

Healthy beets (Poland)

Product developed in EIT Food RIS Consumer Engagement Labs project

We all love food that takes us back to childhood. Especially when it is full of nutritious elements. But it can be time consuming and tiresome to prepare. Also, we have grown to enjoy more distinct flavours which makes us see traditional beetroot recipes as a bit flat and boring. But it is time for the oldie but goldie beetroot salad to make its way back on today's tables in a re-made version.

In order to provide consumers with what they actually want, last fall we have invited Polish older adults to take part in the co-creating workshops, where together with the representatives of food suppliers, food producers and startups they came up with the idea of a product that will satisfy their needs in terms of full taste and enhanced health-promoting properties.

Innovative food product

Beets run in Polish veins, same as cabbage. They are the fourth most popular and liked vegetable, especially for older consumers' households. But its preparation is often demanding and can be quite messy. It is also difficult to prepare just the amount that one needs for a single meal. Thus, *Burak na zdrowie* (eng. *Healthy Beets*) offers a spiced up version of a traditional home-made dish with a healthy supplement. It combines a well-known recipe for a beetroot salad with a touch of exotic taste thanks to the fresh turmeric and ginger, zhoozhed up by collagen. So, instead of having to buy additional supplements, it is already in the salad.

Apart from innovative ingredients, *Burak na zdrowie* (ang. *Healthy Beets*) meets the needs of older consumers regarding packaging. It comes in convenient portions, enough for 1-2 servings, thus reducing the risk of unwanted leftovers to the minimum, and preventing from dull need of eating the same product ad nauseam.

Good for health

Three types of ingredients make this new product a valuable addition to everyday diet, for all age groups, especially for older consumers. Beets, traditionally known as healthy vegetables, are gaining attention from scientists as a health promoting and disease preventing functional food. They are also being considered as a promising therapeutic treatment in a range of clinical pathologies thanks to its anti-oxidative, anti-inflammation and vascular-protective properties.

Turmeric and ginger have a wide range of uses in middle eastern and oriental traditional medicine. They are the spices known for their antioxidant, antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory properties, making them a beneficial nutritional component. It has been confirmed that turmeric's antioxidant effect correlates with a decrease in LDL levels in blood and to a reduced risk of atherosclerosis. Both spices are also known for being natural appetite enhancers.

Collagen, in turn, as a main component of connective tissue, is a protein responsible for strengthening bones and joints and securing proper skin tone. With aging production of collagen significantly decreases, thus it should be supplemented by consumption. Fish collagen added to the salad will help to overcome the scarcity of this important protein with no influence on the flavour. Instead of having to buy several additional supplements, now all of the health benefiting ingredients are encompassed in one salad!

Preferred by older adults / Designed by older adults for older adults

Healthy Beets combine the traditional flavour of gently sweet beetroot salad with an interesting, earthy aroma of turmeric and spicy touch of ginger. Our older consumers co-designers underlined that they expect clear and distinctive taste from the new product. The earthy sweetish taste of beets will be balanced by the zing from spices, elevating the taste of a beetroot salad to the next level. Adding oriental spices will make the flavour more interesting and strong, answering consumers wishes.

Different from existing products

As this product builds on a well-known, traditional recipe, it appeals to all age groups looking for a homely flavour with healthy properties. It combines the best qualities of the traditional recipe and generational experience enhanced by modern technology. It is designed especially for the older consumers, who would like to eat their favourite dish with a twist of a new flavour and maximize health benefits. *Burak na zdrowie* (eng. *Healthy Beets*) is a tasty salad and collagen supplement in a single bite!

Additional information about the project:

Burak na zdrowie (eng. *Healthy Beets*) is a product designed during the co-creation workshops, held as part of the EIT Food RIS Consumer Engagement Labs project. The project is coordinated by the University of Warsaw and financed by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), under the Horizon 2020, the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, as part of EIT Regional Innovation Scheme. The project's main aim is to address the needs of older consumers in the food and beverages market by applying novel methodology which engages consumers, stimulates creativity and fosters the acceptance of new products. The concept of *Burak na zdrowie* (eng. *Healthy Beets*) was designed in 2019 in Poland during such co-creation sessions which gathered: older consumers, representatives of food retailers - Gminne Składy, food producers - Folwark Wąsowo, and startups - COFACTOR. Following the co-creation process, the actual product was developed and introduced to the market by the Polish consortium in 2020.

Find out more about the project at: <http://timo.wz.uw.edu.pl/cel>