

Barley's benefits in 3 minutes: why food manufacturers are turning to technical good of beta-glucans

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Here's a sobering truth – coronary heart disease (CHD) may be the leading cause of death worldwide, yet a 2023 survey by the American Heart Association noted more than half (51 per cent) of respondents did not know that heart disease is the leading cause of death in their country^[1]. In Southeast Asia, CHD is responsible for 30 per cent of annual deaths – and almost half (48 per cent) of these cardiovascular disease-related deaths occurred prematurely, affecting individuals aged between 30 and 70 years*, according to the World Health Organization^[2].

Today's health-conscious world has witnessed a significant shift toward eating habits, that prioritise long-term health over immediate satisfaction. However, surveys like the above underscore the importance of preventive dietary choices – and how simple decisions to include whole grains and fibre as part of a healthy diet, can go a long way in lowering the risk of CHD.

A strong market potential exists for new product developments with proven health benefits that can be claimed on the pack, such as with the humble barley!

#1: Authorised by Global Official Bodies

For savvy consumers looking for scientific-backed authorisations, the positive health effects of beta-glucans have been shown in more than 120 scientific studies and recognised by official bodies such as the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and other national authorities^[3].

In particular, BENEØ's Orafit® 12-Fit earned its [certification](#) from the American Heart Association. Derived from a barley variety naturally high in beta-glucan, this innovative ingredient works to support heart health by reducing cholesterol levels

and improving overall cardiovascular function.

#2: Clean Taste and Clean Label

As a 100% wholegrain flour made from barley, BENEÔ's Orafiti® Î²-Fit provides 20 per cent beta-glucan fibres â?? which is significantly higher than conventional cereal flours. It also features a clean taste and neutral colour for seamless integration into various formulations, while its natural thickening properties enhance texture by increasing viscosity, making it suitable for dairy and dairy alternatives.

Additionally, for customers mindful of sustainable and clean business practices, Orafiti® Î²-Fit ticks the box. It is produced with the use of the entire kernel. There is no waste in production and a 100 per cent valorisation of raw material, with no water resources needed.

#3: Cost-Effective Ingredient

Which would you pick for breakfast: three bowls of oatmeal or 15grams of Orafiti Î²-Fit?

Both deliver the required 3g of beta-glucans the human body requires daily. However, with Orafiti® Î²-Fit, beta-glucans can be easily and economically included in a variety of food items- from breakfast cereals and bread, to pasta, baked goods, and dairy alternatives.

Its versatility enables food manufacturers to innovate while addressing diverse consumer preferences. Here are [two quick recipes](#) to get innovating!

#4: Stability and Reliability

This ingredient is pH and temperature-stable, ensuring that it maintains its functional properties throughout processing and shelf life. This reliability is crucial for manufacturers looking to deliver consistent quality in their products. Moreover, when it comes to reformulating recipes with Orafiti® Î²-Fit, most applications allow for a straightforward 1:1 replacement of the original flour ingredient, such as bleached white flour, with BENEÔ's enriched beta-glucan Orafiti Î²-Fit flour, and be able to support a heart-healthy claim.

#5: Fibre Friendly

Beta-glucans are not digested by the human enzymes of the small intestine but are completely fermented by the microbiota in the colon. By adding Orafiti® Î²-Fit â?? which delivers a total fibre content of 40% (inclusive of beta-glucans) to meals, manufacturers can market this as a smart way of easily elevating digestive health, by promoting bowel regularity and supporting gut microbiota for enhanced nutrient absorption.

Choosing Orafiti® Î²-Fit enables manufacturers to help consumers attain a sustainable approach towards supporting heart health, while simultaneously benefiting from a high-quality fibre that promotes gut health â?? all of which are essential for maintaining vitality as we age.

[1] <https://www.heart.org/en/about-us/heart-and-stroke-association-statistics?uid=1740>

[2] <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/healthcare/who-south-east-asia-region-calls-on-member-states-to-raise-awareness-about-heart-health/articleshow/104020186.cms?from=mdr>

[3] Commission Regulation (EU) No 432/2012 of 16 May 2012; Commission Regulation (EU) No 1048/2012 of 8 November 2012; [EFSA Journal 2009; 7(9):1254; EFSA Journal 2011;9(6):2207; EFSA Journal 2011;9(12):2470]; FDA: 21 CFR Â§101.81; Summary of Health Canada's Assessment of a Health Claim about Barley Products and Blood Cholesterol Lowering, July 2012.