

Yoplait



THE MARKET

When Yoplait was launched into the Australian market in 1982, annual yogurt consumption was quite low at 0.9 kilograms per head. The total market size was only 14,000 tonnes. By 1999, the market for yogurt has grown to 91,000 tonnes, valued at \$315 million, and consumption per head is more than six kilograms. Household penetration is 80%, and is even higher in households with children.

The strong annual growth that yogurt has experienced in the years between 1982 and 1999 owes much to Yoplait. It took only six weeks after its launch for Yoplait to become market leader, and the brand has been instrumental in driving market growth by encouraging market segmentation. In the early 1980s, the yogurt products on the market were designed to have reasonably broad family appeal. In 1985, Yoplait was the first to offer a light yogurt, and in the ensuing years the brand has continued to meet the lifestyle demands of consumers, especially in regard to convenience, health, great taste, flavour and variety.

Key segments of the yogurt market now include regular, light, diet, acidophilus and bifidus yogurts with their extra health benefits, and children's yogurts.

Currently, the highest consumption of yogurt is by children. It is anticipated that these younger generations will continue to enjoy yogurt well into adulthood, further growing the market by increasing penetration and consumption.

Present-day Australian adults were not brought up with yogurt, and have been slower than their children to adopt the product.

Yogurt is eaten on various occasions by all members of the family. Single serve packs are generally used as snacks at any time during the day. The larger family size packs are also used throughout the day, especially to provide topping for fruit or cereal at breakfast or a healthy dessert. Yogurt is also becoming popular for cooking, as an alternative to cream or ice cream and in ethnic dishes such as tzatziki dips.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Yoplait offered the first true national brand of yogurt with substantial consumer appeal. Prior to Yoplait's launch there was limited choice and a general focus on full fat and natural-flavour products with a tart flavour profile. Yoplait made available a range of fruity flavours with innovative packaging in user-friendly twin packs, and the yogurt market has never looked back.

In 1984, Yoplait was the first brand to launch a four pack, while introducing the concept of a variety of flavours in the one pack. A year later, Yoplait launched its Fresh'n'Light range (now called Yoplait Light), successfully offering consumers a great-tasting, low-fat choice with "less than 0.5% fat". By 1986, Yoplait multipacks were the top five national sellers and the launch of multipack themes, such as Berry Delights in 1987, continued to encourage growth in this

segment. Yoplait made additional health benefits available with the launch of the Yoplus range in 1990, which incorporated the now well-known probiotic cultures of acidophilus and bifidus.

The introduction of Yoplait Petit Miam in 1991 was an opportunity to provide a healthy snack, especially for children. Petit Miam (It's French for Yum) was the first children's fromage frais on the market and also the first product to really meet the specific needs of both mothers and children. It is a product that children can call their own in a pack of appropriate size and with a thick texture to make eating easy, while simultaneously offering the nutritional values that mothers wanted to see. Petit Miam has been supported with a strong advertising campaign featuring cute French children.

Taking yogurt to even younger consumers, Yoplait launched Yoplait Baby, a range of fresh dairy products targeted at babies from six months of age. This range has been formulated especially to meet the nutritional needs of babies and to provide a fresh and convenient format for mothers.

Yoplait is the best-known brand in its segment of the Australian market and has continued to enjoy strong growth since its launch more than a decade and a half ago.

HISTORY

The story of yogurt begins with Middle Eastern nomads and the Persians. The first yogurts were made from the milk of various animals, concentrated by heat and fermented naturally to produce a smooth, delicious product known then as 'sour milk'. The fermentation process in these predecessors of our yogurt destroyed undesirable microorganisms and left the beneficial lactic acid bacteria which gave the pleasant aroma and flavour which yogurt lovers appreciate to this day.

It was believed that the Biblical character Abraham derived his virility and longevity from yogurt. Some scientists regard modern yogurt, a blend of nutritious milk and beneficial cultures, as one effective tool for dealing with many health problems. Yogurt provides an excellent source of calcium and other essential nutrients. It is also suitable for people with lactose intolerance, since the bacteria which create yogurt use lactose as an energy source and lower its levels substantially.

Today's consumer believes yogurts stand alone for their texture, taste, nutritional values, variety and versatility.

THE PRODUCT

The Yoplait brand originated in France and is now sold in 68 countries. It is the second largest fresh dairy brand in the world. In Australia, Yoplait is manufactured and marketed under licence to National Foods Ltd, the largest supplier to the supermarket cold case in Australia. One in three Australians consumes a National Foods product every day. The company competes in three market sectors - Juice, Milk and Dairy Foods — and holds a leadership share in each.

National Foods recently built a state of the art fresh dairy factory at Morwell in Victoria, and all Yoplait products are now made there. Prior to the opening of the site, Yoplait products had been manufactured at various sites across Australia.

Yoplait offers more than 40 different flavour combinations, an important way to keep consumers interested in the category. New varieties are launched every season. Recently, Yoplait added citrus flavours to its range following a strong trend in European markets.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The Petit Miam franchise was extended in 1996 with the innovative product Petit Miam Tubes, a convenient eat-anywhere snack which has been a great hit for school lunches. The tubes are

also popular frozen, offering a healthy snack on hot summer days.

In 1998, Yoplait launched Diet Lite yogurt with only 0.1% fat and 48 calories per 100g but with all the full, delicious fruity taste of Yoplait. At the same time, Yoplait introduced the children's range Fruzoo, aimed at kids who had moved on from the small tubs of Petit Miam. Fruzoo is intended to make yogurt products fun for children while retaining the nutritional values mothers expect. All Fruzoo packs have bright packaging with different animal themes such as Africa or the Arctic.

Yoplait now provides consumers with the largest range of products in market segments catering to everyone from babies to adults.

PROMOTION

The Yoplait brand has always had strong, consistent advertising that is fun to watch, supporting the brand and building brand values. The commercials have focused on a French setting with French people and the gendarme as a central character. The advertising has consistently used the line "Yoplait. It's French for yogurt" and has always been designed to have maximum family appeal. Core advertising has consistently been supported by 15 second advertisements, announcing new flavour varieties.

The unique and appealing advertising campaign was one of the reasons for the early and overwhelming success of the Yoplait brand. Brand awareness has always been the strongest in the category.

Yoplait's sub-brands have always been launched with campaigns that maintain the brand values and have kept the brand fresh and relevant to consumers. The most recent Yoplait commercial, launched in September 1998, is focused on Yoplait Light with its great creamy taste and its "less than 0.5% fat" claim. The television campaign has been strongly supported by transit and in-store advertising.

BRAND VALUES

Yoplait has consistently maintained its brand values of French, Fruity, Fun and Family.

THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT YOPLAIT

- Every year, Yoplait produces enough tubs of yogurt to stretch from Melbourne to Paris when lined up side by side.
- Yoplait is available in 68 countries around the world.
- To make its range of products, Yoplait uses around 30 million litres of fresh milk every year.
- There are two trillion live bacteria in every 200 gram tub of Yoplait yogurt.