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Personal and Planet Health to Drive Food & Beverage Innovation This Year

According to NielsenIQ's most recent Global Health and Wellness report, consumers are prioritizing health for themselves and the planet.

Presence, a natural products food brokerage and service provider, revealed their trend predictions for consumers this year. Trend predictions from Presence include:

Carbonated soda for gut health. Consumers are more aware of prebiotics, probiotics, and postbiotics for their digestive health and immunity benefits. Presence believes that carbonated drinks "are the next generation of functional drinks".

Regenerative Agriculture.

Consumers are becoming more aware and interested about the way their food is grown. Regenerative agriculture focuses on the interconnection of farming systems and ecological systems as a whole. Interest in regenerative agriculture has grown significantly, and Presence expects this practice will soon be on labels.

More sustainable packing options. The industry is responding to consumers' concern over packaging waste. Presence has seen an increased use of recyclable cups (23%), aseptic cartons (9%), and glass (2%).



Nutrition and Snack Bars Expected to See Strong Growth and Innovation in 2022

Bars are a convenient and a perfect on-the-go snack, but saw a dip in sales in 2020 as the pandemic restricted activities and forced people to stay home. However, the bar category saw a rebound in 2021 as restrictions lifted. “What we started to see, especially around the second quarter when vaccines took an uptick and mobility followed suit, is that the bar category saw great growth,” said Sally Lyons Wyatt, executive vice president for client insights, IRI.

The bar market is thriving and consumers are demanding products that provide functional health benefits. Thanks to the pandemic, the interest in this category has boomed. According to Innova Market Insights, 94% of cereal bars launched in the U.S. from 2016–2021 made a health claim, with “no sugar added” being the fastest growing claim within cereal and energy bars.

Our **infused dried fruits** are perfect for elevating nutrition and snack bar innovations. Authentically delicious, naturally nutritious, and distinctively vibrant, our superfruits deliver exceptional flavor, color, texture, and performance across all nutrition and snack bar applications. Our robust portfolio of infused dried ingredients are buzz-worthy for their health benefits, crave-worthy for their intense flavor, on-trend, and always in season as consumers are demanding healthy and nutrient-dense ingredients. Are you looking to add a health halo and a bit of color to your nutrition and snack bars? Talk to our **experts** today!



March is Michigan Food & Agriculture Month

In celebration of Michigan's farmers, the diversity of products grown, and the partnerships that keep the food industry thriving, Governor Gretchen Whitmer has declared March as Michigan Food & Agriculture Month.

“Michigan's food and agriculture industry is a national powerhouse. We've generated 805,000 jobs, and more than \$104 billion to our state's economy annually,” said Governor Whitmer. Throughout March, the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) will partner and showcase events with Michigan State University Extension, and the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity.

Ukraine War Affects Food Industry

Russia's invasion of Ukraine continues to affect the food industry worldwide.

Fertilizer supplies in Brazil are threatened as a fifth of imports come from Russia. The current situation might also drive up the costs of several commodities because Brazil is a major exporter of beef, corn, coffee, sugar, soybeans, and other agricultural products.

China is having trouble as well as they're under pressure to help sustain Russia's economic and financial systems by maintaining and increasing trade. In America, brands like Starbucks and PepsiCo are receiving backlash on social media for continuing to operate in Russia. Yum Brands, which includes chains like KFC and Pizza Hut, who also have large footprints in Russia, announced that they will suspend investments in Russia.



5 Reasons to Eat More Tart Cherries

Montmorency cherries are the perfect superfood to add to your diet this year. Unlike sweet cherries that are eaten during the summer season, Montmorency tart cherries are available year-round as dried, canned, juice, and juice concentrate. As if you needed more reasons to eat tart cherries, here are five more:

1. Better sleep. Tart cherries are one of a few food sources that have melatonin and have been the focus of many sleep studies.

2. Exercise recovery. Tart cherries have anti-inflammatory properties thanks to its high levels of anthocyanins, a group of phytochemicals that work as antioxidants and give cherries their bold red color.

3. Arthritis and gout. Several small studies suggested that drinking Montmorency cherry juice every day for 3-6 weeks can help reduce inflammation, improve joint function, and relieve joint stiffness and pain in people with osteoarthritis.

4. Heart health. Cherries are rich in nutrients and compounds known to promote heart health, including potassium and polyphenol antioxidants.

5. Versatility. Tart cherries can easily be transitioned from sweet to savory applications, adding a burst of flavor and nutrition to oatmeal, smoothies, salads, and trail mix.

Are you ready to add our signature Montmorency cherries to your diet? Request your samples today!



Upcoming Industry Events

Taipei International Bakery Show

Taipei City, Taiwan

March 17-20, 2022

Great Lakes IFT

Battle Creek, MI

April 26, 2022

Bakery China

Shanghai, China

April 26-29, 2022

Northern California IFT

Pleasanton, CA

May 10, 2022

Northwest IFT

Worcester, MA

May 17, 2022

SIAL China

Shanghai, China

May 18-20, 2022

Gen Z and Millennials are Seeking Comfort Food with a Side of Function

According to a new survey from The Food Group, young adults plan on balancing their comfort food consumption by adding more plant-based and functional foods this year.

The food and beverage marketing agency surveyed 200 adults between the ages of 21-40 across the U.S. and found that almost half plan to buy more plant-based products, even though most identified themselves as meat eaters. The survey found that 6 in 10 surveyed adults plan to increase their functional food purchases, with fruits, vegetables, tea, and kombucha being the most popular items.

Pizzas, tacos, and fried chicken topped the comfort food list, but Gen Z and millennials plan to balance them with options, such as topping their pizza with meat-free pepperoni or sausage. Functional foods and plant-based alternatives were especially important for respondents between the ages of 21-30. 51% indicated eating more functional foods in the last two years compared to 43% of consumers ages 31-40. Younger respondents were also more likely to focus on making healthier options this year as 66% of respondents 21-30 plan to increase their intake of functional foods compared to 53% of respondents 31-40 who are planning to do the same.

"The survey results indicate the growth of the plant-based industry is not slowing down," explained Mark Cotter, chief executive officer at The Food Group. "Consumers are considering a variety of factors when it comes to food - not just price and taste, but also nutrition, sustainability, and how it fits into their lifestyle".



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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