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Consumers Seek Physical and Mental Benefits from their Nutrition Bars

Nutrition bars play an essential role in people's routine whether they're health-conscious adults, high school students, or full-time athletes. Recently, bars have become more focused on health, meal replacement, weight management, and energy.

One significant trend nutrition bars saw in 2022 was the emergence of proteins and probiotics. Probiotics have gained popularity over the past few years thanks to their role in digestive health and immunity as consumers became more aware of their health during the pandemic. Protein, on the other hand, has been emphasized for a long time but recently saw a spike in demand with an increased focus on caloric management, weight control, and energy.



It's no surprise that sustainability is one of the leading priorities for shoppers today. One trend that goes hand-in-hand with sustainability is upcycling. Upcycling is the process of repurposing ingredients that otherwise would not have gone to human consumption. For example, upcycled kale, cauliflower, and sweet potato could be dried and milled into powders for different inclusions. These repurposed ingredients are good for a prudent economy and innovation while making consumers feel as though they are part of the solution.

Although sweet inclusions are dominating bars, there's a chance that inclusions will expand into savory flavors and combinations. There are a number of bars that include savory inclusions like bits of dried meat, nuts, cheese, seeds, and even freeze-dried vegetables. On the other hand, indulgent

bars include flavors like chocolate, sea salt, and inclusions like bacon bits to fill “neither and both” cravings of today’s consumers.

Our exceptional **infused dried fruit ingredients** are the perfect inclusion for **nutrition bars**. Small but mighty, infused dried fruits add authentic taste, distinct texture, bold flavor, and vibrant color. From infused dried **blueberries** to **apples**, we have the product profile you need for any snack bar application. Interested in adding infused dried fruit in your next innovation? Talk to our **experts** today!

Survey Shows Shift in Consumer Behavior Since Mid-2020

Food company Rich Products has been tracking consumer behavior and shopping habits through surveys since mid-2020. The company asked consumers what they were looking for in the bakery department and what they bought. The findings provide valuable insight into the baking industry and reveal that consumer preferences are driven by increases in meals and snacks being eaten at home.

The survey showed that consumers are looking for ways to elevate at-home meals with healthier options and affordable portion sizes. With breakfast, consumers are buying fewer meals at restaurants. 46% of consumers reported buying fewer breakfasts from restaurants as shoppers are looking to save on food. Bread and rolls seemed to be the solution for price-conscious consumers. “66% plan more bread and roll purchases to save money, another way fresh bakery items can elevate everyday occasions,” Rich Products explained.

The company also found that anytime treats and comfort purchases were on the rise since mid-2020. The survey found that 31% of respondents bought more everyday indulgences in the last two years compared to pre-pandemic times. With this, consumers were also looking for healthier options. 42% of respondents indicated an interest in healthier options in the fresh bakery. Things like clean labels, healthy positioning, and quality ingredients are becoming more important to consumers as they look for healthier food options.



Application of the Month: Trail Mixes & Snacks

The snack category continues to grow and surpass other food segments.

Luckily, our **infused dried fruit** ingredients are the perfect addition to trail mixes and other snacks. Whether it’s infused dried **cherries**, **blueberries**, or **cranberries**, our ingredients perform exceptionally in a number of **trail mixes** by adding distinct texture, bold flavor, and a burst of color. Why dried fruit? They can be precisely mixed and measured, retain their piece identity and color, are easy to store, and have an extended shelf life. Order your **samples** today or talk to our **experts** for customized solutions!

Plant-Based Innovation Continues to Grow

Market researcher Brightfield Group found from their consumer insights platform that, despite the slight decline in market penetration, new plant-based product formulations are continuing to be introduced.

“Expect to see brands promoting the brain boosts available from familiar energizing ingredients, such as plant-based ingredients,” said Rebecca Vella, Director of Insights at Mintel Food & Drink. Microalgae is another potential trend on the rise recognized for its high nutrient content and versatility. “Today we have shown another facet of the unlimited possibilities this superfood can offer – a dairy and lactose-free alternative to ice cream that, thanks to microalgae, offers a higher nutrition content than most available dairy-free alternatives,” explained Eugene Wang, co-founder and CEO of Sophie’s BioNutrients. Larger companies like Kraft Heinz Co. are adding plant-based versions of their popular products.



Grubhub Reveals Top Desserts of the Year

Online food ordering company Grubhub recently released their annual 2022 Delivered report which highlights the biggest national ordering trends and eating habits of the year. The food delivery platform analyzed millions of orders to identify the foods consumers ate this year.

The top overall dishes represented comfort foods including burritos, cheeseburgers, cheese pizzas, pad thai, and chicken quesadillas (in descending order). This comfort trend wasn’t only seen in entrees.

Grubhub found that this trend of comfort also applied to desserts as dishes like brownies and cookies were some of the top desserts of the year. Nationally, the top desserts include:

1. Tiramisu
2. Baklava
3. Cookies
4. Cheesecake
5. Brownies
6. Churros
7. Cannoli
8. Carrot Cake
9. Chocolate Cake
10. Flan

Another notable find of Grubhub’s 2022 Delivered report is the several international cuisines that are

trending nationally. For example, Grubhub found that Australian and South African dishes were spiking off the charts in new interest.

Our exceptional [infused dried fruit ingredients](#) are the perfect addition to a number of dessert applications. From cookies, to chocolates, to other [confectionary applications](#), our infused dried fruit ingredients add authentic taste, distinct texture, and a major pop of color. Our robust portfolio is on-trend, crave-worthy, and always in season. Interested in adding infused dried fruits to your next innovation? Talk to our [experts](#) today!



What's New At Graceland Fruit

On September 21, 2022, Graceland Fruit and Benzie Habitat announced a partnership to work together to address the affordable housing shortage in Benzie County. Currently, Graceland Fruit and Benzie Habitat are working with the township zoning administration and local officials to discuss what the project might look like moving forward. At this point, there is no formal application to be considered. Hopefully, Graceland Fruit will meet with Gilmore Township officials at the end of the year so the first phase of the project can begin summer 2023. Click [here](#) for more information about the Graceland Fruit and Benzie Habitat project.

Consumers are Looking for Digital Experiences in 2023

Market research firm Innova found that the top trends for 2023 include redefining value and affordable nutrition. Other key trends include quality, digital experiences, big flavor, and transparency.

Innova's 6th trend, quick quality, stems from the demand for convenient nutritious food. Approximately 66% of global consumers indicated that they were looking for simple ways to meet daily nutritional requirements and that they now rank health aspects as a more important factor when choosing meals. This quick quality trend also indicates a move away from short-term diets into lifestyles like keto or paleo.

Innova's 7th trend focuses on digital experiences for food and beverage products. Connecting digitally with consumers is especially appealing to the younger demographic as 30% of consumers 18-34 indicated that they were interested in entertaining digital experiences. Companies realize this and are already implementing a digital experience with their products. For example, Gatorade launched a branded bottle that connects with an app to track hydration goals.

Innova's final trend highlights transparency, especially around sustainability. Innova's survey found that 60% of consumers said that their trust in a brand increased when the brand communicated any challenges they were facing.



We deliver *delight*.

Graceland Fruit, Inc. is a leading producer and global distributor of premium quality dried fruit ingredients for the food industry. Our exceptional product and service performance make it easy for innovative food manufacturers and providers to create delicious, on-trend products to surprise and delight their consumers.

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