

20 TREND 17 INSIGHT



THE INGREDIENT HOT LIST:

Functional Favorites

Much like clean label, health and wellness is much more than just a trend. It's a movement, one that is piquing the interest of consumers from every segment and age group. More and more, functional ingredients play perfectly into this environment. From the snack food aisle to top-tier restaurants, ingredients with functional benefits are everywhere. It is the chia seeds in your smoothie and the aquafaba in your cocktail. But many of these ingredients come with taste challenges that can cramp product development.

Let's take a look at some of these hot ingredients capturing the palates and pocketbooks of consumers, and ways to include them moving forward.

More so than ever before, consumers are reaching for that kale salad over their favorite hamburger and here's why.

When it comes to food, consumers continue to look for ways to improve their overall health while not sacrificing taste. This means they are seeking out new ways to keep eating food they love, while finding additional ingredients that will do more for their overall well-being. More and more consumers are looking for foods to provide nourishment for the body, not empty calories.

While indulgence hasn't been pushed aside by any means, nutrient-dense ingredients are HOT with consumers. Most importantly, their inclusion cannot mean that taste is sacrificed.



Bee Pollen

Considered one of nature's completely nourishing foods, bee pollen contains nearly all nutrients needed by humans. In fact, bee pollen contains more protein than any other animal source, but it isn't that easily obtainable. In order to get 1 teaspoon of this nutrient dense pollen, it takes one honey bee a full month of 8-hour work days to gather enough flower pollen.¹ However, the labor is worth the reward. Bee pollen has been proven to be a natural energy enhancer, soothe inflamed skin, reduce inflammation in the respiratory system, alleviate allergy symptoms, aid in digestion, boost the immune system, and support cardiovascular health. Most commonly used as a daily supplement in tablet form, it can also be consumed as a topping on yogurt or salad, blended into a smoothie and even cooked into granola or protein bars.

Bee Pollen Flavor Pairings

- Chocolate
- Almond
- Lemon-Lime
- Dates
- Peach
- Raspberry



Greens+ Plus Bar is an on-the-go, convenient snack that features dates, almond butter, greens & bee pollen. This organic snack bar provides energy and supports performance and nutritional balance.



TNT by Nature's Best is a peach-flavored pre-workout dietary supplement that is a naturally flavored tea with maximum caffeine, and a great taste with a kick. Contains no carbs, fat, calories, sugar, aspartame or preservatives but does contain organic bee pollen.



Greens Plus Chocolate Energy Bites claim to deliver organically grown superfoods, high energy herbal extracts, a little bit of honey and lastly bee pollen to produce the perfect cold-pressed, alkaline-forming green food snack.



This Honey Cup Herbal Blend loose-leaf tea consists of organic rooibos, bee pollen and natural honey flavor to create a smooth brew. It is said to be a light-bodied Darjeeling tea with flavors of sweet fig, blackberry and anise.

Raw Cacao Nibs

Dating back at least 3,000 years, cacao's health benefits can be rooted in epicatechin, a flavanol found in the seeds. This powerful antioxidant can help to prevent some cancers as well as brain ailments like Alzheimer's disease. Its high contents of magnesium and iron can help the body maintain muscle and nerve function in addition to preventing anemia⁶. Cacao nibs are simply chocolate in its purest form, before any kind of processing takes place, making for a nutrient-rich snack⁷. Works great as a low-calorie snack or added to a salad or a smoothie for flavor.



Cacao Flavor Pairings

- Coconut
- Almond
- Caramel
- Hazelnut
- Sea Salt
- Peanut Butter
- Mint
- Coffee



Inner-Eco's Fresh Young Green Coconut smoothie pack comprises creamy, young green coconut, which is naturally low in sugar, has 0% cholesterol and fewer calories than mature coconuts and contains all natural raw cacao.



Organic Larabar Superfoods with Coconut, Kale & Cacao is free from gluten, added sugar, GMO and dairy. It is a good source of fiber that is made from 100% real fruit.



Two Bears Cold Brew Coffee is Sweet Cacao flavored and is an all-natural product. Handcraft brewed with 100% Colombian coffee, gluten free and low in calories.



I Heart Keenwah's Peanut Butter & Cacao Quinoa Clusters are made with quinoa seeds, which are a naturally complete source of protein with all nine essential amino acids. These clusters contain rich, espresso-y cacao nibs, creamy peanut butter and roasted peanuts.

Watermelon Seeds

You might have heard as a child that if you eat watermelon seeds, you might find a watermelon growing in your belly soon there-after. Good news for all the watermelon lovers, this is far from the truth. Studies show that there are numerous health benefits that root themselves in these seeds. Because of their high amounts of zinc, magnesium, iron and copper, watermelon seeds are a great way to ensure that you are getting plenty of these minerals that are very hard to receive in your diet³. According to Mintel, 90% of consumers believe watermelons seeds are a good source of protein, 87% believe it to be a good source of energy, and 76% believe they improve satiety². With 8 grams of protein per ounce, watermelon seeds seem to be the go-to choice compared to their chia, sunflower and flax seed counterparts.

Spotted on Instagram, is a Kale salad massaged with avocado and lemon juice, sprinkled with sea salt and diced tomatoes and topped with watermelon seeds for protein with a crunch! Recipe can be found on the @SmartGirlVeg Instagram account.⁴



Watermelon Seed Flavor Pairings

- Sea Salt
- Chocolate
- Black Pepper
- Wasabi
- Ranch
- Dill Pickle



Harvested for You Watermelon Seeds are said to be an excellent source of magnesium and phosphorous, and a good source of folate and healthy fats. Perfect for a healthy snack!



Ocean's Halo Almond Seaweed Strips blend sweetness, sliced almonds and seaweed and in a healthy, easy to eat strip. Available In a resealable bag for consumers' busy lifestyles.

Ashwagandha

Referred to as the “strength of the stallion” or Indian ginseng, this herb has gotten these titles from its ability to strengthen the immune system, enhance stamina and relieve stress⁹. Originating in ancient Indian medicine, this exotic herb is an all-natural approach that is trending for its relaxing and calming properties, according to Mintel⁸. Additional benefits include improving the health of your thyroid, balancing hormones, improving adrenal function, improving symptoms of Alzheimer’s, depression and anxiety, and can potentially prevent and treat certain cancers⁹. Looking at the current market, we are finding ashwagandha most commonly used in beverage products, but new innovation promises additional ways to consume ashwagandha.



Image source: NDTV Foods

Ashwagandha Flavor Pairings

- Dark Chocolate
- Cinnamon
- Coconut
- Curry
- Elderberry
- Jackfruit



Supper Rebbli Dark Chocolate Protein Coconut Milk is a unique and ethnically source elixir that is enhanced with a signature adaptogen blend of maca, ashwagandha, and reishi to support athletic performance, endurance and a healthy stress response.



Good Seed Curried Sweet Potato Hempseed Burgers are a samosa-style protein patched patty with a curry milk flavor, and are packed with powerful hemp seeds, ashwagandha, chia seeds and super herbs.



Bolema Smart Lime 100% Natural Lemonade Drink contains ashwagandha plus Asian ginseng panax which are claimed to have been used to memory function and to help support cognitive functions and reduce mental fatigue.

KEEP IT FUNCTIONAL. KEEP IT TASTY. KEEP IT CLEAN.

Adding functional ingredients to your product often come with taste challenges. Are off-notes or bitterness preventing you from exploring your functional ingredient options? Working to keeping great taste while also increasing nutritional content and maintaining a clean label? It all can feel like a balancing act. We get it. Let FONA do the heavy lifting.

FONA CAN HELP!

Let FONA's market insight and research experts translate these trends into product category ideas for your brand. They can help you with concept and flavor pipeline development, ideation, consumer studies and white space analysis to pinpoint opportunities in the market.

Our flavor and product development experts are also at your service to help meet the labeling and flavor profile needs for your products to capitalize on this consumer trend. We understand how to mesh the complexities of flavor with your brand development, technical requirements and regulatory needs to deliver a complete taste solution.

CONTACT OUR SALES SERVICE DEPARTMENT

at 630.578.8600 to request a flavor sample or visit www.fona.com.

SOURCES

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