

“We’re going to witness a rise in drinks with nutritionally dense ingredients”

☞ says Geeta Sidhu Robb, CEO and founder of Nosh Detox. “We’re going to witness a rise in drinks with nutritionally dense ingredients that offer a higher nutrient profile such as kale, quinoa and chia seeds.”

Coconut water

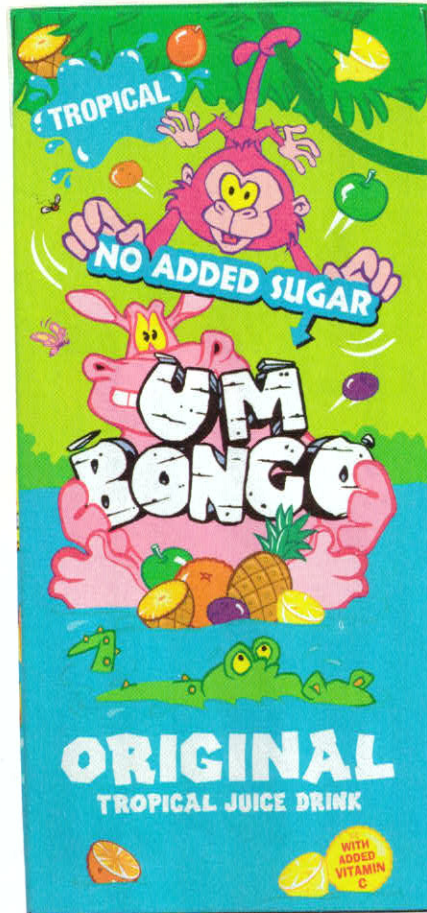
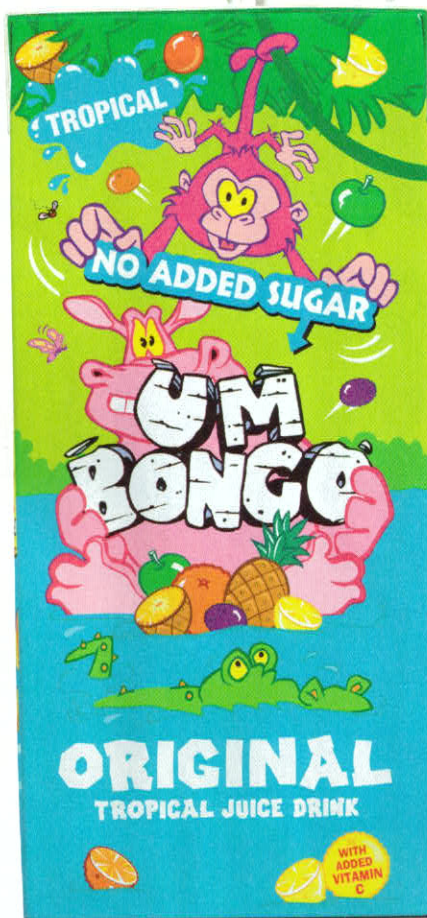
With shoppers seeking out lower-sugar, functional alternatives to conventional fruit juice, we’re also witnessing a rise in coconut water. Low in calories, fat free and without artificial sweeteners, coconut water is a rich source of potassium and electrolytes, offering a 100% natural alternative to juices and smoothies, say players in this sector.

“The UK coconut water market is growing fast and is currently worth £26m, which is double the size of last year,” says Adrian Troy, head of marketing for AG Barr, which launched Rubicon coconut water in April 2014. “It is estimated that the market will be worth £100m in the next three years.”

In order to secure a share of that market, players are moving away from just plain old coconut water, launching increasingly inventive variants. Jax Coco launched the ‘world’s first’ dark chocolate-infused coconut water alongside a banana variant in Ocado in January, both boasting up to 40% less sugar than fruit juice. And Vita Coco mixed coconut water with lemon purée with the February 2014 launch of Vita Coco Lemonade, before expanding into kids drinks the following month.

But lower-sugar alternatives aren’t the only path to success, as not-from-concentrate brand Copella has proved. Despite its Waitrose delisting – and the fact that the not-from-concentrate market as a whole suffered value decline of 1.2% on volumes down 0.3% [Kantar] – the PepsiCo owned brand is going from strength to strength, with value sales up 7% on volumes up 4.6% [IRI].

A spike in promotional activity appears to have helped Copella. The brand more than doubled its use of featured space promotions in 2014, offering shoppers an average saving of £1.23 per unit compared with £1.07 the previous year [Assosia 52 w/e 31 December 2014]. Meanwhile, the wider market’s decline can partly be attributed to a decline in featured space deals in some retailers, although some brands say the end of the fierce deals that characterised the market previously has aided their profitability. ☞



Panda and Peppa set to it on healthy kids’ drinks

Panda has toned down its packaging in a bid to shake off its fizzy drinks image; Um Bongo is ditching sugar in favour of sucralose: with the war on sugar raging, kids’ drinks brands have been forced to shape up.

“The negative headlines in the media are driving a tide of change and awareness will drive away products not suitable for people’s health,” says Bobby Patel, founding partner at Appy Food & Drinks, which rolled out its lower-sugar Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and Peppa Pig drinks sweetened with stevia to Tesco last June.

Vimto-owned Panda says it is enjoying year-on-year value growth of

69% since it introduced clearer packaging with improved descriptions of its no-added-sugar credentials in April 2014, when its flavoured water range was renamed Panda Splash to differentiate it from the juice range.

This month Refresco Gerber is launching a 1-litre no-added-sugar juice drink sweetened with sucralose as an alternative to sugar under its retro kids brand Um Bongo, with just 18 calories per 200ml. “Our innovations team has



been working closely with brands to bring down sugar levels, replace sugar with sweeteners, and reduce portion sizes,” says James Logan, commercial director at Refresco Gerber, which is also rolling out school-friendly 150ml formats of Sunride juice this spring.

Appy Foods says its Peppa Pig licensed cartons, made with 50% spring water and 50% natural juice with stevia, are its most successful owing to ingredients as well as the parent-friendly persona. “Licensing partners and manufacturers have a responsibility to work with brands that care what products are created using their licences because what kids put in their tummies is very important.”

That responsibility prompted Innocent to add Fruity Water to its kids range, a not-from-concentrate mix of 50% juice and 50% spring water, in January.