

MSU Product Center

For Agriculture and Natural Resources

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Vegetable-containing side dishes - Overview

Products included in the product line

- For the purpose of this report, vegetable containing side dishes are rice or pasta mixes with a variety of vegetables, baked beans, and different kinds of vegetable stuffed shells and salad kits that are sold as side dishes.

General market trend and information

- In recent years, sales of side dishes at constant prices have been declining mainly due to aging product lines, a lack of innovation and marketing support, and competition from other convenient foods. The market for prepared salad declined mainly due to a decline in sales of branded products in this segment which resulted from low interest by manufacturers.
- In 2003, sales of vegetables going into side dishes through food services and industrial outlets has been estimated at \$153 million, 1% higher than sales in 2002.

New product trends

- Many new products claim to be suitable for cooking or heating in a microwave for a few minutes. There are also some ethnic-oriented side dishes that are entering the market.
- Most of the side dishes are coming in flexible plastic containers, while others appear in cartons, jars, trays or tubes. Shelf stable side dishes are dominating, while some products need to be chilled or refrigerated. Some products claim to be without preservatives, artificial flavors or fat. Others are made from organic ingredients and claim to be suitable for a vegetarian diet.
- Some vegetable-containing side dishes are coming targeting specific demographic segments.

Manufacturing and distribution issues

- Most of the branded and private label side dish products are coming from leading brand manufacturers. However, since the category now contains mainly aging products, large food manufacturers tend to show less interest and side dish does not appear to be their high priority.

Overall assessment of opportunities

- Due to high competition from complete meals and other convenient foods, vegetable-containing side dishes will provide selective product development opportunities for manufacturers.

Sources

Mintel, Global New Product Database. <http://www.gnpd.com>

____, Side dishes, 2003.