

Pasternak i soczewica w marynowanych pieczarkach – Parsnip & lentils with gravy (Poland)

Product developed in EIT Food RIS Consumer Engagement Labs project

Consumers are looking for products that will be convenient to prepare but at the same time offer premium quality in terms of health and flavour. This challenge was accepted by the Polish start-up LYOFood and resulted in an innovative, convenient meal *Pasternak i soczewica w marynowanych pieczarkach* – lyophilised parsnip and lentils with gravy. Thanks to insights gathered from older consumers, food so far associated with professional outdoor explorers, became the source of inspiration for innovative everyday food product that is tailored to specific needs of older adults.

Innovative food product

Customers ask for nutritious products without additives. At the same time, older consumers might not have enough time or means to prepare homemade meals from scratch. Nevertheless, they want to eat healthy and balanced meals. The Polish company proposed a new take on ready-meals originally targeted at outdoor enthusiasts to find a solution to consumers' need for premium quality convenient food. Thanks to lyophilisation, proposed meal keeps the best nutritious qualities. Its composition is tailored to specific needs of older consumers and their dietary requirements.

Good for health

Older consumers are looking for products that will meet their dietary needs and preferences. *Parsnip & lentils with gravy* offers vegan readymade meal that is gluten and lactose free, making it easy to digest and prevents inflammatory response. Older consumers value natural composition of the product, thus *Pasternak i soczewica w marynowanych pieczarkach* does not contain any additives. Its main ingredient – parsnip – is rich in potassium, a mineral vital for keeping optimal heart function, balances blood pressure, and lowers risk of kidney stones. Lentils are an excellent source of protein, providing for a healthier alternative to meat products. They are also rich in fiber, folate and potassium, important for managing blood pressure and cholesterol. They are also a source of iron and vitamin B1 which helps maintain a steady heartbeat. Together with horseradish and turmeric, known for inflammatory qualities, they make a healthy and balanced meal.

Preferred by older adults / Co-designed with older adults for older adults

Parsnip & lentils with gravy is an exciting approach to a readymade meals, easy and quick to prepare at home or on an adventure. The product comes in a handy paper cup that also serves as a pot to prepare the meal and replaces a plate, possibly reducing dishwashing hassle. Older consumers, who are environmental conscious, will welcome the information that the packaging is recyclable and compostable. It is convenient to prepare - as it is a pre-cooked and freeze dried meal, it needs only adding hot water to rehydrate and to be ready for consumption in a few minutes. It is also easy to carry and store at home - as it comes in a small and light cup. It can be stored for nearly year and used whenever a healthy and convenient meal is needed. It can also be easily taken for a trip or social gathering outdoors. Composition of the product meets older consumers' taste preferences – *Parsnip & lentils with gravy* has a plausible twist of spices and interesting spice/savoury balance.

Different from existing products

Pasternak i soczewica w marynowanych pieczarkach combines modern food processing technologies with close attention to older consumers' needs and preferences. It is unique on the market as it offers nutritious and balanced but convenient ready meal. Thanks to lyophilisation, so far associated with ready meals for outdoor sports enthusiasts and professional athletes it provides for exciting yet easy to prepare meal of home cooked quality. Thanks to the freeze-drying method LYOFood was able to produce food maintaining the original texture, nutritional values and long shelf life for consumers, who want quality food but do not want to spend a whole day in the kitchen.

Additional information about the project:

Pasternak i soczewica w marynowanych pieczarkach is a product designed during the co-creation processes, held as a part of the 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/Horizon Europe, the EU Framework Programmes for Research and Innovation, as a part of EIT Regional Innovation Scheme. The project's main aim is to address the needs of elderly 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 *Pasternak i soczewica w marynowanych pieczarkach* was designed in 2021 through co-creation processes, which involved the identification of consumer preferences and new product ideas put forward by older consumers from multiple European countries and the subsequent formulation and design of the final product by the representatives of food producer from Poland – LYOFood. Following the co-creation process, the actual product was developed and introduced to the market by LYOFood in 2022.

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