiber, Fruits and Veggies.

Although the former is intended primarily to ease kids' cold symptoms, its 1,000mg of vitamin C could help boost an adult immune system as well. The fiber gummies are pitched to all age groups, and particularly to adults with pre-diabetes, according to Rainbow Light, since dietary fiber helps reduce after-meal elevations of blood sugar.

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Since gummy supplements need to be palatable if they're going to be successful, it follows that a manufacturer would make adjustments to local tastes when taking the concept into an entirely new market. In September, La Puente, CA-based Niusule Biotech Corp. launched its Niusule Gummy Bears nutritional products in China, rolling the line out in Zhejiang Province, where its PlantFusion protein products have been sold since July of this year. The company's R&D team modified the gummy bear formula to make the flavors more suitable and appealing to Chinese consumers.

Manufactured under contract by Santa Cruz Nutritionals, which has been in the gummybear game longer than most, Niusule's Gummy Bears include both a multivitamin and a formula fortified with vitamin D, calcium and phosphorus. "According to data

from China Population & Development Research Center, there are about 251 million children under the age of 14 in China," said Qinghua Hu, CEO and CFO of Niusule Biotech Corp. "In light of the recent health concerns, Chinese parents are keen on obtaining high-quality, safe and nutritional products for their children. We are confident that our Gummy Bears will capture this growing demand in China. We plan to expand our distribution channel by increasing our sales force and partnering with distributors."

Gummy formulations have scored a few firsts from the standpoint of ingredients. When Northwest Natural Products (NNP) launched an omega-3 product in late 2007 as part of its L'il Critters line, it featured a chia seed extract as the source of both omega-3s and DHA. The Vancouver, WA-based manufacturer chose chia seed extract because it is plant-based, has a high omega-3 concentration and possesses a clean taste profile.

More specifically, NNP selected Tresalbio chia seed extract, manufactured by Valensa International (Eustis, FL). "In developing our Omega-3 Gummy Fish, we reviewed virtually every omega-3 source—both fish- and plant-based—and Tresalbio was the only one that met our goals for taste," said NNP Vice President Kate Jones. "With Tresalbio, we found an ingredient that excelled in our sensory panels and at the same time gave us a better product nutritionally." By that, Jones means a smaller effective dose requirement due to Tresalbio's high concentration of omega-3s.

"When our product development team at Valensa first came up with the idea for Tresalbio, we knew we had an ingredient that responded to a number of trends in the market," commented Dr. Rudi E. Moerck, president of Valensa. "We think that it is fitting that the first large use of Tresalbio is in a gummy-type children's vitamin product." **NIE**

FORMOREINFORMATION:

- Integrated Marketing Group, (801) 538-0777
- Niusule Biotech Corp., (626) 968-9198
- Santa Cruz Nutritionals, (831) 457-3200
- Valensa International, (877) 876-8872