


Going After Goliath: Raised Real Reduces Sugar For Generation Alpha

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For any global market leader, course-correcting due to consumer insights is a heavy lift. This includes massive changes in sourcing, manufacturing, and product development.

According to a World Health Organization analysis, despite globally agreed upon rules on the promotion of foods for infants and children, many companies that make and sell commercial baby foods fail to comply with these rules. Baby food often contains too much sugar and is incorrectly advertised as suitable for infants under six months of age.

The study collected data from over 500 stores across four countries, and at least half of the products analyzed in three of four cities provided more than 30% of their calories from sugars. About a third of them listed sugar, concentrated fruit juice or other sweeteners as an ingredient. That raises the risk of obesity and diabetes later because it can wire young children to a lifelong preference for sweet foods.

Nestlé leads the global baby food market, with a 20% share. For the past five years, the company has accelerated product transformation, removing over 44,000 U.S. tons of sugar from their portfolio. They also have executed the Nestlé for Healthier Kids initiative, which

was created to “help 50 million children lead healthier lives by 2030.”

For any global market leader, course-correcting due to consumer insights is a heavy lift. This includes massive changes in sourcing, manufacturing, and product development. However, for smaller niche players like Raised Real, it is not only easier to adjust the go-to-market strategy, it’s also easier to steal fragments of market share, innovate, and develop a unique value proposition.

Raised Real launched in April 2017, as a baby food company redefining the idea of “homemade” baby food. Since that time they’ve raised just over \$7 million and delivered over 500,000 meals nationwide. By October 2019, the company will be launching breakfast with four organic plant-based meal options, creating a full platform for parents who are beginning their kids on solid foods.



A Raised Real nutrition label.

Raised Real

While Nestlé strives to “turn the ship around,” Raised Real prides itself on a few differentiating factors- all grounded in generation Alpha and millennial parent consumer trends. According to a Hartman Group study, millennials are also the generation most likely to have tried a plant-based diet. The plant-based food trend also tops the list for 2019 with a third of the population actively reducing their meat consumption. Santiago Merea, CEO of Raised Real, discusses their decision to create a plant-based product range for generation Alpha:

“The plant-based category is seeing enormous growth, and adding breakfast meals to our assortment is an important step for us. Breakfast is, not only, our member's number one request, but it also makes us a breakfast-lunch-dinner plant-based platform that helps parents feed their babies and toddlers in minutes.”

Raised Real meals contain less than five grams of sugar on average. Each meal also contains organically-sourced, plant-based, allergen free (tree nuts, peanuts, shellfish, fish, wheat, dairy, soy, and egg) ingredients. This is a claim that more than likely attracts millennial parents- almost 1 in 5 adults in the United States *think* that they have a food allergy, while only about 1 in 10 actually do.

The World Health Organization specifically calls out problems within the production process of baby food purees, specifically the addition of concentrated fruit juice and other sweetening agents. The process by which larger baby food manufacturing companies turn produce into purees for their products results in a higher concentration of naturally occurring sugar. Often, a boiling pasteurization process is used, which can make produce bitter. In an attempt to sweeten the puree, large baby food manufacturing companies add more fruit or juice, leading to high sugar contents. In contrast, smaller niche players like Raised Real have adopted a no processing production model, flash freezing produce at the farm level.

Merea summarizes:

"We believe there is an opportunity to go back to the start with a product that is pretty much the opposite of 'baby food' - not pre-pureed, not processed, using only ingredients you can see. Baby-led weaning and flavorful combinations of ingredients and spices are very important trends. Feeding our kids processed purees that are full of sugar and preservatives is not natural. It is also not how today's parents aspire to feed their kids."