

The Mushroom Benefit fuses mushroom functionality and umami goodness into a convenient crunchy snack

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Mushroom innovators The Mushroom Benefit Ltd. introduces its new line of **Umamis Crunchy Snacks**, bringing exotic mushroom goodness to the snack aisles. These all-natural bites offer a delicious, on-the-go snack that leverages the health characteristics innately present in specialty mushrooms — all while granting consumers a naturally derived and guilt-free umami kick. The startup will launch the new product line at the Summer Fancy Foods Show, New York at the Javits Center, on June 23-25, booth #3702, adjacent to the entrance to Hall E.

Umamis Crunchy Snacks are manufactured using traditional extrusion technology applied with novel adaptations that yields a generous 40g-equivalent hit of fresh mushrooms per serving. The result is an indulgent and wholesome umami-rich treat that easily fits today's on-the-go lifestyle. Each package contains a combo of all-natural king oyster mushrooms and corn to give it a crispy puffed texture. The zero trans-fat, plant-based product contains no cholesterol or sugar, and no artificial flavoring or coloring.

"The mushroom base enabled us to design a snack that is all-natural and tasty, as well as delivering mycotherapeutic functionality," says Mira Weigensberg, CEO and co-founder of The Mushroom Benefit, Ltd. "Our product line is compliant with the FDA regulations for defining healthy food products. This is a significant milestone, as it sets The Mushroom Benefit far ahead of the majority of crunchy snack food brand products currently on the market that often contain trans-fats and higher calories with minimal nutrients."

In addition to certain crucial vitamins, minerals, protein and fiber, specialty mushrooms are touted for their naturally occurring beta-glucans, a polysaccharide complex with acknowledged benefits for boosting immunity and balancing metabolic functions. These nutrients can withstand extreme conditions such as heat which enables them to retain their healthful features throughout the manufacturing process.

Positioning specialty mushrooms as the central ingredient adds both exotic appeal and a compelling flavor boost, without the need for MSG, salt or artificial flavors, and takes advantage of the delicious savory sensation that mushrooms naturally impart.

The snack sector is highly dynamic, and the salty snack market in the US is particularly thriving. Current estimates point to sales of close to \$30 billion by 2022[i]. Data from Innova Markets Insights points to a growing snacking trend, particularly among US Millennials who are progressively blurring the lines between snacking and dining. This is largely driven by overly hectic lifestyles, with less time for traditional meal breaks. Innova reports a 17% average annual global growth in confectionery and snacks launches over the past five years.

“The snack market is yearning for innovation,” says Oren Kessler, the company’s VP of R&D and co-founder. “The Mushroom Benefit’s snacks are fun, pampering, joyful and healthy. They come in a variety of crunchy flavors that children can enjoy, while being sophisticated and satisfying for adults as well. Our ultimate goal is to introduce our mushroom treasures into the mainstream of daily living.”

The Umamis Crunch snack portfolio currently comprises four flavors: natural, barbeque, salt and vinegar, and salt and pepper.

“As consumers become more informed about the ingredients contained in their food, there is a pronounced gravitation towards natural, clear-label foods that contribute to well-being yet do not detract from the joy of everyday living,” notes Tal Leizer, CEO of Practical Innovation Ltd., a key innovation engine behind the development of Umamis Crunchy Snack. “The product line offers a better-for-you product that is in a convenient format that conforms to consumers’ busy schedules. We designed it to embody the taste and nutritional values that the wider public is seeking.”