



Al Behrman / Associated Press

Mike Wirth, left, samples the new Active Lifestyles milk at a tasting stand run by Tiffany Heath in a Kroger store in Cincinnati.

Kroger markets healthier milk Company says Active Lifestyle brand is nation's first cholesterol-cutting milk using plant sterols.

CINCINNATI -- Kroger Co., the nation's largest traditional grocery chain, is marketing a new milk brand for its cholesterol-reducing ability.

The product, under Kroger's Active Lifestyle brand, is billed as the first national launch of a cholesterol-cutting milk. It adds to the company's expanding lines for consumers of health-conscious and natural/organic foods and the in-house brands the company sees as an important part of its profit growth strategy.

"There's a major trend toward health and wellness in the country," said Linda Severin, Kroger's vice president for corporate brands. "Managing cholesterol is just a key need for many of our customers. This is a way we can help our customers be proactive with their heart health."

The milk uses an ingredient with plant sterols, found naturally in some vegetables, fruits, nuts, and other foods. The Food and Drug Administration has said plant sterols may reduce the risk of heart disease by lowering cholesterol levels when used in recommended amounts as part of a healthy diet.

The CoroWise plant sterols extract, from Cargill Inc., already is offered in a range of national brand products from orange juice to granola bars. Coca-Cola Co. spokesman Ray Crockett said its Minute Maid Heart Wise brand has been a strong seller since the cholesterol-cutting orange juice was rolled out in 2003. Promised Land Dairy, based in San Antonio, began selling its Y.U.M. (Your Ultimate Milk) brand last fall in Texas, and slowly has added a few other states.

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