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Our aging population can benefit from dairy ingredients

By Alan Reed for Dairyfoods.com

An aging world population of almost half a billion seniors age 65 and older has placed increased demands on food and beverage manufacturers to take a closer look at their nutritional needs to help seniors manage chronic conditions affiliated with aging, such as heart disease, diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

U.S. dairy ingredients are well-positioned to help address the needs of this population who are actively seeking solutions to assist with healthy aging.

Extensive dairy ingredient nutrition research — supported by the Dairy Research Institute and the dairy checkoff — continues to showcase its numerous benefits to meet the growing nutritional needs of an aging population looking for ways to maintain an active, independent lifestyle.

Whey protein is a high-quality protein naturally found in milk that contains all the amino acids that the body requires for muscle protein synthesis. It is highly digestible and rapidly absorbed by the body.

Research continues to support the ability of dairy ingredients, such as whey protein, to help build lean muscle and decrease the risk for muscle wasting in aging consumers. Whey protein is a high-quality protein naturally found in milk that contains all the amino acids that the body requires for muscle protein synthesis. It is highly digestible and rapidly absorbed by the body, which is of particular benefit to aging seniors.

Milk protein concentrate (MPC) offers food and beverage manufacturers options to increase protein content in formulations without significantly increasing the lactose content in the finished product, while still maintaining a clean dairy flavor. Like whey protein, MPC is also a multifunctional ingredient that provides benefits, such as water binding, gelling, foaming, emulsification and heat stability. We also know that many of dairy's nine essential nutrients — including protein, calcium and potassium — are of particular interest to seniors hoping to maintain their active and independent lifestyle.

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