

Disney to sell Mickey-themed veggies

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A unit of The Walt Disney Co. plans to begin selling a new line of fruits and vegetables this fall with a bit of sales help from Mickey, Minnie, Donald and Goofy.

Disney Consumer Products said Friday it would use the popularity of its theme park characters to appeal to children and launch a line of products called Disney Garden, to be sold in the produce aisle of stores nationwide including Winn Dixie, Albertsons, and Price Shopper.

New items include Mickey-shaped snack trays with combinations of celery, peanut butter and raisins or apples, cheese and crackers and others. Other items include teriyaki sugar snap peas, honey orange carrot coins, cheesy broccoli bites and miniature apples, peaches, pears, plums and oranges.

The move comes as the food industry faces more pressure to curb its marketing of junk food to children, including the use of popular cartoon characters in advertising and packaging.

Disney said a year ago that it would restrict its use of advertising targeting children. It is one of a dozen companies that had made a pledge before a Federal Trade Commission hearing in July that put more pressure on the companies to help curb the growing child obesity problem through more responsible marketing.

Disney has previously sold fruits with character stickers on the packaging as well as frozen pizza and hamburger patties made in the shape of Mickey Mouse's head.