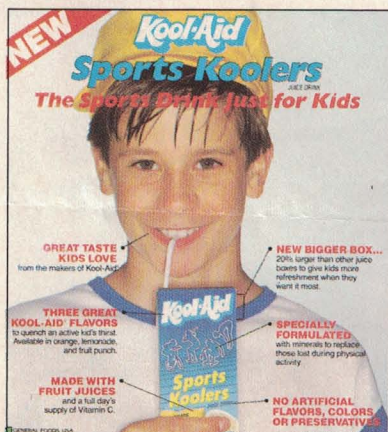


# Marketers Find Kid Stuff Is the Right Stuff

MIAMI BEACH, FLA.—Packaged-foods marketers have rediscovered kids. Children are more than a quarter of the market for macaroni and cheese, pizza, spaghetti, processed meats and salty snacks, according to MRCA Information Sources. And, kids ate more than one third of all frozen novelties, fruit drinks and pre-sweetened cereal consumed at home from July 1986 to June 1987. Canny manufacturers are aiming other new products at this market.

The most promising category is microwavable dinners and entrees. The Campbell Microwave Institute reports that 9 out of 10 kids ages 6-17 use the microwave. With this opportunity in mind, Geo. A. Hormel & Co. has begun test marketing a seven-variety line of **Kid's Kitchen** entrees in Indianapolis, Denver and Phoenix. Advanced packaging technology, presumably similar to Hormel's successful Top Shelf adult entrees, enables Kid's Kitchen to be stored unrefrigerated for up to 18 months. The seven varieties available are macaroni and cheese, spaghetti with meatballs in tomato sauce, chicken chow mein, spaghetti rings in tomato sauce, macaroni and chicken, chunky vegetables and beef in sauce, and beef ravioli in tomato sauce.

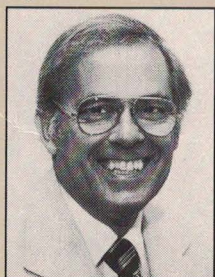


General Foods' Kool-Aid Sports Koolers is the first isotonic beverage directly aimed at active children.

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## NEW PRODUCT WATCH

By Martin Friedman



**My Own Meal**, a new Chicago company, headed by Mary Ann Jackson D'Onofrio, has introduced a line of main-dish meals in microwavable plastic pouches for children ages 2 to 8. The meals, which include chicken, meatballs and macaroni, and pasta with meat and barley, have no preservatives, no MSG, no artificial additives and need no refrigeration. They can be boiled or microwaved.

A frozen, microwavable entrée line from Multi-National Co., located in Hastings-on-Hudson, N.Y., is testing **Mr. Food Meals for Tod-**

**dlers** in northern New Jersey. They are offered in pasta wheels and cheese, pasta shells and meatballs, creamed turkey and fish, and potato sticks varieties. In upstate New York, McCain Foods Inc. is marketing **Alphabet Fries** and **Potato Squares**, crispy, side dish finger foods made from real mashed potatoes.

There are few children's breakfast foods other than the well-established, ready-to-eat, pre-sweetened cereals. However, Pet Inc. is trying **Kid Waffles** in Rochester, N.Y., and other markets. The waffles are described as "soft on the inside, crisp on the outside; and the kind that won't wimp out under gobs and gobs of butter and syrup."

Snack foods have always been attractive to ravenous youngsters, and many new choices are in distribution. RJR Nabisco's **Del Monte Corp.** sells its canned, single-serve yogurt cups under the headline, "Now Yogurt's Kid Stuff." The yogurt-fruit puree mixture needs no refrigeration and comes in a sturdy pop-top container so it holds up in the lunch box.

General Foods is regionally marketing **Kool-Aid Sports Koolers** juice drink, "The Sports Drink Just for Kids." This is the first isotonic beverage directly aimed at active children. Sargento Cheese Co. promotes its **MooTown Snackers**, individually wrapped, 100% natural cheese snacks with the copy line, "Your kids'll eat them 'til the cows come home." Continental Baking Co. has introduced "new kid-size **Hostess** pies in a mom-size package!"

Non-food manufactur-

ers also are directing new products at the youth market. Colgate-Palmolive is out with **Colgate Junior**, sparkling, star-shaped toothpaste; and **Colgate Junior Toothbrushes**. These introductions follow successful launches of Procter & Gamble's Sparkle Crest for Kids and a bubble-gum flavor extension of Beecham Products USA Inc.'s Aqua-Fresh Toothpaste. Sandoz Inc. has launched **Nite Light**, "Nighttime Cough & Cold Relief for Children," while P&G offers a similar product



These main-dish meals need no refrigeration and can be boiled or microwaved.

in its **Vicks Children's NyQuil Nighttime Cough Medicine**. Scott Paper Co. also reaches stuffed-nose kids with **Ka-choos Children's Facial Tissues** "for little noses, little sniffles and little smiles."

Cleveland-based BertSherm Products is in mid-western markets with a floral-scented deodorant called **Fun 'n' Fresh**, aimed at children between the ages of 7 and 12. Solgar has a **Vita-Kid** children's chewable multivitamin line made with Sucanat, a natural sweetener made with cold-pressed sugar cane juice. Nutritech Co., a Santa Barbara, Calif., health food stores supplier, has developed **California Earth Shake**, a children's milkshake-style powder. Earth Shake is packaged in its own shaker bottle and cap cup.

The breakfast cereal market is concentrating on adult and all-family products. Of the 97 new cereals reported in *New Product News* in 1988, only 10 were traditional kids cereals. Ralston-Purina had the most creative concepts—Dinosaurs, Dunkin' Donuts and, now, **Morning Funnies**, a pre-sweetened, "smiling faces" cereal with kids' comic strips on the back of the package.



Sandoz Inc., like other non-food manufacturers, aims Nite Light at the youth market.