

## Beverage firms to drive healthier drinks in rural India

19 April 2018 | News | By NFS correspondent



This summer, beverage companies are looking at rural India to push healthier drinks, as the growth of sugary carbonated drinks have started tapering off across the country.

Rural and semi-urban segments currently account for 60% of the juice market in India and have been growing faster than metros, according to data from US-headquartered PepsiCo, which sells Pepsi, 7UP and Mountain Dew.

Along with PepsiCo, companies, including Gujarat-based Manpasand Beverages, Dabur and Bisleri have started packing juices and juice based drinks into small affordable PET bottles for rural consumption.

Traditionally, sugary fizzy drinks priced at Rs 10 were mainstays in rural and semi-urban markets.

Manpasand Beverages has developed juices sweetened with honey instead of sugar.

Fresca juices, which has been selling litchi and apple juices in small packs is upping the ante with two-litre family sized packs.

PepsiCo, which just launched juice-based drinks under the Slice brand has partnered with Ravi Jaipuria-led Varun Beverages to increase its reach in rural and semi-urban areas. It aims to double sales of its juice brand Tropicana by 2020 and is shifting away marketing money from its main carbonated brands.

Dabur India marketing head-foods Mayank Kumar said, "With growing health consciousness, the market for healthy beverages has expanded exponentially. On one hand, we are driving our 200ml portion packs in low penetration geographies through a mix of demand as well as distribution enhancement and on-ground visibility initiatives. On the other, we have also expanded the range with the launch of a fruit beverage, Real Koolerz at a lower price point."