

PRESS RELEASE:

Consumers drive reinvention of “real food” as sports food

Entrepreneurial brand Veloforte’s sports twist on a traditional Italian treat packed with fruit and nuts – which has won the start-up a cult following – highlights the growing opportunity in repositioning “real foods” as a sports food product.

“While sports nutrition products are going mainstream, the much stronger trend is in the opposite direction – ‘real’ foods are becoming more attractive for people to use in sports,” said food industry analyst Julian Mellentin, director of consultancy New Nutrition Business and author of a new report, *“Real food” – the strategy that’s transforming sports nutrition*.

“Both professional and amateur athletes are increasingly dropping gels and sports bars laden with ‘artificial’ ingredients from their diets, and making instead ‘real food’ choices, like peanut butter and flapjacks to maple syrup, Nutella and traditional Italian panforte,” Mellentin added.

The trend is powered by sports dietitians. The Collegiate and Professional Sports Dietitians Association, which represents America’s leading sports dietitians, has adopted the “food first” principle that “whole foods are the best fuel”.

“‘Real food’ is a message that resonates with a wider audience – not just serious athletes – as in more and more countries, consumers are trying to build activity and maintaining weight wellness into their everyday lives,” Mellentin said.

“Regular” food and drink businesses are enjoying success by positioning products as “real food for sports” – some by re-inventing established, traditional products, others by creating new products. Not only are they getting more volume, they are almost always earning premium prices – the reward for connecting to consumer needs. Examples include:

1. California-based Clif Bar, which has become a \$750 million annual sales supermarket brand by firmly tethering its identity to sports and activity and the idea of “naturally healthy”
2. Soreen, a fruit-based cake from the UK whose re-positioning for recreational cyclists has driven a 70% increase in retail sales, despite selling at a 100% price premium.
3. Low-sugar protein bar Grenade Carb Killa markets its products in the confectionery aisle as a real food alternative to sports nutrition bars and has become the 3rd fastest-growing brand in the UK grocery market.

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“Any product that offers on-the-go convenience with benefits such as more protein, less sugar, fewer carbs or better-quality carbs can use the ‘real food’ strategy to get good growth,” Mellentin added.

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. Editors can request comment or arrange an interview with Julian Mellentin, by contacting Mikaela Lindén at mikaela.linden@new-nutrition.com
2. Julian Mellentin is one of the world’s few international specialists in the business of food, nutrition and health. He is director of New Nutrition Business, a research and consultancy company with an expert focus on the business of food and health since 1995. It provides case studies and analysis of success and failure in the global nutrition business and is used by more than 1,700 corporate subscribers in 42 countries. It has offices in the United States, Europe, and New Zealand and affiliates in Japan and South Korea. Find out more at: www.new-nutrition.com.
3. *“Real food”: the strategy that's transforming sports nutrition* is available to buy at www.new-nutrition.com