

SPECIALTY FOOD

PRODUCTS • TRENDS • BUSINESS INSIGHTS

MAGAZINE®

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CHEFS on a MISSION:

Jamie Oliver and five others are changing the way America eats



The Community-Candy Sales Connection

CRACKER TRENDS:

New Flavors, Ingredients, Textures

FOODS IN FOCUS

A similar product comes from The Slims Collection from



Some manufacturers are creating mini versions of already successful crackers to offer lower-calorie snack packs.

all natural **MOVIE** no preservatives
crackers

FAMILY OWNED **PARTNERS** SIMPLY DELICIOUS

0.75 oz snack size bags (8 count caddy or 60 count case)

Low in:

- ✓ Calories
- ✓ Fat
- ✓ Sodium

roasted garlic & rosemary
honey wheat
olive oil & sea salt
cheese

facebook.com/partnerscrackers • cookies • crackers • granola

Trumps Foods, Vancouver, B.C. It offers a 100-calorie pack of its all-natural cracker snacks in Banana, Cocoa and the high-fiber Omega Slims that are filled with flax, pumpkin and sunflower seeds. The trans fat-free crackers are being marketed as a calorie-conscious, on-the-go-snack, perfect with a piece of sharp Cheddar or, due to their flavor profiles, as a healthful cookie-like snack on their own.

Selling Strategies

Retailers are finding that consumers who snack on healthier, more flavor-forward varieties, will come back for more. But they are also making sure to use crackers as a way to maximize cheese and dip sales and introduce new varieties to their customers. "We are definitely merchandising more specialty crackers around our Kroger cheese shops than we did three years ago," says Nathan Aldridge, field merchandising specialist for Murray's Cheese. A New York cheese institution since 1940, Murray's partnered with Kroger supermarkets three years ago to open Murray's cheese cases at more than 20

Kroger stores. The cases carry between 150 to 180 cheeses as well as specialty items found in the New York store and local items specific to each Kroger location.

The Murray's Kroger cheese cases offer about 31 cracker varieties and sales are strong. Aldridge cites a 30 percent increase in cracker sales in Kroger's Cincinnati district stores—mainly from customer demand for crackers he brings in that are considered new and cool.

To encourage sales, he suggests not only merchandising crackers on top of the cheese case but actually directly on top of specific cheeses. "This gives customers an easy one-stop shopping experience, especially when they are known for shopping for cheese first, then the cracker," he says.

"Merchandising crackers in a different light at a cheese counter draws customers out of the cracker aisle," Aldridge says, "and gives them an incentive to try new varieties." Which is, of course, what all retailers want. **|SFM|**

Nicole Potenza Denis is a contributing editor to Specialty Food Magazine.