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Delight in a Bite

Nicky Schrader*Tararua College**Year 11 Food Technology, 14-week project**Teacher: Diana Eagle*

When asked to identify an issue in the given 'Lunch Box' context, Nicky chose to investigate a snack product. She wanted to develop something for teenage girls who play sport that reflected a key market trend for healthy but indulgent snacks.

She surveyed a small focus group representing her target market on the current products they liked, and the type of snack that might suit their needs. She then investigated the available foods suitable for before- or after-game snacks, and asked the group for their comments on these.

One of the preferred choices was a scroggin product (a 'Me Too' product), which inspired her to try adapting it to better suit her target market. Her solution would be scroggin balls with lots of fruit, using a fruit syrup formulation to act as the sticking ingredient.

Nicky had to develop a solution that would caramelize and hold the scroggin ingredients together, one that hopefully used less added sugar than the current market products. After trialling a range of fruit-based products, including fruit leathers and fruit juices, she finally developed a syrup that was fit for its purpose by combining apricot and peach syrup from the canned products with liquid glucose to help caramelize the solution.

The solution was then added to a balanced mix of nuts and dried fruit which included apricots, cranberries, raisins and prunes. She developed this mixture into small bite sizes and dipped one half into melted chocolate. The result was a moist fruit/nut texture with a fruity flavour and the sweet, indulgent taste of chocolate.

When she presented this final product to her focus group they were thrilled with the product and commented on it being "a delight in a bite" which she used in her final labelling concept. Their feedback suggested that her product would be most suitable for teenage girls to have as a pre- or post-event snack, or as a good energy booster for a half time nibble.

Teacher comment

Nicky demonstrated good technological practice in her product development by continuing to experiment with ingredients and their quantities, until she solved her issues by developing a caramelised mixture in her recipe formulation. Using her focus group, and being clear as to the feedback she wanted from them each time she met with them, enhanced the direction of her project.

Nicky showed innovation in the development of her scroggin bites by looking at a current market product and then developing a new look and taste combination to suit a particular market. After developing a nutrition information panel for her product Nicky was able to compare the sugar and fat content with current market products and was pleased to note that hers was definitely healthier, even with the indulgence of chocolate. It was certainly a "Delight in a Bite"!



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