

White Moustache Turns Whey By-Product Into 'Nature's Sports Drink' Tonic Line

Brooklyn, NY—A small-batch, old-world artisan yogurt company here has developed an imaginative beverage line to re-purpose its acid whey by-product – Probiotic Tonics.

The all-natural whey tonic is the result of the yogurt straining process. When we strain our beloved yogurt as we do, we are left with a natural by-product called “whey,” said Iranian-born Homa Dashtaki, founder and owner of The White Moustache yogurt company.

“This whey is almost neon green in color – it’s that pure.” Dashtaki said. “There isn’t a drop of cloudy milk solids in our whey, so, zero fat. And just like yogurt, it is chock full of probiotics and calcium.”

“Now, back home, we used to clamor over this ‘yogurt water’ for its hydrating gulps, but now we have quite a bit of it on our hands and people aren’t as familiar with it or what to do with it,” she said.

Our family just drinks it straight up, but we are Middle Eastern – we love the taste of tangy yogurt, Dashtaki said.

“What we didn’t realize are the myriad of uses folks are finding for the whey. We’re not chefs, but we are lucky enough to now be in a city where food is a religion,” she continued. “We like to think of it as nature’s sports drink – and so much more.”

The line of White Moustache Probiotic Tonics are available in six flavors:

Plain Probiotic Tonic in 16-ounce and 32-ounce bottles can be used it as an ingredient in smoothies and juices, or as a brining agent.

Flavored Probiotic Tonics are sold in 16-ounce bottles and include: Ginger Probiotic Tonic with fresh ginger; Honey-Lime Probiotic Tonic with fresh lime juice and wildflower honey; Passion Fruit Probiotic Tonic with passion fruit juice; and Pineapple Probiotic Tonic with a splash of pineapple juice.

“In addition to it being delicious, nutritious and multi-dimensional, finding a home for the whey is also socially responsible for us to do,” Dashtaki said. “Now, we’re a tiny company, but we take this seriously.”

So seriously, in fact, that despite growing demand for its yogurt line, White Moustache will not expand without finding a market for its leftover whey. White Moustache yogurt is sold to 41 retailers, while the Probiotic Tonic line can be found in 15 retail locations.

Acid whey has recently been called one of the “five ingredients to watch” by market research firm Mintel with an increased use of 129 percent between 2010 and 2014. It’s also becoming a popular drink

ingredient in Europe, according to *Food Business News*.

CDR: Consumer Appeal Depends On Flavors

The Wisconsin Center For Dairy Research (CDR) has explored many different options for using Greek yogurt acid whey as a beverage base.

“It has a mildly acidic flavor, which is predominantly a lactic acid flavor that is slightly sweet,” said K.J. Burrington, CDR dairy ingredient applications coordinator. “White Moustache has added flavors to it to make it more interesting,” Burrington said. “Whether it would be a hit for consumers really depends on the flavors they add to it.”

“The Greek yogurt acid whey has a yogurt taste, which won’t appeal to everyone,” she continued.

It’s a possibility for other companies to follow suit, but not many Greek yogurt plants also have a bottling line or are in the business of selling and marketing beverages, Burrington said.

“It’s less difficult and less risky for a small company like White Moustache to produce and market this beverage,” Burrington said.

“The big companies would want to introduce a new product on a national level, and that takes a lot more volume potential and marketing dollars,” she continued.

White Moustache Probiotic Tonics have merit, as it’s not a new concept to utilize the acid whey derived from yogurt as a beverage and type of marinade, added Mike Molitor, CDR innovator for milk and whey, and process plant manager.

“They’re accurate to reference the higher calcium content because the milk calcium is solubilized by the lower pH and becomes part of the acid whey,” Molitor said.

“Thus, the acid whey contains nearly as much calcium as milk or two to three times more calcium compared to sweet whey,” he continued.

‘Best Yogurt In The World’

Powered by seven full-time employees, White Moustache also offers traditional Persian Yogurt and Greek Yogurt with flavors including Kiss – Greek yogurt with orange blossom honey and walnuts; Sour Cherry; Dates; and Yalda – Greek yogurt with green raisins, mint and walnuts.

Limited edition seasonal flavors are Sweet Beets, Summer Peaches, Quince and King Mulberry.

Other products include Labneh, a gravity-strained yogurt cheese spread in Plain; Shankleesh – Labneh with aleppo pepper and za’atar; and Kurdish – Labneh with brined garlic shoots; along with Moosir –



Persian yogurt with leopoldia shallots.

White Moustache products are sold exclusively in New York City at cheese mongers such as Murray’s Cheese, Saxelby Cheesemonger’s, and Stinky Bklyn, as well as famed restaurants like Tavern on the Green and Cafe Clementine.

White Moustache makes its yogurt entirely by hand using Hudson Valley Fresh milk, which is certified by KOF-K Kosher Supervision. However, production facilities are not certified kosher at this time.

Between 10 and 12 ounces of milk goes into making one jar of yogurt. There is also roughly one ounce of fruit in every jar.

Ingredients include whole milk and probiotic cultures to make the yogurt, without any added cream

or starches. The result is a thick, decadent yogurt that writers from *The New York Times* to *Vogue* to Oprah Winfrey herself describe as “the best yogurt in the world” and “what heaven must smell like.”

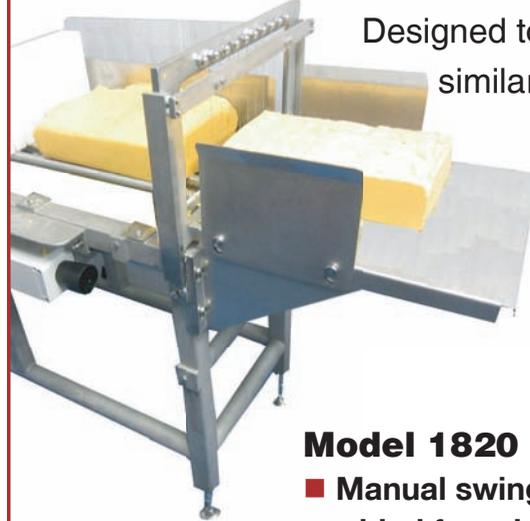
As of August 2014, White Moustache only makes one batch of yogurt per day. One batch typically takes three days to complete from start to finish.

“We make our yogurt entirely by hand using high-quality, meticulously sourced ingredients in an unfathomably time- and labor-intensive process,” Dashtaki said. “If you were to stop by the factory at two in the morning you’d see us merrily whisking yogurt and spooning sour cherry preserves into jars, one at a time.”

For more information, visit www.thewhitemoustache.com.



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