

Coca-Cola SA caters to call for lower sugar intake

Coca-Cola in South Africa says it supports the current recommendation by several leading health authorities, including the World Health Organisation, that people should limit their intake of added sugar to no more than 10% of their total energy or calorie consumption.



It's not only rethinking many of its drinks and package sizes, but also broadening its portfolio to include more brands across existing categories including juices, iced tea and purified water as well as new products such as dairy products and ready to drink coffee.

"We're rethinking many of our drinks and package sizes around the world to reduce calories and sugar and reflect the changing tastes and dietary preferences of our consumers. We are also committed to providing a greater range of beverage choices for those wishing to moderate their sugar intake," says Roger Gauntlett, the general manager of Coca-Cola Africa's South Africa franchise.

According to The Coca-Cola Company, it reduced sugar in more than 200 of its drinks globally. Since 2014, the company has launched more than 100 new low- or no-calorie beverages worldwide in response to changing preferences. Approximately 30% of the more than 3,900 beverages produced by Coca-Cola globally fall into the low or no-sugar categories and 18 out of its 20 top brands now feature a low or no-sugar option.

Long-term business strategy

As part of its long-term business strategy, The Coca-Cola Company says it will focus on bringing new drinks to market that "provide benefits such as nutrition and hydration". It also says it will make smaller, more convenient packages to make controlling sugar easier and give people clear, easy-to-find calorie information up front to help them make informed choices.

“We’re making low and no-sugar drinks more visible and educating people about our low and zero sugar options through our marketing,” says Gauntlett.

In South Africa, over the last three years the Coca-Cola system has reduced the average sugar content across the portfolio by 16%. Through ongoing reduction efforts, the brand aims to reach a total of 22-24% by the end of 2018, which is ahead of industry commitment of a 14-18 calories per person per day reduction by 2018.

Additionally, in response to market research showing that people were looking for packaging sizes that suit smaller households and that make it easier to control their added sugar intake, the company has added new pack sizes include a 300ml offering to replace the 330ml version; and a 440ml to replace the 500ml version.

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