Calming ingredients help consumers to relax

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In today's fast-paced society consumers are looking for many different ways to de-stress, relax and slow down. In the December issue of *Food Technology* magazine published by the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT), Contributing Editor Linda Milo Ohr writes about several ingredients and beverages that may have a calming effect when consumed.

Some popular ingredients currently being used in products to promote relaxation or reduce stress include botanicals such as chamomile, passionflower, and valerian. Most people are familiar with chamomile in tea form as a mild sedative and muscle relaxant. Another less well-known botanical, gotu kola, has been known to enhance cognitive function including memory and alertness and reduce mood disorders. Passionflower is a sedative, and valerian is a muscle relaxant.

Several companies are creating ingredients from these botanicals to meet the consumer demand for products that promote relaxation. One company has created an ingredient for beverages from a plant extract derived from lemon balm leaves of the species Melissa officinalis L. that acts simultaneously on stress and its associated symptoms like sleep disorders thanks to its specific composition. Another company created a pure form of the amino acid L-theanine to be added to beverages shown in a study (Yoto et al. 2012) to reduce anxiety, and keep blood pressure down in adults.

More information: Read the Food Technology article here: www.ift.org/food-technology/pa … /nutraceuticals.aspx

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