

Dutch oat bread gets a product-specific health claim

The world's first cholesterol-lowering bread carrying a product specific health claim will be available on the shelves of Albert Heijn supermarkets from the middle of June. The Dutch retailer, which is part of Ahold, is launching a private label multi-grain, sliced bread named Vitaalbrood Pró-Fit. It's not Albert Heijn's first functional bread foray – in 2003 it launched the inulin bread Vitaalbrood Flora, which also carries an approved health claim, relating to gut-health.

The active ingredient in Pró-Fit, which is a 400g dark loaf, is OatWell oat bran, supplied by CreaNutrition, a subsidiary of Swedish Oat Fiber AB. A clinical trial on Pró-Fit demonstrated that consumption of four slices a day (providing a total of 3g of oat beta-glucan from OatWell oat bran) resulted in a reduction in LDL cholesterol of 3% within three weeks among persons with elevated cholesterol levels.

General Manager of Zing, Switzerland-based CreaNutrition, Ruedi Duss, says that bread is an important application for his company's ingredients. He says there is demand from the industry and he is convinced that activities like the *Dutch Code of Practice on Health Claims* will further motivate the bakery industry to enrich their products with high quality oats. Last autumn CreaNutrition also announced a collaboration agreement with Puratos, one of the world's leading companies in bread premixes.

"It is especially advantageous from a public health perspective that this cholesterol reduction can occur by incorporating oat bran into a daily-consumed food product like bread that has considerable nutritional value," says Duss.

Pró-Fit will have a retail price of around €1.60, which is a slight premium to regular breads. However, a fundamental aim for Albert Heijn has been that the product should present an affordable way of lowering cholesterol levels. "It needs to be a healthy bread available to everybody, supported with strong science," believes Duss, who adds that the Netherlands is an interesting market for such a bread, since a significant part of the population has elevated cholesterol and simultaneously bread is an important daily staple food product. "There is a natural and logical

bridge between bread and the health benefits of grains which makes it easier for the consumer to perceive the benefits," Duss concludes. A website will be launched in support of Pró-Fit bread to help health-conscious consumers gain more detailed information.

The applicant for the health claim is a small Dutch-based marketing company called CS Food Innovations (which also was involved in the development of the Vitaalbrood Flora) and which collaborates with CreaNutrition, which provided the extensive scientific dossier substantiating the claim for the product.

Although several countries in Europe, including Sweden and the UK, have approved generic cholesterol-lowering health claims for oat beta-glucans the recent approval by the Dutch regulator of



a claim for Pró-Fit is the first time in Europe, or the U.S., that a product-specific claim linking oat beta-glucan and cholesterol-lowering has been authorized. It's also the first time ever in Europe or the U.S that a bread can make an authorized, product-specific cholesterol-lowering health claim.

As the claim is product specific that means that any other product seeking to use OatWell, or any other beta-glucan, must also petition for a health claim under the *Dutch Code of Practice*.

"Our code has a specific view, it wants

PRÓ-FIT LABEL TEXT

Pró-Fit lowers your cholesterol and risk of CHD. Pró-Fit is a tasty multi-grain bread of 400g. The consumption of 4 slices of Pró-Fit a day easily helps to reduce LDL cholesterol. This reduction of the LDL cholesterol is reached in just 3 weeks. The bread contains 100% natural substances and with high consumption there are no known negative consequences.

Take care of your health. More than half of the adult population has elevated cholesterol levels. Most people are not even aware of this. The special OatWell oat bran used in Pró-Fit is an ideal source of soluble oat fibre. It has been frequently proven that this oat bran reduces cholesterol levels and helps keep your heart and blood vessels in good shape. Pró-Fit fits in a healthy lifestyle.

Cholesterol reduction scientifically proven. Pró-Fit is the only bread that can lower the cholesterol in the blood. A scientific study with persons between 35 and 70 years old has shown that Pró-Fit lowers the LDL cholesterol significantly. The risk on CHD is reduced by 6-9%. Bread is an important part of the daily diet and Pró-Fit perfectly fits into a cholesterol-lowering diet. An additional advantage is that the inclusion of OatWell® oat bran guarantees a longer freshness. Moreover sun-dried seeds have been used to give the bread a delicious taste.

NUTRITION FACTS PANEL:

100g nutritional value:

Energy	909 KJ (217 kcal)
Protein	9.53g
Carbohydrates	40.80g
- of which sugars	1.52g
Fat	1.82g
- of which saturated	0.5g
- of which monounsaturated	0.52g
- of which polyunsaturated	0.68g
Cholesterol	0.00g
Fibres	5.79g
Oat beta-glucan	2.2g
Salt	1.45g
Sodium	0.47g
Pró-Fit is free from milk protein	

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The starting point for the communication around Knorr Vie is therefore the question "Are you getting enough fruits and vegetables?". A Unilever spokesperson explained to *New Nutrition Business* that: "After making people aware of the so called 'fruits and vegetables issue' we communicate Knorr Vie as part of the solution. The third step is making people taste the product because 'tasting is believing'. For these three steps we use TV, outdoor, print, and product tastings. Education is an essential part of the communication around Vie and for this we work closely with the Dutch Nutrition Centre and the Unilever Health Institute."

Knorr Vie is initially being retailed in packs of three, "to lower the entry barrier for

people to try the product," said the Unilever spokesperson, adding: "At this moment we clearly see that this strategy is effective with very high trial figures. Also repurchase rates are very good which confirms that we address a relevant consumer need with good products."

Most probiotic dairy drinks are currently retailed in packs of four, six or eight, to allow daily consumption throughout the week, but Unilever said it was too early to comment on whether it might consider these types of pack formats for Vie.

Pricewise, a 3-pack of Knorr Vie retails for € 1.99. For comparison a 4x100ml pack of Danone Actimel (Europe's biggest dairy probiotic) retails for €1.79 and the newly-launched daily dose version of Vifit (the

Netherlands number one probiotic dairy brand – see page 7) retails at €2.59 for 6 bottles.

On a per bottle basis that puts Knorr Vie at €0.66 (\$0.83) compared to €0.44 (\$0.55) for the probiotic dairy drinks – a 50% price premium. However, Knorr Vie is very unlikely to be competing with the dairy drinks since it offers a very different health benefit. In practice it will likely draw in new consumers who don't consume probiotic dairy drinks (and most Europeans still don't) but who are health-conscious, although for the health-conscious already buying brands like Actimel it may be a logical incremental purchase, since they are already used to the concept of health benefits from the 100ml packaging format.

Unilever has logically positioned its innovation under the Knorr brand, which can be found in 80 countries, including, as well as Europe, the growth markets of Asia and Latin America, allowing the company to extend the brand globally if the European launch works out. The Knorr brand was first created in 1838 by Carl Heinrich Knorr, who identified a need for nutritious ready-to-eat meals amongst factory workers in Germany. Knorr is synonymous with vegetable dishes and particularly soups, sauces, stir fry dishes and bouillons. The brand positioning is Magic & Nutrition.

Unilever is known to have been looking at the smoothie and fruit drink arena for some years and it's impressive and refreshing that the company has enough of an innovative approach to decide to use the potential of the small bottle daily dose format. It's a packaging concept that many, many companies in diverse markets have looked at in recent years and most have shied away from, despite the obvious success of the package (see the Benecol article on page 5 for example).

Ve helpt je om op een makkelijke manier je dagelijkse hoeveelheid groenten en fruit aan te vullen.

- 50% van de aanbevolen dagelijkse hoeveelheid groenten en fruit
- We bestaat uitsluitend uit groenten en fruit, dus geen kunstmatige toevoegingen
 - Geen suiker toegevoegd
 - Rijk aan anti-oxidanten, zoals vitamine C

Hoe past al dat groente en fruit in zo'n klein flesje? Het wachtersap is geconcentreerd, dat wil zeggen dat veel vrucht uit het fruit is gehaald waardoor de pure voedingsstoffen overblijven.

Elk flesje bevat net zoveel als:

1 appel + 2 wortel + 2 aardbei + 1 cherry

Dit product is een voorkeursproduct in de productgroep Groente en Fruit volgens het Voedingscentrum

NUTRIENTIEWAARDEN PER 100 ml	
Energie	280 kJ (65 kcal)
Eiwitten	1,9 g
Koolhydraten waarvan suiker	14 g
Vet	0,5 g
van waarvan verzadigd	0,1 g
vezel	1,5 g
zout	0,01 g
Vitamine C	20 mg (35% van de aanbevolen dagelijkse hoeveelheid)

Ingrediënten: 30% appelpuree, 29% geconcentreerd wortelsap, 24% geconcentreerd aardbeisap, 8% aardbeien, wassappelsap, 1,5% geconcentreerd sap van West-Indische kers, geconcentreerd citroensap, appelpectine.

Koel bewaren. Schudden voor gebruik. Ten minste houdbaar tot: zie bovenop de fles. Drink op basis van geconcentreerde vruchten- en groentesappen.

Knorr Consumentenservice
Unilever Nederland, Rotterdam
www.knorr.nl | Tel: gratis 0800 0223055

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One bottle of Knorr Vie delivers a dose equal to two servings of fruit and vegetables, and this is graphically expressed on the package with pictures of an apple, a carrot, a strawberry and a cherry. In the Netherlands the recommended consumption is not "5-a-day" as in most countries but "Two servings of fruit and two of vegetables", so in this country Knorr Vie is marketed as delivering 50% of the daily requirement of fruit and vegetables. The Dutch national Food Centre (Voedingscentrum) operates a logo program, with one for products that deliver two servings of fruit and a similar but separate logo for products that deliver two servings of vegetables. Both logos are used on Knorr Vie.

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to see that the functional aspect really works, that the concentration is high enough, that it is bioavailable, not destroyed by the processing or so," Louis van Nieuwland spokesperson for the Voedingscentrum Nederland (The Dutch Food Centre), which oversees the health claim procedure, told *New Nutrition Business*. "Convince us of the functionality and we add a positive report to our list."

The Netherlands does not as yet have a specific procedure for a health generic claim but there is a possibility that one may yet be put in place. "It depends completely

on the proceedings in Brussels," observes Van Nieuwland. "If we can expect a European regulation in a year or two, we will change the regulations. If Brussels makes a mess of it, as it looks now, we will modernize the code."

The health benefit the Dutch scientific committee signed off on is:

Daily consumption of 140g of Pró-Fit bread (4 slices, providing 3g beta-glucan from OatWell oat bran per day), has been shown to reduce the serum concentration of low-density lipoprotein by 3% within three weeks, in persons with elevated cholesterol.

Under the Dutch system the actual

wording of the claim used on the label and in marketing is left up to the brand-owner who is expected not to go beyond what would be acceptable – given the level of scientific substantiation – to the Dutch Food Authority and the National Advertising Code. But, observes Nieuwland, "A producer can almost never be completely sure of staying out of difficulties with these organizations as the border to 'misleading' is unsure. There is also the difficulty that medicinal claims are forbidden; there exists a general accepted list with a thousand wordings that distinguish between medicinal claims and accepted claims."