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Giving women something to chew on

New food, drink brands target female palates

By Bruce Horowitz USA TODAY

The popularity of chick lit and chick flicks — books and movies aimed at women — may have spawned the marketing world's latest trend: chick food.

More than 1,000 new foods and drinks targeting women have hit the global market in the past four years, says Mintel, which does research on new products.

These aren't just diet foods. There are energy bars for women — even one just for pregnant women. There's bread for women, and a tortilla. There's a tea for women.

The hottest categories:

•**Energy bars.** There are about a dozen female-focused energy bars, but none has the wallop of Luna. Luna Bar was created in 1999, after women at Clif Bar lobbied for an energy bar with fewer calories. "In a perfect world, we'd see no packaged food," says Nicole Pernerl, Luna brand manager. "But convenience is huge. We offer women something thought out for them."

More recently, Luna has expanded into tea cakes (soft cookies) and elixir (think organic Crystal Light).

Luna's newest rival: Bellybar, an energy bar for pregnant or nursing women. It's got extra calcium and Omega-3.

"Pregnant women are hungry all the time," says Leslie Sagalowicz, co-founder of its maker, NutraBella. "It's a healthy alternative to candy bars."