



Four in ten consumers have bought more functional products during pandemic, Kerry survey shows

Beloit, WI [June 23, 2021] More than four in ten consumers have increased their purchases of functional foods, beverages and supplements since the start of the pandemic, a major global survey has found.

Kerry, the makers of clinically proven immune health ingredient Wellmune®, surveyed 13,000 people across 16 countries to provide manufacturers with insights into the impact of COVID-19 on purchasing behaviors.

Forty-four per cent of respondents globally said they had bought more dietary supplements since the outbreak of the pandemic, while 42% had increased their purchases of functional or fortified foods and beverages.

Respondents were presented with a list of health areas and asked which were reasons for buying healthy lifestyle products. Globally nearly six in ten (58%) chose immune system support, significantly more than the numbers who picked healthy bones and joints (46%), digestive health (43%), heart health (40%) and improved energy (39%). Immune health was the top health benefit sought by consumers in each of the 16 countries surveyed.

As many as 39% of consumers had used an immune health product over the past six months and a further 30% would consider doing so in future, suggesting a total potential immune health market of 69%.

John Quilter, Kerry VP of Global Portfolio – ProActive Health, said: “Interest in health and wellness has never been higher and we wanted to give the industry new insights into changing purchasing habits. One of our key findings was the scale of the impact of the pandemic on demand – not just for immune health products, but for functional foods, beverages, and supplements overall. Consumers were adopting increasingly proactive, holistic attitudes to health, wellness and nutrition long before 2020 but the pandemic has massively accelerated this trend.”

The survey also reveals the food and beverage categories where immune health is a particularly powerful purchase driver. One in three (33%) consumers said they would be interested in purchasing fruit and vegetable juices if they contained ingredients that promoted immune support. Many other categories were also seen as a good fit for immune health benefits, including spoonable yogurt (31%), dairy-based drinks (28%) and hot beverages (24%).



Wellmune, Kerry's proprietary baker's yeast beta 1,3/1,6 glucan, is clinically supported to help strengthen the immune system, and the survey shows that the brand instills high levels of trust.

Respondents were given a detailed description of Wellmune and the types of formats in which it can be found. Eight in ten (80%) found the description believable and 56% thought it was unique. Seven in ten (70%) said they would definitely or probably purchase a product containing Wellmune, and half (50%) said its inclusion would influence them to switch brands.

John Quilter added: "Manufacturers should see the surge in demand for immune health products not as an opportunity, but as a reason for increased responsibility. Everyone in the immune health sector needs to earn the trust of consumers by communicating transparently about product benefits and using proven ingredients supported by high-quality research. The reason Wellmune connects so well with consumers is that its benefits are substantiated by science."

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Notes

Survey carried out online in January 2021. Total sample (n=13,072). Australia (n=805), Brazil (n=804), China (n=808), Colombia (n=803), France (n=801), Germany (n=805), India (n=801), Indonesia (n=805), Italy (n=804), Japan (n=805), Mexico (n=804), South Korea (n=806), Spain (n=802), Thailand (n=809), UK (n=808), USA (n=1002). All respondents had responsibility for grocery purchasing decisions and had used, or considered using, a healthy lifestyle product such as a supplement or functional food over the previous six months.

About Wellmune®

Wellmune® is a natural food, beverage, and supplement ingredient clinically proven to help strengthen the immune system, making it easier for people of all ages to be well and stay well. Part of Kerry's ProActive Health portfolio, Wellmune is a proprietary baker's yeast beta 1,3/1,6 glucan, and is patented, Kosher, Halal, non-allergenic, gluten-free and available in Non-GMO Project verified. As a global brand available in more than 60 countries, Wellmune has regulatory approval in major markets, including GRAS status in the US and novel food approval in Europe and China. A recipient of numerous industry awards, Wellmune is part of Kerry's nutrition and wellness portfolio. For more information, visit [Wellmune.com](https://www.wellmune.com) or follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#).

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