



Affordable health food key to food retail growth: Industry experts at India Food Forum 2017

Mumbai, 31st January 2017: While the food retail sector is steadily growing over the past five to seven years, there is a clear, emerging trend of preference for wellness and health foods. However, despite the increasing demand for it, health food is still unaffordable for majority of the population. The experts in the retail food industry feel that the market needs to concentrate on increased penetration of affordable health food in Indian market.

During the Inaugural session on 'Food For Tomorrow, How Current Trends are Shaping The Growth of Tomorrow' at the mega industry event India Food Forum 2017, corporate honchos from India's major food & grocery retail and foodservice companies agreed that health food market has huge potential and can do wonders if penetration and affordability were taken care of.

Krish Iyer, Chairman of India Food Forum 2017 and President and CEO, Walmart India stressed that the health food though sought after by majority of the consumers, is not picking up as it should have been, because of the cost issue. "The health food is still unaffordable to majority of the urban consumers. The consumers are willing to experiment with health food, but the high pricing is the biggest hurdle, we need to overcome to develop this segment," Iyer said. He added that the pace at which Ayurveda is growing is surprising. It was a good opportunity for the players in food industry to grow further.

The 10th edition of India Food Forum – India's largest food retail intelligence event is being held from January 31st to February 2 at the Bandra Kurla Complex in Mumbai. The three-day major industry event includes a large exhibition, over 35 Conference sessions and the annual Coca Cola Golden Spoon Awards ceremony on Feb 2nd.

"Health and Wellness foods are the emerging trends in Indian food sector. The phenomenal growth achieved by Patanjali and Sri Sri Products is testimony to this. However, much more needs to be done to expand this market through multichannel business modules. At times when more and more consumers are shifting to ready to eat food items, we need to tap the sector to ensure they get health food," said **Mohit Kampani, CEO, Aditya Birla Retail.**

Cofounder of Swiggy, Nandan Reddy feels that the Indian population between the age group of 25 to 35 is more inclined to getting cooked food. "Their dependency on cooked food, delivered at home is growing rapidly. Their preferences too are changing. They are ready to explore new food items and experiment with health food as the basic criteria," Reddy said.

Jamshed Daboo, MD, Trent Hypermarkets says, "Food consumption trends reflect the lifestyle of consumer. Hectic urban lifestyle has changed food habits completely. With the growing trend of being health conscious, consumers are inclined to choose healthy food. But at the same time, they are keen on the ingredients as well. Purity and authenticity of the



ingredients has become most sought while choosing food items. At the same time, current generation has more sense of pride in being Indian. They see a lot of merit in ancient Indian traditions and culture. This has given rise to a mixture of pride and authenticity of ingredients has suddenly become the core issue.”

According to Arvind **Varchaswi, Trustee Sri Sri Ayurveda Trust, and Group Advisor - International Affair, Ayush Advisory Group**, purchasing food has now become an experience and not a mere activity. Consumers are highly educated and they know exactly what they want and choose accordingly. “The health food sector will grow even faster, if the food is made tasty too,” Varchaswi said.

Devendra Chawla, Group President, Food and FMCG Brands, Future Group and CEO, Future Consumer Ltd said authenticity of food has become paramount. “Like every other decision making may it be deciding holiday, shopping household items, authenticity of ingredients of food items has now become the core issue when it comes to decide what food is to be consumed in a family. Patanjali and Sri Sri Ayurveda have done exactly the same and achieved phenomenal growth.”

Mohit Kampani pointed out that there is huge trust deficit among consumers when it comes to packaged food. “This has grown over past few years as various serious details about packaged food started coming out. Due to this, local food gained importance and sense of nationalism also made a huge difference in changing the eating habits of people. This will bring about paradigm shift in food industry over the years to come,” Kampani said.

About India Food Forum:

The India Food Forum was formed in the year 2008 under the chairmanship of the then Food Processing Minister with India's leading manufacturers, marketers and retailers of food, grocery and FMCG products joining in to take up a series of support initiatives for the Indian food retail business. The forum's sole purpose has been to connect all key stakeholders of food & grocery retail and HoReCa businesses with their respective potential partners to collaborate for profitable growth, collectively work towards new category development, boost consumption, share global best practices, benchmark new standards, and serve customers efficiently. Comprising a 360-degree format of conference, exhibition, networking and industry awards, India Food Forum is unarguably India's most exciting and forward looking knowledge sharing venue for food, grocery and FMCG brands, distributors, marketers, grocery retailers and foodservice companies.

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