treated with air, must still remain readily dissolvable upon consumption at such a rate as to transfer flavor to the consumer's taste buds. Moreover, the product should be readily dissolvable to reduce the risk of choking hazards for consumers with restricted or under-developed oral motor skills or digestive functions. As a known solution, increasing the aeration can improve dissolvability. However, increased aeration has the negative effect of reducing the hardness of the end product. When the hardness is reduced, the physical stability of product can be compromised. Therefore, there is a need for a product that is freeze-dried and aerated that has improved physical stability and improved dissolvability.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides a "**clean label"** product devoid of any added sugar, gluten, preservatives, thickeners, artificial colors/flavors, emulsifiers, gums, whipping aids, additives, non-GMO (genetic modified food) and/or chemically synthesized materials.

In one aspect, the present invention relates to a freeze-dried aerated baby food snack comprising egg white, starch, natural buffer and at least one fruit ingredient and/or at least one vegetable ingredient; wherein the snack is clean label.

In another aspect, the present invention relates to a process for preparing a freeze-dried food snack comprising the steps of:

(i) Mixing egg white, tapioca starch and at least one fruit ingredient and/or at least one vegetable ingredient in presence of a natural buffer;

(ii) Subjecting the mix to a UHT process by heating till to 95°C - 100°C for up to 3.0 minutes and cooling below 20°C

(iii) Aerating the mix with nitrogen.

(iv) Depositing the aerated product to a shape (shape that assists in self feeding for a child) for e.g. dollop or drop

(v) Freeze drying the obtained shaped product.

The snack of the present invention is all-natural alternative to the complicated ingredient labels you find in snacks. These melts are dairy-free, gluten-free and Non-GMO.

CLAIMS

1. A freeze-dried aerated baby food snack comprising egg white, starch, natural buffer and at least one fruit ingredient and/or at least one vegetable ingredient; wherein the snack is clean label and wherein the egg white comprises in amount ranging from 0.5 to 1.5% w/w, and the fruit or vegetable ingredient is present in amount of from 60% to 98% of the composition, the natural buffer is lemon juice and wherein the snack is configured to dissolve in range of 0.002 to 0.030 g/minute.
2. The snack of claim 1, wherein the starch comprises tapioca starch, potato starch and/or corn starch added to result in a viscosity ranging from 50,000 to 250,000 centipoise.
3. The snack of any one of the preceding claims, wherein the fruit ingredient comprises in amount ranging from 80 - 98% w/w.
4. The snack of any one of the preceding claims, wherein the vegetable ingredient comprises in amount ranging up to 20% w/w.
5. The snack of any one of the preceding claims, wherein the fruit ingredient does not contain added sugar and comprises banana, kiwi, grapefruit, blueberry, apple, mango, pear, guava, strawberry, peach, raspberry, and combinations thereof.
6. The snack of any one of the preceding claims, wherein the vegetable ingredient comprises whole vegetables, vegetable puree, peas, carrots, sweet potato, Zucchini, squash (all varieties including butternut) and combinations thereof.
7. A process for preparing a freeze-dried food snack according to any one of claims 1 to 6 comprising the steps of:
    (i) Mixing egg white, tapioca starch and at least one fruit ingredient and/or at least one vegetable ingredient in presence of a natural buffer;
    (ii) Subjecting the mix to a UHT process by heating till to 95°C - 100°C for up to 3.0 minutes and cooling below 20°C
    (iii) Aerating the mix with nitrogen.
    (iv) Depositing the aerated product to a shape (shape that assists in self feeding for a child) for e.g. dollop or drop
    (v) Freeze drying the obtained shaped product.

8. The process of claim 7 wherein an optional step comprises after step (iii) to store the UHT treated mix at temperature ranging from 1 – 5 °C for up to 180 days; followed by a mixing and aeration step (iii).