

Snacks for healthy eaters

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UiTM food researchers Noriham Abdullah, Marina Zulkifli, Mohd Hilmi Hassan, Wan Nur Zahidah Wan Zainon and Nur Ilmiah Alimin have developed a new process for the formulation of fruit peel based snacks to bridge the gap between fast, on-the-go snacking and meeting consumer health concerns.

As there is a growing body of evidence to suggest that health conscious consumers are turning to more adventurous and healthy alternatives to chocolate, biscuits and cakes, the researchers produced fruit leather that utilises agricultural by-products as its main ingredients.

The team from the Faculty of Applied Sciences used typically tropical ingredients which are cheap and available in abundance, such as mango

and guava peels, to produce leathery, bite size [snacks](#) called Fruity-Peelo.

Their basic premise is that fruit peels should be treated as a specialised residue due to high levels of polyphenols, carotenoids and other [bioactive compounds](#) which offer various [health benefits](#). Utilisation of these by products for product recovery is a promising measure from both an environmental and economic point of view.

Lead researcher, Dr. Noriham Abdullah, says that not only is Fruity-Peelo a tasty convenience snack, it also carries particular health compounds such as antioxidants, dietary fibres and Vitamin C. The product also boasts a long shelf life at room temperature.

All this begs the fundamental question: will consumers actually break the habit of choosing indulgent varieties of food for such healthy snacks?

Thanks to heightened concerns over climbing obesity levels and the efforts of researchers who continue to rejuvenate the image of the on-the-go options, products such as Fruity-Peelo are well placed to target the growing trend for convenience snacks that are healthy, quick and adventurous.

Provided by University Teknologi MARA

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