

Healthier Snacks Grow in Importance



The United States is a nation of snackers. And we're choosing healthier options when we snack. Learn how to profit from the trend with our easy-to-implement snack suggestions.

The United States has become a nation of snackers, and even more so since the pandemic upended so many schedules. In fact, according to The NPD Group's most recent Eating Patterns in America report, over the past five years, Americans added 25 between-meal snacking occasions per capita, from 505 between-meal snacking occasions per capita in 2015 to 530 in 2020, and consumption of snack foods at meals increased from 21% of eatings in 2010 to 26% in 2020.

Whether offered as a pre-meal nibble or a between-meal pick-me-up, in lieu of three squares or something to grab on the run, snacks are good for business because they appeal to customers. And so much the better if they can be positioned as better for you.

Look to the basic food groups for healthy-eating snack inspiration.

Fruits and Vegetables

Beyond an apple or carrot and celery sticks, there are many ways to incorporate produce into snacks. Many of these represent a cross-utilization from other ingredients.

- Parsnip or carrot cupcakes
- Fruit- and yogurt-based ice pops
- Figs stuffed with dates and nuts

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- Chili-lime grilled pineapple
 - Watermelon cups filled with chopped cucumber, red onion, and fresh herbs
 - Chunky fruit or vegetable salsa with baked chips
 - Butternut squash and Parmesan dip
 - Distinctive bite-size vegetables like colorful peppers, crunchy fennel, grape tomatoes, Belgian endive leaves, and sugar peas with dip
 - Buffalo cauliflower bites
 - Nori roll vegetable sushi

Grains

The soaring popularity of whole and ancient grains like quinoa and farro has led to their use in many different kinds of recipes, including snacks.

- Over-the-top popcorn or popped sorghum (for example, truffle or black sesame and mustard)
- Housemade multigrain bars
- Rhubarb oat muffins
- Farro or quinoa stuffed mushrooms
- Oat or teff pancakes with smoked salmon
- Tabbouleh
- Porridge rolls or bagels
- Nacho pizza with masa crust
- Mixed-grain granola energy bites
- Sour cream cake with spelt

Nuts and Seeds

Flexitarian diets point to using more seeds and nuts in recipes to add protein, value, and a pop of texture.

- Housemade seeded crackers with herbed cheese

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- Housemade peanut butter crunch spread
 - Dukkah with olive oil and crudites
 - Sesame jaggery squares
 - Sunflower seed breadsticks
 - Almond-pepita clusters
 - Roasted rosemary nuts and pumpkin seeds
 - Chia pudding
 - Black pepper togarashi elote
 - Beet and caraway seed muffins

Protein

- Pickled shrimp
- Deviled eggs
- Hummus (chickpea, black bean, edamame, etc)
- Cowboy caviar (black-eyed peas and vegetables)
- Asian chicken lettuce wraps
- Cheese quesadillas
- Tofu, shrimp, or chicken spring rolls
- Mediterranean salmon spread
- Queso dip
- Ahi tuna poke

The information provided is based on a general industry overview, and is not specific to your business operation. Each business is unique and decisions related to your business should be made after consultation with appropriate experts.

TRY THIS: SUPERFOODS

With more customers trying to boost consumption of nutrient-rich food considered to be especially beneficial for health and well-being, try incorporating any of the following into snacks:

- Blueberries
- Pomegranate
- Avocado
- Sweet potato
- Cinnamon
- Dark chocolate
- Kale
- Ginger
- Acai or gogi berries
- Almonds
- Coconut
- Green tea

DON'T FORGET

- Many people enjoy specialty beverages as a snack, including juice or juice blends, smoothies, malts and milkshakes, and premium coffee drinks (both hot and cold).
- For more information and recipes, check our [Beverage Brands Corner](#) and [Beverage Recipes](#) index.