

# 3 STEPS TO Choosing the Right Seasonal Flavor for Your Brand

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We're well into the fall season, and if you're like most foodies you're probably enjoying plenty of pumpkin spice-flavored treats. Even outside of fall, seasonal varieties or limited time offering (LTO) products add excitement, serve as a marker for the advent of a season and cheerfully bring some festive fun. You know a good opportunity when you see (or taste) one, but how can seasonal or LTO flavors work for your brand?

## BY OFFERING A SEASONAL FLAVOR, YOU:

- Capitalize on consumers' curiosity and fear of missing out (FOMO) on a new product. This encourages faster trial by shortening the product availability.
- Can get creative by using proven flavors that may positively push the boundaries of your brand and bring a delightful, unexpected surprise.
- Gain new consumers who might not have tried your brand before, but love the flavor profile.
- Keep existing consumers interested in the brand by keeping it fun, fresh and festive.

## 1 START WITH A FAVORITE SEASONAL FLAVOR

So let's take fall for example. First, I suggest you start with one of the three fall favorites—pumpkin, apple, or maple—as your foundation for maximum appeal. Consider your brand, target consumer(s) and associations those consumers may have with a flavor as directional benchmarks to weigh a flavor's potential against. Then, brainstorm associations and themes of the flavor (within a fall context) to help you narrow it down.

Here's an example of my personal associations with these three flavors. Note that your associations or your consumers' associations may be different and that's okay. You can do this with any season, but we're taking on fall as an example here.



PUMPKIN	MAPLE	APPLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Cozy</li> <li>◆ Spiced/spicy</li> <li>◆ Nostalgic - memories of enjoying pumpkin pie with my grandma at Thanksgiving.</li> <li>◆ Fun - I mark the start of fall by enjoying a pumpkin spice latte in late September.</li> <li>◆ Indulgent - For me, pumpkin equates to pumpkin pie.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Pancakes</li> <li>◆ Breakfast</li> <li>◆ Sweet brown sugar</li> <li>◆ Comforting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Crisp fall apple or apple cider</li> <li>◆ True-to-fruit or spiced (I'm not a big sour/green apple person)</li> <li>◆ "Healthier" (vs. pumpkin)</li> <li>◆ Adventure - I have memories of drinking apple cider after visiting an apple orchard and corn maze.</li> </ul>

## 2 BUILD UPON YOUR FOUNDATION FLAVOR

Use your associations to build upon your foundational flavor and choose the right flavor profile that fits your product's usage occasion and positioning. Let's take a look at how you could break out the many possibilities of an apple flavor based on your target profile. Apple is pretty versatile, so you could go any route—true-to-fruit, confections-inspired, spiced or even baked goods-inspired.



TRUE-TO-FRUIT	CONFECTIONS-INSPIRED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Fuji</li> <li>◆ Honeycrisp</li> <li>◆ Green apple</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Sour apple</li> <li>◆ Caramel apple</li> <li>◆ Candy apple</li> </ul>
SPICED	BAKED GOODS-INSPIRED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Apple cinnamon</li> <li>◆ Spiced apple cider</li> <li>◆ Apple chai</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Apple pie</li> <li>◆ Apple fritter</li> <li>◆ Apple cider donut</li> </ul>

## 3 CHOOSE A BRAND FITTING NAME

After you've found the perfect flavor profile for your product, choose a flavor name for the front of pack that fits your brand. Do you want to keep it simple (general), be specific or use a descriptive name that ties back into the flavor's seasonality?

These are some ways you may name a spiced apple-inspired flavor on the front of pack.

GENERAL NAMES	SPECIFIC NAMES	DESCRIPTIVE NAMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Spiced Apple</li> <li>◆ Apple Spice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Apple Cinnamon</li> <li>◆ Apple Chai</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Spiced Orchard Apple</li> <li>◆ Warm Harvest Apple</li> <li>◆ Cozy Apple Spice</li> </ul>

*Optional Step 4: Enjoy the “fruits” of your labor with a delicious apple-flavored beverage or food product. Cheers!*

**FLAVOR CAN BE AN ITERATIVE PROCESS, BUT OUR EXPERTS ARE HERE TO HELP.**

FONA can help guide you through these steps to get you to the perfect flavor profile and name for your product.

Let’s talk flavors, innovation and anything in between.

Reach out to our team for inspiration, insights and actionable ideas to move forward.



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**ABOUT GENA**

With nearly a decade of experience in B2B and B2C marketing, Gena brings a passion for communicating and connecting with customers and consumers. She serves as Sr. Industry Associate on FONA’s beverage marketing team with the ultimate goal of providing actionable insights to valued partners. When she’s not ideating on innovation or mapping out marketplace trends, you can find Gena recreationally researching consumer behavior or trying out the most unique beverage on a restaurant’s menu.