**CONSUMER LED MARKET ANALYTICS - A NOVEL METHOD FOR INNOVATION LANDSCAPING OF REMOTE MARKETS**

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**Introduction**

Patent analytics have traditionally been used by industry to source information relating to compliance, emerging technology development, competitor activity and R&D investment. It was hypothesised that patent data could also reveal innovation trends in response to consumer needs in remote markets. To test this hypothesis, a case study has been prepared combining in-market consumer research on the attributes of “premium” food products with an analysis of Chinese patent activity. The resulting case study reported herein, focusses on premium dairy innovation in China.

**Development of ASEAN patent database**

In market consumer research capturing Premium food attributes as defined by the consumer

**Results**

**Development of ASEAN patent database**

A consumer led approach to the data

Patent citation analysis conducted with a focus on New Zealand and China, to identify Australian innovation opportunities.

**Conclusion**

Preparation of this case study demonstrated the effectiveness of the consumer led patent searching methodology. Using this novel method to search Chinese patent data resulted in the identification of several innovation opportunity areas. The method allows premium enabling patents to bubble to the surface whilst maintaining a broad view of the dairy innovation patent landscape for China. A subsequent validation exercise conducted using traditional patent classification searching coupled with technology key words was found to have a reduced hit rate for premium enabling patents resulting in less opportunity for the discovery of unexpected premium innovations.

**Method**

Development specific search conducted (Dairy in China)

Search results were then used to map out consumer benefits per innovation patent and subsequently to generate an innovation landscape for Chinese dairy.

Full case study report can be found at www.foodvaluechain.unimelb.edu.au on resource / publications.

**Dairy innovation themes in China**

Relevant premium patents were classified by category (cheese, milk, yoghurt and ice cream) and the major innovation themes found ranged from Taste – Health – Wellbeing – Beauty

**Example Innovation Opportunities**

**Flavour** formulations for milk based beverages differed widely from the from traditional strawberry, chocolate and banana varieties found on the Australian supermarket shelf. Fruit juice and milk combinations coupled with carbonation or filtration processes to make milk more translucent/thinner were common. Flavourings for ice-cream included carrot, sesame, black tea and traditional Chinese fruit/vegetables.

**Functional Products** included a wide range of innovations with a number of patents related to the addition of vegetable proteins into milk bases. Complex combinations of traditional Chinese Medicines were incorporated into a number of wellbeing type products for balancing ‘Qi’ and tonifying ‘Yang’.

There were also additives with specific health claims for heart health, diabetes and digestive health. Fermented whey based beverages were also a new area for consideration by the Australian market, manufacture of these beverages may be an opportunity to value add to existing whey waste streams.

**Beauty** was another new innovation space, Formulation patents included a milk base enriched with collagen and ceramide, while other patents included beauty claims for specific bacterial strains e.g. Streptococcus thermophiles.

Chinese beauty product formats included beverages and tablets (image is a daily milk beverage enriched with 5500mg hydrolysed marine collagen and L-Arginine, Polysaccharide of Silver Ear mushroom (Tremella fuciformis), essential vitamins, C, A, E, B complex and D3.)