

YOUR KETO BEVERAGE:

3 TECHNICAL CHALLENGES & HOW TO OVERCOME THEM

By Trina Murray, Senior Scientist

At FONA, we believe signs point to a long-term future for keto. With an active and committed consumer base, the time to capitalize on the keto is now. Our research shows that this consumer base is looking for convenient products that taste great. Of course, with high fat and low carb requirements – there are challenges in creating a consumer-friendly beverage. Check out the common pitfalls – and our tips on overcoming them.



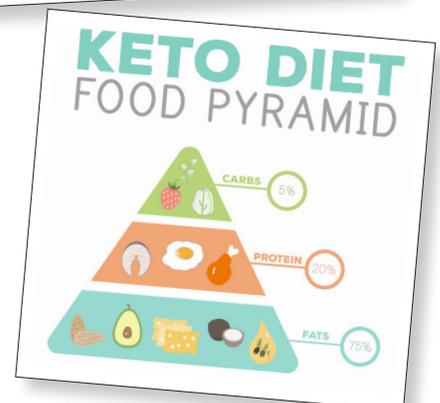
MASTER THE MOUTHFEEL

One of the biggest technical challenges for developers in keto is mouthfeel. The fat content is so high (75%) and the carbs are so low (5-10%) – it can be difficult to find the right ingredients. Carbs such as nutritive sweeteners and hydrocolloids generally play a big role in beverage consistency and mouthfeel. With net carbs so tightly restricted for keto friendly beverages delivering on mouthfeel expectation can be challenging.

Our Advice: Be original & Iterate

It can be tempting for some brands to start with the ingredient list of a competitor and “tweak.” We say that your best bet to avoid unpleasant mouthfeel is to start from scratch when you begin formulating. Have confidence in your instincts from the start. Just because a similar beverage is using pectin – that doesn’t mean

that you should. There are more ingredient and flavor options than you may realize. And plan on multiple iterations to end up with a better product in the end. Identify your goal, communicate it openly, and you should get the valuable guidance you deserve from your ingredient vendors about your options.



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SALTY PROFILE

Beta-hydroxybutyrate (BHB) are exogenous ketones that are said to help people stay in (or accelerate) ketosis – clearly a benefit consumers seek. The technical challenge comes with the salty taste inherent in these ingredients.

Our Advice: Congruent flavors & Communication

We've found that contrary to many of the chocolate and vanilla products filling shelves, citrus flavors may work best in BHB beverages. There's a certain congruency to pairing the salt and sour notes of BHB with those flavors. Avoid the trap of following the competition and instead work WITH these ingredients instead of against. Also, consider taste modification. A true flavor partner will guide you through your options.

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FATS & FLAVOR

There are a couple of fat-related issues that can arise in keto development. First, the fats and oils often used in keto can have a slight burning sensation in the back of the throat after consumption. Secondly, high fat content means that your flavor gets muted.

Our Advice: Blending Fats & Increased Usage

Flax oil and MCT oils are often to blame for the burning sensation experienced by keto consumers. We've found that blending your fats with coconut oil or other oils can help smooth out your beverage. It's better to blend than to over-rely on one type of fat. When it comes to improving the taste impact, consult your flavor vendor about increasing the usage in your product. Also explore sweetness and taste enhancers, if they're an option for your product. Again, open communication about goals and challenges can help save time and cut down on your timeline.



TIME TO CAPITALIZE ON KETO?

If you're dipping your toe in the keto pool – or are already well-versed in the technical implications of these products – you deserve the right information right now. From flavor creation to applications; regulatory to taste modification, FONA's experts are ready to help you grow in keto.

Email Trina at TMurray@fona.com or Business Director Cara Newkirk at cnewkirk@fona.com to ask a question or get more information.