

Nutrition Week initiative successful

Tetra Pak's support of National Nutrition Week 2015 was a successful public-private collaboration between the Department of Basic Education, Clover and Tetra Pak, in which nearly 10,000 learners, their teachers, school employees, and food handlers benefitted.



The tripartite collaboration conveyed messages about the benefits of healthy eating, healthy lifestyles, curbing malnutrition and obesity, and overall demonstrated the benefits of eating healthily at school.

"We were overwhelmed by the response," said Penny Ntuli, Communications Director of Tetra Pak South Africa. "Our team of around 35 people, consisting of the three partners, visited 19 schools in four provinces, including Gauteng, Mpumalanga, the Northern Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal. We gave each learner UHT milk from Clover in 250ml packs, pencil cases that carried our nutrition and healthy eating messaging, and we got to engage with each and every learner about the benefits of milk, keeping alert through good nutrition to foster quality education, and generally eating and drinking healthy foods and liquids to develop strong and healthy bodies and minds."

Ntuli added that it is crucial to instil healthy habits in youngsters during their formative years because they benefit immediately by being alert and receptive to their education on a daily basis, they develop healthy and strong physiologies, and they develop healthy habits that follow them into adulthood.

"We were pleasantly surprised to see in almost every location we visited educators had seized the opportunity and brought

their own complementary messages about healthy eating with examples of vegetables that benefit children as they grow," said Ntuli.

"We received a very warm welcome from the older children too," she said, "who were receptive to the messages and the activities and engagement we had planned for them. The campaign was an immense success for all three partners and we feel sure it contributes towards the government's aim to help reduce the obesity rate across South Africa by the year 2020."

One in four undernourished

Of the 805 million who suffer from chronic undernourishment around the world, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO), nearly 230 million were African by 2014. Nearly one in four sub-Saharan Africans remain undernourished, a situation that UHT milk can help to reverse.

Clover and Tetra Pak specifically chose to donate packs of UHT milk because of its many nutritional and other benefits. UHT, or long-life milk, contains no preservatives and keeps fresh for more than six months due to the six-layered packaging that locks in the goodness.

Milk is the closest to ideal single food source because of its high nutrient values and the fact that new advanced milks contain no hormones, contain large doses of calcium, and are fortified with vitamins such as D, A, and B, as well as phosphorus.

Pasteurised milk, however, is not the most convenient for active people on the go or those living in rural areas far from the cold distribution chain or where electricity supply is erratic. UHT, or long-life milk, is fresh and, contrary to popular misconception, contains no preservatives. The secret to its long life is that it is treated to ultra-high temperatures - that destroy none of the goodness - and then packaged in the six-layer carton packs to retain freshness. The packaging is also specially designed for people on the move and makes it easier to transport and consume and, for the increasingly environmentally aware among us, is 100% recyclable.

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