

# FEELING **GOOD** about **FRIED** FOODS



## FDA REQUIREMENTS

The Food and Drug Administration has also weighed in on this issue. As of January of this year, the FDA requires that food companies list trans fat content separately on the Nutrition Facts panel of all packaged goods

Aramark Corp.'s Nutritional DiningStyles research shows that customer worries about trans fats (21%) have overtaken their concern

about limiting carbs (18%). Aramark also found that health consciousness comes in at number four among factors people consider when dining out, up from fifth place in 2004.

Many foodservice manufacturers are responding with an array of food products that help you address changing lifestyles and new patron eating perspectives. As retail activity on the trans fat issues intensifies, the demand for 0g TFA products in foodservice is likely to grow. According to a report from AC Nielsen, products labeled "no trans fat" increased 12% to \$6.4 billion for the 52-week period ended October 2004 compared with the previous 52-week period. In fried foods, McCain Foods USA is leading

He accomplished this by changing the oil in which his fried foods were prepared. "We had an opportunity to look at a zero trans fat cooking oil," says Garvey. Six months ago the company also switched to some of the items in McCain's 0g TFA line including Ore-Ida Tater Tots®, as a second-fry option, and Brew City® Beer Battered Onion Rings.

"While it's not a knock-down-your-door, let-me-shake-your-hand attitude, reaction from customers has been good," says Garvey.

## THE RIGHT OIL

While many operations like Jakes Hamburgers are taking steps to remove trans fat from the menu, McCain research shows that there is still plenty of confusion when it comes to frying oil selection.

Using the right oil and the right procedures is key to providing healthier fried options. Check the label to verify there are zero grams of trans fat per serving and that the words "hydrogenated" or "partially hydrogenated" do not appear. Non-hydrogenated oils contain less saturated fat; have high levels of unsaturated fats that don't elevate cholesterol counts; and have little or no trans fat.

Don't fry foods containing trans fat in the same oil that was used for items containing no trans fat and practice good overall fryer maintenance. "It is more labor intensive and expensive, states Garvey. "But the trade off is beneficial company wise," he is quick to add.

## PROMOTION IS KEY

According to McCain Research, 63% of fast-food customers say they would be more likely to visit a restaurant that served food fried in trans-fat-free oil. Don't be shy about sharing your wellness philosophy with your patrons. Educate your waitstaff on 0g TFA products and prep methods and consider using POS materials like counter cards, table tents and waitstaff buttons. "Customers see our table tents and appreciate the fact that we're trying to offer them healthier options," says Garvey.

For free merchandising tools, consumer perspectives on trans fat and practical information on products, oils and preparation methods, visit [www.mccainusa.com/zerotrans](http://www.mccainusa.com/zerotrans).

Now when customers say "pass the ketchup," they can feel comfortable about ordering fries thanks to operators—like you—who are serving 0g TFA products.

## GOOD OIL CHOICES

Here are some good frying options that have zero grams of trans fat\* per three-ounce serving.

### \* BEEF TALLOW

(\*May not fit zero gram claim)

- High stability, but very high saturated fat
- Inexpensive
- Can have up to 5% trans fat

### \* PALM OIL

- High stability, but high saturated fat
- No trans fat

### \* HIGH OLEIC OILS

- More stable, bland flavor
- Most comparable to PH oils but very expensive
- No trans fat

### \* CANOLA, RICE, PEANUT, NUSUN

(Non-hydrogenated)

- Canola – Fairly stable, widely available
- Rice – Has the highest saturates of this group
- Peanut – Has a unique flavor
- All are no trans fat options

### \* CORN, SOYBEAN, COTTON, SUNFLOWER

(Non-hydrogenated)

- Lower in stability
- Less expensive, widely available
- Corn – Has a unique flavor
- Cotton – Has higher saturates and a sweet taste
- All are no trans fat options

**W**hile diners today are embracing bold new flavors and Asian and Latin fare, they still continue to enjoy classic favorites.

In fact, according to data from NPD/Crest burgers and fries are rated as the two most frequently ordered items in restaurants. Yet, Baby Boomers, the group who put the meat-and-potato duo on the culinary map, are now among those looking for more healthy options.

Consumers are addressing their health concerns in a never-ending battle to find the right balance of diet and exercise to help maintain a fit lifestyle. Currently the issue at the forefront is trans fat or trans fatty acids (TFAs). According to the FDA, trans fat reduces HDL (good) cholesterol and increase LDL (bad) cholesterol, which may also contribute to heart disease and stroke.

Trans fat is formed when liquid vegetable oils go through a chemical process known as hydrogenation where hydrogen is added to make the oils more solid. TFAs are found in baked goods, snack foods, fried foods and other processed foods made with, or fried in, partially hydrogenated oils.

the way with an expanded line of french fries and specialty potatoes that are both 0g TFA and low in saturated fat. McCain also offers an expansive range of 0g trans fat appetizers and snack foods, including mushrooms, onion rings, empanadas and Poppers® stuffed jalapeños marketed under the Anchor, Moore's, McCain and Brew City brands.

## RETHINK PREP

While purchasing 0g TFA products is a good first step, prep methods may need adjusting to gain complete customer confidence – and ease their concerns about eating fried foods. Oven baking is one option, but if deep-frying is your preferred method, then oil selection is critical.

Greg Garvey, co-owner of four Jakes Hamburgers in the Dallas area, wanted to be able to offer diners something in the way of wholesome options on a menu that "does not offer a lot of healthy choices."

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