

NEW TRENDS IN FOOD SERVICE INDUSTRY

Need for Introducing Nutritionally Balanced and Health Specific Meals:

Food provided by residential institutions such as boarding schools, college hostels, hospitals, and old age homes are probably the only source of nutrition and must be adequate. The list of residential institutes is long, and it is the responsibility and moral obligation of the caterer to provide nutritionally adequate meals to the residents. Sample menus based on the principles of meal planning should be provided to the caterer to ensure to ensure that the meal is balanced as well as attractive, appetizing and affordable.

The need for nutritious meals, each meal meeting one-third of RDA, is necessary for growth and well being of the individual and the nation. Different requirements based on age, gender, activity and physiological state should be provided. Nutritional education and awareness of community at large is necessary. People should be more particular about what they eat and where they eat. This is particularly necessary to combat the lifestyle diseases to which youngsters are falling prey.

Critical Evaluation of Fast Food:

The fast food industry is growing rapidly all over the world to provide a quick meal to customers at an affordable cost and in very little time. Modern commercial fast food is often highly processed and prepared in an industrial fashion. Most items on the menu are prepared at a central supply facility and then supplied to individual outlets where they are reheated/cooked or assembled in a short time. The central kitchen ensures consistency in product quality and ability to deliver the order quickly to the customers eliminating labour and equipment costs in, the individual restaurants.

1. Since the fast food concept relies on speed, uniformity and low cost, fast food items need ADDITIVES and processing to ensure flavour, consistency and freshness of the product. This processing often

reduces the NUTRITIVE VALUE of food. Many popular fast food items are unhealthy and excessive consumption can lead to obesity. These foods adversely effect the eating habits and health of children who prefer burgers, french fries and soft drinks to a traditional hot meal at the table.

2. Local cuisines are dying a slow death as people are forgetting the richer, ma-e varied and narishing tastes of freshly harvested seasonal food.
3. Some fast food chains are offering healthy alternative of fresh foods and salad and low fat in their menu. I lowever these foods are still high in fat and cholesterol and refined cereals. South Indian fast food snacks are fermented food combinations which are more nutritious than western counter parts. They are blend of cereal and pulses and are non greasy, easy to digest and safe to eat.

Nutritional Evaluation of Newil Launched Products:

A wide variety of convenience foods are available and new products in attractive packages are being launched every day to meet the growing demands of working woman, single families , the elderly and commercial establishments who are too busy to invest valuable time and labour in pre-preparations. The newly launched products in the market can be categorized under five heads namely:

1. Basic product
2. Ready to cook product
3. Ready to use product
4. Pre-cooked product
5. Table ready product

Many products launched in the market make; health claim which at times could be misleading. Convenience is not the main criteria, but meeting the day's nutritional needs should be checked. Some newly launched products based on soy proteins, flax seeds, carotene and vitamin-E rich oils have distinct benefits while other foods such as non diary creams have both advantages because of no cholesterol and disadvantages because of fatty

acids composition of vegetable oils used. Bakery shortenings in the market are specially designed for a particular product and the ready products are of superior quality but the trans-fatty acids present in these fats are harmful to health.

In short, these products are at the basic level clean, washed, peeled and cut or ready to use, ready to cook, ready to eat or ready to serve. Although these products are industrially prepared often under strict regulation and control and sometimes bacteriologically safer than fresh goods, if they are not stored under temperature controlled storage during retailing, their nutritive value and overall quality can be grossly affected.



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