Study Under PM Poshan Scheme Highlights Potential of UHT Milk in Boosting Nutrition in School Children

Category: Business
written by International Khabar | May 29, 2025

A new study conducted under the PM Poshan (formerly Mid-Day Meal) scheme has revealed overwhelming acceptance of UHT (Ultra High Temperature) milk among schoolchildren reinforcing the potential of packaged milk in India’s school nutrition programs. The study surveyed **4,484 children (ages 3-13)** and **57 key stakeholders**, including parents, school administrators, and program coordinators across Chandigarh.

Verka study: UHT milk widely accepted by Chandigarh schoolkids

"Ensuring access to safe and nutritious milk in schools can be a game-changer for childhood development," said a **Verka spokesperson**. *"This study confirms the strong acceptance of UHT milk among students and makes a compelling case for expanding school milk programs across India. By scaling up distribution and integrating milk's nutritional benefits, we can address key public health challenges like malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies. Stakeholder collaboration remains crucial to ensuring the success of such initiatives."*

Key Findings:

- 80% of students rated the cardamom-flavored UHT milk from Verka as highly satisfactory.
- 69% of children recognized multiple health benefits of milk, with 22% associating it primarily with strong bones.

- 44% of students consumed milk more than four times a week, while 38% had it two to four times weekly.
- 82% of children responsibly disposed of empty milk packets in designated bins, reinforcing positive environmental habits.

The study-conducted by Verka in collaboration with Punjab University, the Department of Education (Chandigarh), Tetra Pak, and NGO Yuvsatta-underscores the effectiveness of aseptic UHT milk packaging. This packaging technology ensures food safety and extends shelf life without refrigeration, making it an ideal solution for large-scale school meal programs.

The study calls for an increase in milk distribution days, enhanced awareness campaigns on milk's nutritional benefits, and the addition of complementary nutritious foods to improve overall dietary diversity. Regular monitoring and continuous stakeholder engagement are also recommended to strengthen program implementation.

School Milk Program by Verka

Milk Fed Punjabs Verka brand recently piloted a school milk program to support the PM Poshan scheme in schools. Through this initiative, students in Chandigarh received nutritious milk in Tetra Pak cartons. After consumption, these used cartons were collected by a local NGO and collection agencies and recycled into various useful items such as notebooks, planters, school desks and more. To encourage milk consumption among school kids, Verka made milk available in cardamom (elaichi) flavor to begin with, making it more appealing to children.

In addition to providing much needed nutrition to children, this school milk initiative served as an educational opportunity for children, teaching them the importance of responsible consumption and planet-friendly practices like

recycling.

Global Context: A Growing Case for School Milk Programs

The International Dairy Federation (IDF) advocates for school milk programs as a solution to nutritional deficiencies and food education-helping millions of children worldwide understand the impact of food on health, society, and the environment. Countries like USA and China have successfully integrated milk into their school meal programs, significantly improving childhood nutrition and academic performance.

India now has an opportunity to scale its school feeding programs by fostering partnerships between government bodies, dairy cooperatives like Verka, and technology providers such as Tetra Pak. With the right ecosystem, the country can create a sustainable and impactful model for school nutrition, ensuring better health outcomes for future generations.

To access the full report, please visit the Verka website