

New milk-based drinks needed for young people, says panel

Written by Rudy Susanto

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The dairy industry should step up efforts to develop healthy milk-based drinks that appeal to young people, according to a new panel created by The Dairy Council in the UK.

At its inaugural meeting in London on May 13, the health and nutrition panel sought to alert the dairy industry to opportunities to create milk-based drinks and snacks “to be seen with”.

The appeal comes following years of decline in the popularity of traditional dairy products like milk among young people.

Accent on innovation

To draw young people back to dairy so they can reap the rewards of its nutritional benefits, the expert panel called on the industry to create new products rather than try to push old dairy favourites.

“The dairy industry needs to accelerate the development of innovative new products that will appeal specifically to young people,” said panel member, Professor Michael Symonds, director of the Early Life Nutrition Research Unit, Nottingham.

Dr Judith Bryans, director of The Dairy Council said; “It is apparent that the dairy industry needs to increase the accessibility of milk based drinks and address the image and appeal for young people.”

“Messages clearly need to be defined on the benefits of drinking milk and marketed so they are easily and readily available to young people.”

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Other topics

At the opening meeting of the expert panel, members also discussed the need for academics to defend dairy publicly on the issue of health claims.

They also broached the subject of sustainability, calling for more research and evidence to feed into government initiatives in the area and ensure that the dairy industry is properly recognised.

On the role of the new panel, Bryans said: *“The creation of this expert panel will broaden our expertise within the organisation. And the inaugural meeting was successful in bringing new thinking to many issues that affect the dairy industry”*

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