

## Energy Drink Explosion Hits Food

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Mintel expects energy drink buzz to spill over into food, snacks and candy

Anyone who's been to a convenience store, sporting event or bar lately knows-energy drinks are hot. Mintel's latest report on energy drinks values the retail market at \$4.8 billion, a growth of over 400% from 2003.

Mintel sees the number of 'energy drinkers' growing quickly. In 2003, only 9% of adult respondents to Mintel's survey said they drank energy drinks. In 2008, 15% did. Teens have picked up energy drinks even faster. Mintel's latest survey of teenagers revealed 35% regularly consume energy drinks, up from 19% in 2003.

'Energy drinks have quickly become a daily beverage choice,' states Krista Faron, senior new product analyst at Mintel. 'As more Americans use energy drinks, we've seen a rise in products being launched with innovative new ingredients, claims and consumer targets.'

Mintel Global New Products Database (GNPD) tracked just 80 new US energy drink launches in 2003. But in 2007, the firm tracked 187 and already in 2008, Mintel GNPD has seen more than 270 new energy drinks launched in the US.

### Eating for energy

As energy drinks become more commonplace, Mintel sees 'energy' expanding beyond the aluminum can. 'Energy bars are familiar to many Americans,' explains Faron, 'but other energized foods, such as candy, chips, milk and cereal, are definitely not. We expect the concept of 'energy'-both physical and mental-to greatly influence food product development.'

Through Mintel GNPD, Faron has seen 'energy' ingredients moving from drinks into food. Ginseng, guarana and taurine-popularized by energy drinks-now appear in snacks like NRG Phoenix Fury chips with taurine or Full Charge sunflower seeds with ginseng and guarana.

Caffeine is also emerging in foods from energy bars to cereals, such as Morning Spark's caffeine-fortified instant oatmeal. Superfoods, recognized for high antioxidant content, are now added to foods for mental and physical performance benefits. The Think Green Superfood Energy Bar, for example, includes blueberries and noni powder.

'Energy is poised to take food in a new direction, giving consumers who need a boost many different ways to get it,' comments Faron. 'From natural energizers like omega-3s or antioxidants to foods that are fortified with energizing ingredients, we are seeing 'energy' to emerge as a core benefit in new food products.'

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