

New Survey Shows Majority of Americans Plan to Eat More Natural Foods as Part of Healthier Diet in 2005

TURNER FALLS, Mass. -- Lightlife:

E[acute accent]--44% Are Including Vegetarian Foods in Daily Diet along with Meat, Even as 41% Still Consider Vegetarian Food 'Too Weird'

E[acute accent]--To Spice Up This Mix, Lightlife(R) Introduces Great-Tasting New 'Smart Meals On-the-Go'; Meets Growing Demand for Convenient Vegetarian Meals That Are 'Good for You & Good to Eat'

E[acute accent]While 41% of Americans say they still find meatless substitutes and vegetarian products "too weird," a greater number, 44%, now eat vegetarian foods as part of a daily diet that also includes meat, because they know how healthy vegetarian food is for them, according to a new survey(i). Indeed, more than six in 10 Americans are looking past labels and fad diets in the New Year, and resolving to eat more natural foods as part of a sensible diet that is nutritious, tasty and heart-healthy, the survey finds. E[acute accent]The survey - a random sample of 1,000 American adults by Opinion Research - was conducted for Lightlife, the leading national producer of refrigerated vegetarian food. Its findings underscore both the continuing stereotypes and surprising progress American consumers have made when it comes to understanding the benefits and over-coming doubts about including vegetarian and other natural foods as an important part of a regular daily diet. E[acute accent]To satisfy consumers' demand for great-tasting vegetarian foods, Lightlife has launched a new line of microwavable heat-and-eat Smart meals -- including Smart Tex Mex, Smart Chili and Smart BBQ - that are not only wholesome and nutritious, but have tested remarkably well in consumer taste tests. E[acute accent]"More and more Americans are looking to natural food as an important part of their daily diet and lifestyle - and they've discovered it isn't just good for you, but also good to eat," said Susan Rolnick-Jansson, at Lightlife. "Planning a healthier diet is one of the best gifts you can give yourself for the New Year. Including all-natural, nutritious, great-tasting products like Lightlife's new Smart meals can help you stay on track throughout the year."

E[acute accent]AMERICANS TRENDING TOWARDS SENSIBLE NATURAL FOODS IN 2005

E[acute accent]In general, the survey finds that as Americans look to 2005, they are turning away from fad diets and plan to include more natural and vegetarian foods as part of sensible diets that are tasty, convenient and nutritious:

E[acute accent]--Fully 62% of the respondents say they will eat foods that are more natural in 2005;

E[acute accent]--44% like foods that are natural, nutritious, convenient and taste good - but say such foods are hard to find;

E[acute accent]--Another 44% say they usually observe a diet that includes meat, but occasionally eat vegetarian products because they know how healthy and good those foods are for them;

E[acute accent]--14% usually follow a vegetarian diet but occasionally eat fish or meat (also known as "flexitarians");

E[acute accent]--One in four Americans (25%) say they are looking to eat less meat in 2005. Of these, 38% say they are reducing the amount of meat they eat because they were on a high protein/low-carbohydrate diet (such as Atkins) and want more balance for 2005.

E[acute accent]HEALTHY DIETS ON NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION LISTS, BUT WILL THEY STICK?

E[acute accent]The survey also makes clear that most Americans want to adopt healthier diets and lifestyles in the New Year, but those resolutions may be difficult to keep.

E[acute accent]--When asked how likely they were to stay on their healthy diet or lifestyle in the New Year, more than half of consumers (51%) said they plan to definitely make it part of their lifestyle throughout the year;

E[acute accent]--Interestingly, experts say that in general, only about 20% of Americans actually keep their New Year's resolutions - lofty aspirations usually fall short of becoming long-term practice;

E[acute accent]--More than a third of the survey respondents (36%) were more realistic - they felt their resolutions were great goals in theory, but would be hard to put into practice;

E[acute accent]--9% conceded their resolutions would be lucky to last a month

E[acute accent]NEW LIGHTLIFE DISHES ANSWER CHALLENGE: TASTE GREAT & GOOD FOR YOU

E[acute accent]The great-tasting new Smart meals from Lightlife are poised to help Americans keep their health and diet-related resolutions in 2005 with a mix of taste, convenience and nutrition that defies expectations many have of vegetarian foods. In the survey, 73% said they knew natural foods were nutritious. But 53% had doubts about the taste of vegetarian meals, and 41% said vegetarian foods "just seem too weird." E[acute accent]In consumer taste tests, however, Lightlife's vegetarian Smart meals scored high on a scale used to rate both vegetarian and meat products. The new meals come in convenient, easy-to-use 6-to-10-ounce microwavable pouches ideal for on-the-go lifestyles, and are available from the produce section of supermarkets and dairy section of natural food stores. E[acute accent]Lightlife's new line is also good for you - containing zero grams of fat and cholesterol per serving and generous amounts of heart-healthy soy protein, perfect for those looking to better manage their health (just in time for National Heart Month in February!). Suggested retail price is \$3.29 per pouch.

E[acute accent]NEW LIGHTLIFE SMART MEALS COME IN THREE GREAT-TASTING VARIETIES

E[acute accent]Smart Tex-Mex

E[acute accent]--Perfect blend of veggie protein, black beans and vegetables in a savory Southwestern sauce.

E[acute accent]--Zero grams of fat and cholesterol.

E[acute accent]--Use to fill tacos, stuff burritos or dip your chip.

E[acute accent]Smart BBQ

E[acute accent]--Just 70 calories a serving.

E[acute accent]--Zero grams of fat and cholesterol.

E[acute accent]--Provides delicious, meat-free BBQ you can feel good about.

E[acute accent]Smart Chili

E[acute accent]--It's old-fashioned chili made the new-fashioned way- without fat and cholesterol.

E[acute accent]--Packed with veggie protein, beans, and just enough spice to lift the spirits, it can provide a delicious, hot meal in minutes simply by heating.

E[acute accent]About Lightlife

E[acute accent]Established in 1979, Lightlife is based in Turners Falls, Massachusetts, and is one of the pioneers of the vegetarian food industry. It is the leading national producer of refrigerated vegetarian meat substitutes, with Smart Dogs(R), Smart Franks(TM), Tofu Pups(R), Smart Deli(R), Smart Bacon(R), Smart Menu(R) and Organic Tempeh. Please visit us at www.Lightlife.com.

E[acute accent](i) These results are based on a CARAVAN(R) survey of 1,000 American adults, conducted by Opinion Research Corporation on behalf of Lightlife between December 10 and 12. The margin of error is +/- 3 percent.

E[acute accent]CARAVAN(R) is a twice-weekly telephone omnibus survey conducted among a total national probability sample of 2,000 adults. The longest running omnibus in the marketplace, CARAVAN(R) is the ideal research vehicle for collecting valuable information on topics ranging from Image Measurement and Advertising Tracking to Product Awareness and Concept Testing. Further information on CARAVAN(R) and Opinion Research Corporation can be found at www.opinionresearch.com.