



Ingredient Hot List

GUT HEALTH

There are billions of reasons why products that promote digestive health are hot right now. The billions of beneficial live organisms found in probiotic-rich foods and beverages go to work improving human digestive health, something that more consumers are seeking as they search for wellness in their lives and balance in their diets. Increasingly, that gut instinct extends to new ingredients that promote good bacteria. Get ready for new kind of “bio lesson” to learn how the gut microbiome is getting a lot of attention and discover what hot ingredients are feeding marketplace demands.

SPEAKING OF GUT HEALTH...



In 2019 and beyond, growing consumer curiosity with the microbiome shows no signs of abating. From gut-friendly fermented foods to probiotic skincare, consumers will demand products that balance and boost the natural bacteria found in and on the body.

- MINTEL



New Nutrition Business listed digestive health as its **#1** food, nutrition and health trend for 2019.

PRO AND PRE-BIOTICS



The global probiotic market is projected to grow to \$50 billion by 2020, spanning traditional probiotic choices like yogurt and kombucha and new shelf-stable items like nutrition bars, desserts and water, as food

technologists use strains that survive and thrive in such processed products.

In that yang-yang of dietary balance, prebiotics are emerging as another way to optimize the healthy flora in the gut. While some food and beverage products are touted for the inclusion of both probiotics and prebiotics (such as the Truth Bar), others are all about the prebiotic.

Consumers like the idea of prebiotics, but there's an open door for more education. A recent Harris Poll showed that although 29% of Americans say they know about probiotics, about half that (15%) say they are aware of prebiotics.

PRODUCTS OF NOTE



DANNON ACTIVIA PROBIOTIC SMOOTHIE contains billions of live, active probiotics with no added sugar. Varieties include a smoothie made with mango, flax seeds, carrot, peach and turmeric; another with pineapple, kiwi, cucumber, ginger, and chia, flax and hemp seeds; and a variety with strawberry, pomegranate, blueberry, beet and chia seeds.



HAPPY INSIDE BLUEBERRY GRANOLA: One ingredient in the new Happy Inside Blueberry Granola product is described as "yogurt probiotic pieces." The granola is part of Kellogg's new Happy Inside line of pro- and pre-biotic added cereals.



GOLD EMBLEM AROUND PROBIOTIC FRUIT & NUT TRAIL MIX: Available at CVS stores, this product is made with probiotic yogurt raisins and yogurt powder, along with other trail mix ingredients like dark chocolate, cranberries, and raw natural almonds.



GOOD PLANTS ALMONDMILK PROBIOTIC YOGURT ALTERNATIVE is a dairy-free probiotic yogurt made with fava bean protein. It has only 100 calories and includes Chocolate Coconut, Vanilla, Strawberry and Lemon Meringue flavors.

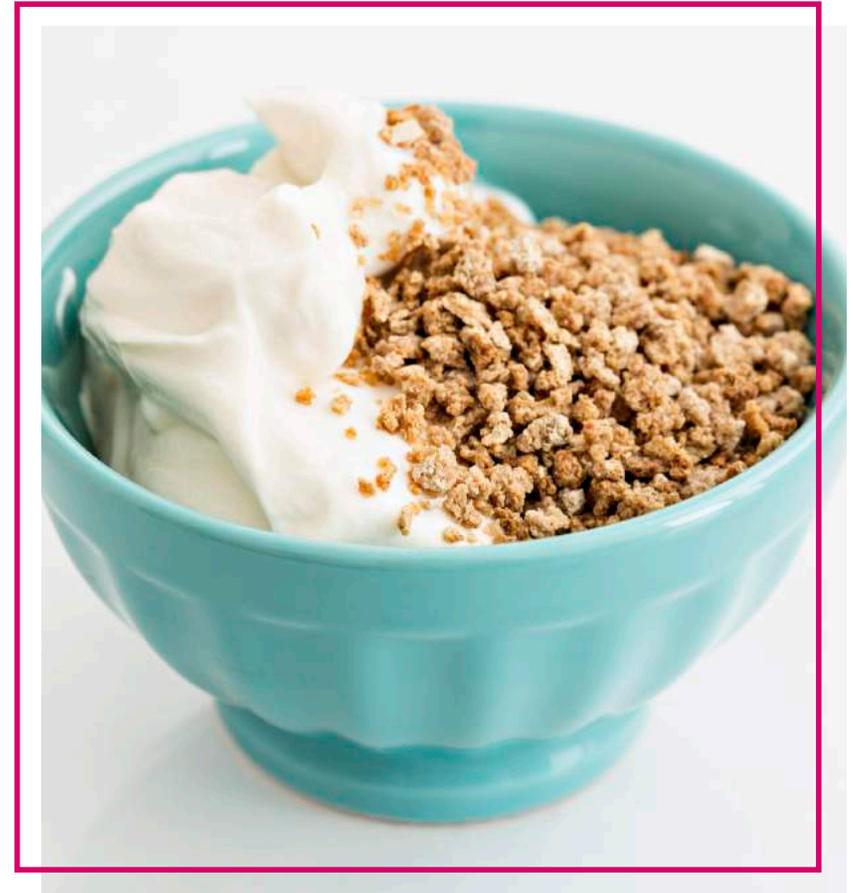
PRO AND PRE-BIOTICS, continued

Pro Yo

While probiotics are showing up in products all around the store, they are an essential part of many yogurts. Those products contain lactic acid-producing cultures, such as *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* and *Streptococcus thermophiles*, added to milk during the fermentation process. Other probiotics, such as strains of *Lactobacillus acidophilus*, *Lactobacillus casei*, and *Bifidus*, among others, can be added to yogurt to enhance the availability of microorganisms that promote gut health.

According to the “Mind of the Consumer” study from the Natural Marketing Institute and *Natural Products Insider*, there is a high awareness of yogurt as a rich source of probiotics. That translates to the marketplace, where sales of probiotic yogurts reached nearly \$20 billion in 2018.

In addition to traditional spoonable and drinkable yogurt, products made with probiotic-rich yogurt ingredients are also emerging in the marketplace. Those items can include baked goods, granolas, cereals and other shelf-stable items.



MICROALGAE

Increasingly, food and beverage manufacturers all over the world recognize that there are more fish in the sea than, well, fish in the sea when it comes to marine-based ingredients that consumers can embrace for better health. For gut health, that can include products made with sea plant-based ingredients awash in beneficial prebiotics.

It may not be mainstream – no waterway pun intended – but microalgae from the sea is high in water-soluble fibers that are source of prebiotics. Humans consumed seaweed in ancient cultures and sea-based ingredients are the most popular in China, Japan and Korea.

Single-cell microorganisms called microalgae can be part of the food chain that encompasses both land and sea. Chlorella is an example of an edible microalgae linked to improved digestive health through the promotion of beneficial intestinal bacteria. Another is spirulina, which is easier on the intestine because of its lack of cellulose walls. Bonus: these ingredients have a green-blue color that makes for eye-pleasing (and Instagram-ready) appearances in foods and beverages.

Consumer Sentiment and Demographics

It's not yet widely consumed and there is still more research to be done to confirm the links between microalgae and gut health, but the buzz is there. Sea greens including microalgae and kelp have shown up on several lists of trending food products, including those published by FoodNavigator.com and Whole Foods.

There may well be a wave of new product development in this area: a new report from Persistence Market Research projects the global market for microalgae to expand between now and 2026, with more than \$75 million in expected sales of microalgae products.



MICROALGAE, continued



Microalgae protein grown in tanks to be the next generation future of food.

-FOOD NAVIGATOR



MICROALGAE PRODUCT RELEASES



VIVAPURA SPIRULINA CRUNCHIES are a granule-type product that can be eaten by the handful or sprinkled on soups, mixed into recipes or blended into juices and smoothies.



G.T.'S ENLIGHTENED MULTI-GREEN ORGANIC VEGAN RAW KOMBUCHA is chock full of prebiotic-rich ingredients like blue-green spirulina and chlorella.

CHICORY ROOT



Chicory root is known as a good delivery for prebiotics that aid digestive health. The fibers in the root of the herbaceous chicory plant, namely inulin and oligofructose, are the source for effective plant-based prebiotics. The fiber can be added to a number of foods and beverages, from nutrition bars to smoothies.

Nutritional Outlook reported on a recent study of children ages 3 to 6, conducted by Beneo, showing that daily consumption of chicory root fiber kept their bifidobacterial level higher to protect immunity and health.

Consumer Sentiment and Demographics

From a big-picture perspective, a study from Health Focus International shows that 79% of consumers in the U.S. are concerned about or impacted by their digestive health, underscoring the current and future market for items that deliver such functionality.

In a survey conducted by inulin and oligofructose maker Sensus, about half of U.S. consumers say that the fiber level of a specific food influences their buying decision. The same survey found that when given information about chicory root fiber, 70% expressed an interest in it as an ingredient.

CHICORY ROOT PRODUCTS OF NOTE



THINKTHIN PROTEIN & PROBIOTIC HOT OATMEAL contains both probiotics and prebiotics, with Cinnamon Almond, Maple Pecan and Blueberry Harvest flavors.



BLUEPRINT BRANDS CHICORY VODKA has a coffee-like flavor, thanks to the chicory root, and the associated health benefits of that ingredient, plus another functional ingredient of dandelion greens.



PERKIER QUINOA BARS contain five grams of chicory root for prebiotic benefits on top of the six grams of protein and fewer than 140 calories. Flavors include Cacao and Orange, Cacao and Salted Caramel and Cacao and Cashew.



BENEO INULIN, FROM CHICORY ROOT FIBER, from the functional food company Beneo was launched based on growing demand for both organic products and chicory root fiber.

THE TAKEAWAYS

Consumers (even the least health conscious ones) are growing more and more aware of their gut health. This quest for better options is intricately connected to the movement to better wellness overall. For a long time, yogurt had a monopoly on pro and pre-biotics, but those ingredients are appealing in other products – is that the right move for your development? Or are up-and-comers like chicory root and microalgae the way of the future? Whatever direction you take, gut health is something to consider as you move forward, no matter your segment.

SOURCES

- Food Navigator
- Mintel
- Natural Products Insider
- New Nutrition Business
- National Marketing Institute
- Health Focus International
- Sensus



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