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## Sweet Biscuits, Snack Bars, and Fruit Snacks in Hong Kong, China

### PROSPECTS

#### Premiumization within Sweet Biscuits with Greater Shelf Presence of European Imports

**D**emand for sweet biscuits in Hong Kong continued to increase in 2019, with stronger retail volume growth for chocolate coated biscuits, wafers, and plain biscuits. Sales of sweet biscuits tend to be driven by seasonal demand and cross-border purchasing from mainland China during festive seasons, as they offer an indulgent treat for entertaining or gifting. A certain degree of premiumization is evident in this category, with increasing popularity for more expensive products such as chocolate coated biscuits, in addition to a greater shelf presence of European imported biscuits such as products from Italy, which attract consumers with in-store promotions.

#### Active Lifestyles Drive Demand for Protein/Energy Bars

Outdoor active lifestyles are helping to drive demand for snack bars, and in particular protein/energy bars, as these are believed to provide a convenient source of energy before, during or after exercise, such as cycling, running or going to the gym. Using nuts in snack bars is one way to promote natural protein content, but producers are also beginning to offer interesting ingredients and flavor combinations to entice consumers while still emphasizing their healthy positioning.

Mediterra offers vegetable options in its snack bars including kale, pumpkin seed, fig, and almond, in addition to walnut and black olive, offering adventurous consumers less conventional options. Leading protein/energy bar brand Soy Joy from Japan offers consumers with gluten intolerance a healthy nutritional alternative by removing wheat, instead using whole soybean flour in addition to fiber, fruit and nuts, while emphasizing its low GI content, which is believed to help slow down the absorption of carbohydrates.

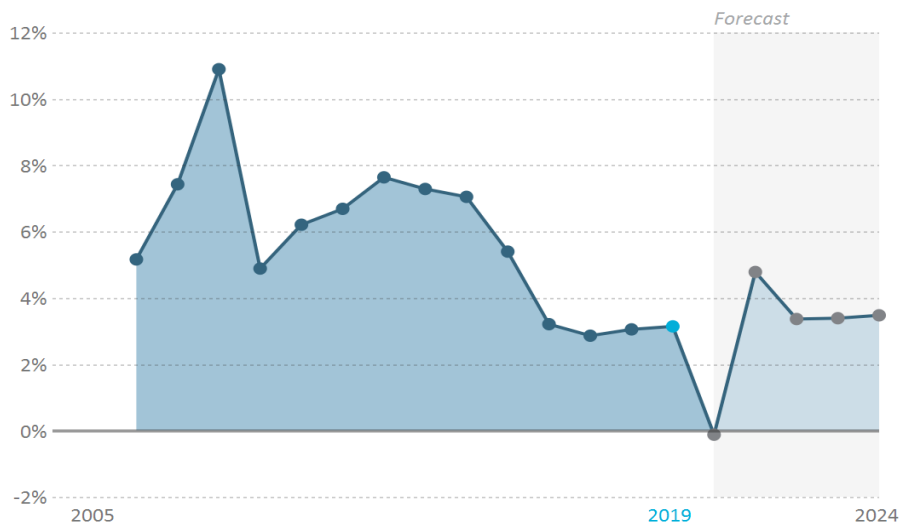
#### Fruit Snacks Offer Convenient Nutritious Snack on the Go

Two factors are influencing greater demand for convenient snacks for on-the-go consumption in Hong Kong; increasingly hectic lifestyles of the emerging working class segment and health and wellness trends. Therefore, in addition to conveniently packaged snack bars with high protein and energy content, consumers are also reaching for perceived healthier fruit snacks. Although this category is still emerging in the country, more health-aware consumers are looking to fruit snacks that can offer them a nutritious snack rather than a packet of potato chips or sweet biscuits. Fruit snacks such as prunes and dates are now being offered in convenient individual packaging which can be easily carried in a bag for on-the-go consumption, reducing the mess caused by a larger

### Sales Performance of Sweet Biscuits, Snack Bars and Fruit Snacks in Hong Kong, China

% Y-O-Y Retail Value RSP Growth 2005-2024

3.1%



open packet. Products such as these can be found in convenience stores, catering to the grab-and-go trend.

### COMPETITIVE LANDSCAPE

#### Kraft Foods Retains Leadership with Strong Placing in Sweet Biscuits

Kraft Foods retained its leadership of sweet biscuits, snack bars, and fruit snacks in Hong Kong in 2019, although it lost some value share to second-ranked The Garden Co Ltd. Kraft Foods' leadership is supported by local consumers' appreciation of international brands and the fact that it offers a number of brands that actively deliver various images, flavors, and product collaborations with other brands. As there is not a huge difference in pricing in some cases compared to domestic products, local consumers are more willing to trade up to international brands for exclusive flavors and premium quality. Its well-known sweet biscuit brands McVitie's, Oreo, and Chips Ahoy! are highly ranked within the category, although they do experience some competition from local player The Garden Co Ltd with its brands Garden and Garden Wafer.

#### Healthy Attributes Promoted by Players of Snack Bars

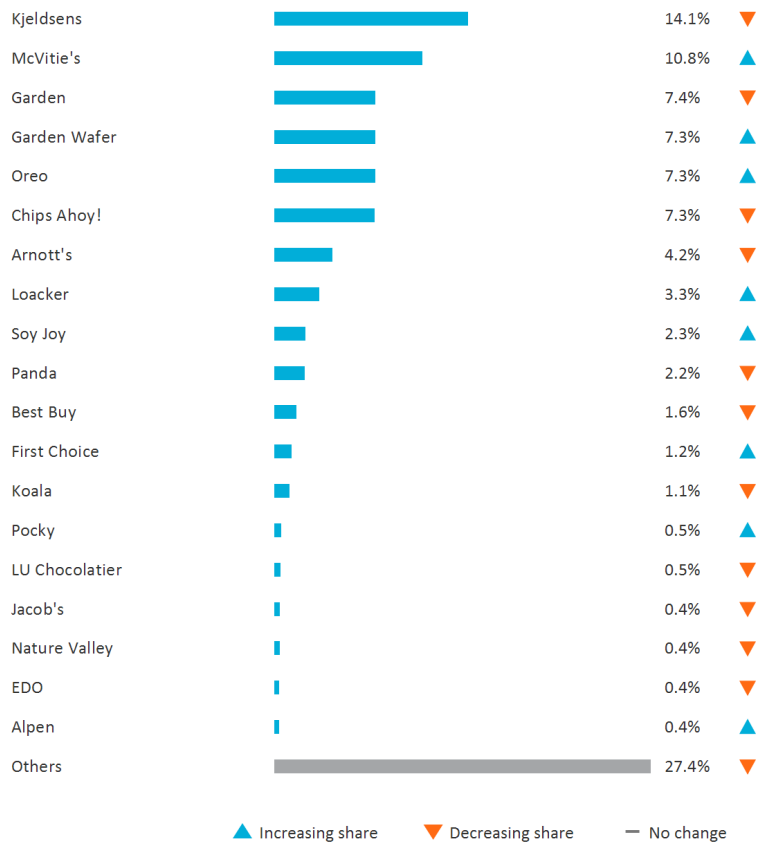
Health and wellness trends are influencing some consumers' snack choices and the communication efforts of some players, such as Carman's nut bars from Australia with the tagline "Real food made with real passion" which are free from gluten and artificial flavors, while Health Valley Organic Multigrain Cereal Bars offers a nutrition scorecard on the front of its boxed packaging making it clear to consumers its high antioxidant and fiber content with ingredients such as apple or blueberry.

#### Indulgence and Fun Remain Elements of Snack Bars for Some Brands

While players within snack bars continue to promote the healthier side of their products, Kellogg Co with its protein/energy bar Kellogg's Cereal Bars, and Nestlé with its Fitness Bar brand in cereal bars take a slightly different strategy by also placing some emphasis on the fun elements of their products, and their suitability for the grab-and-go

trend for those consumers who may not have time for a sit down breakfast before rushing out to work. In the case of Kellogg's Cereal Bars, the indulgence element is promoted with the inclusion of dark chocolate while the highfiber content still offers a healthy aspect. ■

Brand Shares of Sweet Biscuits, Snack Bars and Fruit Snacks in Hong Kong, China  
% Share (LBN) - Retail Value RSP - 2019



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