

What are savoury snacks?

History

Potato crisps have been around for over 150 years and remain the most popular savoury snack in Europe.

Raw materials

Savoury snacks are products made staple raw materials such as vegetables (potato, carrot etc.), fruit (incl. tree nuts), grains (wheat, maize, rye, and rice), starch, vegetable oils and seasonings.

Diversity

The sector offers a variety of products including potato crisps, corn chips/ tortillas, puffed and baked snacks, crackers, pretzels, savoury biscuits, popcorn, meat snacks, peanuts and other snack nuts.

Consumption

Savoury snacks are consumed at different occasions and in different ways across Europe; typically as aperitifs, meal accompaniments, sharing or eating on-the-go.

Five Common Savoury Snack Myths

MYTH: Savoury snacks are a major source of salt and fat in our diets

FACT: Savoury snacks are typically eaten in small quantities and so do not contribute large amounts of salt or fat to average diets. The UK, for example, is one of Europe's largest per capita consumers of savoury snack products, but according to the UK's National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS) they contribute, on average, less than 2% of the adult population's dietary salt intake and less than 3% of the adult total fat intake.

MYTH: Potato crisps contain more salt than any other food

FACT: Potato crisps *taste* salty because the salt is applied to the surface of the snack. However, many other everyday foods such as bread, cereals, and cheese often contain much higher amounts of salt, though you may not notice it as it is distributed throughout the foodstuff. Across Europe a typical 30g serving of ready-salted potato crisps will contain around 0.4 g of salt.

MYTH: Savoury snacks are high in fat

FACT: Savoury snack products are available with fat levels ranging anywhere from around 0% to 40% depending on the cooking process and raw materials used. Producers have made efforts to reduce the fat content of popular mainstream products. In addition, market data suggests that most of them produce fat reduced options. This offers consumers a multitude of choices when making decisions about diet, and provides something to meet everyone's needs. On-pack nutrition information helps consumers in making that choice.

MYTH: Savoury snacks are a major source of saturated fat in our diets

FACT: By switching to alternative vegetable oils which are lower in saturated fat, such as sunflower, rapeseed, corn and olive, the savoury snacks industry has managed to significantly reduce the saturated fat content of its products over recent years.

We estimate that since 2003 the vast majority of the European snacks market has switched, where technically possible, from higher saturated fat vegetable oils to these alternatives, resulting in reductions in saturated fat contents of products in excess of 70%.

MYTH: Savoury snacks have no nutritional value

FACT: All savoury snack products contain vital nutrients (carbohydrate, fat, protein), micronutrients in the form of minerals, vitamins, and fibre, and offer a quick source of energy.

Being made from plant foods, savoury snacks contain all of the vitamins, minerals, and fibre found in the raw ingredients, usually in a concentrated form.

For example potato crisps are a good source of vitamin C, and provide significant amounts of some of the B vitamins. Because they are cooked in vegetable oil, they are a good source of vitamin E. The nutritional value of nuts and the health benefits of their consumption are generally recognised. Cashews, for example, are high in copper and iron, which contribute to the normal functioning of the immune system.