



Ingredient Hot List

IMMUNITY

Driven by varying degrees of concern and anxiety due to COVID-19, consumers' search for foods and beverages that support immunity has continued to grow in recent months. In fact, the Innova Consumer Survey 2020 showed that 6 in 10 consumers worldwide are seeking products that support their immune health and projected this trend will continue in 2021 and beyond. Much of the interest is linked to consumers' desire to stave off COVID-19, but there is also a separate and parallel track towards the consumption of specific ingredients for overall wellness and the prevention of various health-related conditions. On top of it all, consumers search for products that not only benefit their health, but also taste great. With the caveat that ingredients linked to stronger immunity are not medically proven to be a proverbial magic bullet, we're looking at familiar favorites and intriguing newcomers in this space. Let's see what's next for your brand.

IMMUNITY INTEREST

Consumer interest for immunity boosting products has grown over recent years and it's not slowing down any time soon. In fact, in its Global Report 2020-2030: COVID-19 Implications and Growth, the Business Research Company predicts that the global market for immunity-boosting foods will reach \$24.02 billion by 2023. But as some of these products may come with taste challenges, product developers need to prioritize flavor to ensure a satisfying product.



“Ongoing anxiety stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic is continuing to push consumers toward prioritizing their immune health. Immunity-boosting ingredients will play a significant role for the coming year, while research and interest in the role of the microbiome and personalized nutrition as ways to strengthen immunity will accelerate.”

-Innova Market Insights



ACEROLA FRUIT

Acerola is a cherry-like berry (commonly referred to as cherry) that is rich in immune-supporting vitamin C. It comes from a tree native to Mexico, the Caribbean, Central America and northern South America, and is considered a superfruit packed with phytonutrients such as carotenoids, phenolics anthocyanins, and flavonoids.

CONSUMER SENTIMENT AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Food & Beverage Insider magazine recently reported that ingredients with immune-boosting ingredients like acerola are becoming more popular. In addition to the berry form, acerola extract and acerola powder are also garnering interest; according to information from Credence Research, the acerola extract market is expected to grow at a CAGR of 8.2% through 2026.



“They (acerola cherries) are actually higher than most other food sources of vitamin C. United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) data notes that they contain about 13 times the amount found in an equivalent serving of oranges.”

-MindBodyGreen.com



PRODUCTS OF NOTE



SUPERFOOD IMMUNITY C-BOOST FROM BOLTHOUSE FARMS is a blend of pear, mango and acerola cherries and may help to support a healthy immune system. It provides 600% daily value of vitamin C per serving.



SUJA ORGANIC COLD-PRESSED CITRUS IMMUNITY FRUIT JUICE DRINK is packed with immunity-boosting ingredients and is made from purified water, orange, pineapple, mango and coconut water, along with lemon, ginger, acerola cherry, probiotics, zinc and Vitamin D.

25% of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product



TRADER JOE'S ABSOLUTELY ACEROLA JUICE SHOT, available in a 2-fl. oz. bottle, is made from 100% cold pressed acerola cherries and delivers 100% daily value of vitamin C.

23% of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product



APPLES, BANANAS & BLUEBERRIES ORGANIC PUREE FROM LOVE CHILD ORGANICS is intended for babies ages six months and older and includes quinoa and acerola fruit as a natural source of vitamin C.

CHAGA MUSHROOMS



Mushrooms are growing rather wildly in the food-as-medicine and food-as-immune-support circles. In addition to other varieties like reishi, shiitake, lion's mane, turkey tail and cordyceps, the chaga mushroom is attracting notice from health-minded

consumers for its health benefits, as an anti-inflammatory, a stimulator of white blood cells and a regulator of the immune system. The chaga variety is grown on birch trees. Used for centuries in countries like China and Russia for its medicinal properties, chaga is cropping up as a more frequent ingredient in coffees and teas and various foods in the global market.

CONSUMER SENTIMENT AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Data from Chicago-based SPINS shows that growth in functional mushrooms rose 49.9% for the 52-week period ending October 4, 2020 and that annual sales are about \$12 million with a 22% growth rate. Technavio Research predicts that chaga-based products will grow by \$11.31 billion from 2020 through 2024. Consumers are buying supplements with chaga and food and beverage products with chaga as an ingredient, such as jerky, chips and even ice cream.

PRODUCTS OF NOTE



SAPP APPLE GINGER WITH CHAGA ALL-NATURAL BIRCH WATER is made with sustainably tapped birch water from the forests of Vermont and contains chaga, an immune booster grown on birch trees, as well as natural minerals and electrolytes.

19% of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product



MUSHROOM & WILD RICE BURGERS FROM SOL CUISINE are described as "superfood burgers" and are made from a blend of chaga, reishi and cordyceps mushrooms for beneficial health boost.



HOST DEFENSE PRIMORDIAL CHOCOLATE PURELY DARK PREMIUM DARK CHOCOLATE is comprised of 70% cacao, coconut sugar and the mycelium of reishi, chaga and cordyceps.

21% of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product

“A research paper released this past August focused on the virome-modulating and anti-inflammatory effects of mushrooms and herbs on SARS-CoV-2 infection and stated that ‘one of the potential candidates against the SARS-CoV-2 virus may be *Inonotus obliquus*, also known as chaga mushroom,’”

-The Biome

GINGER



Ginger is an often mentioned ingredient touted for immunity-protecting properties, in addition to other health and wellness functions. The key is the gingerols, important chemical compounds found in this

rhizome, or underground stem.

CONSUMER SENTIMENT AND DEMOGRAPHICS

According to information from Google, U.S.-based searches for ginger beverages have grown at around 30 percent year-over-year since 2014. In addition, Transparency Market Research estimates that the market for ginger will reach \$4.18 globally by next year, at a CAGR of about 6.4 percent.

“Dubbed a ‘wonder plant’, ginger has found its way into the diets of health-conscious individuals around the world, as it reportedly helps relieve pain and muscle soreness, lowers blood pressure and boosts the immune system.”
-Mintel

PRODUCTS OF NOTE



NUTTEE BEAN CO. FAVA LICIOUS WASABI & GINGER CRUNCHY ROASTED FAVA BEANS are described as a protein-packed snack with 14g of plant protein and 16g of fiber per bag. They are low in sodium and contain no trans fat, cholesterol, gluten or added sugars.



RAW GENERATION IMMUNITY SHOTS are made with turmeric and ginger -- two of the most anti-inflammatory foods -- combined with a citrus fruit juice blend.

Photo Source: Raw Generation



GR8NOLA CINNAMON CHAI FLAVOR GRANOLA is a clean granola gently spiced with warm chai blend, which combines super foods like cinnamon, cardamom, ginger, allspice and cloves to help boost immunity, support healthy digestion, and fight inflammation. It can be enjoyed with milk, as a topping or straight out of the bag.

18% of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.

PUMPKIN SEEDS

The pumpkin spice flavor may be for fall, but pumpkin seeds have perennial appeal when it comes to ingredients with immunity support claims. Pumpkin seeds, available in raw and sprouted form, are high in magnesium, iron, copper and zinc and contain antioxidants such as carotenoids and vitamin E that offer protection inflammation and disease. In fact, pumpkin seeds offer some of the highest amounts of zinc available in plant-based foods. Pumpkin seeds can be added to a variety of products, including yogurts, salads, nutrition bars, soups and desserts.

CONSUMER SENTIMENT AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Pumpkin seeds sales are sprouting among consumers. Technavio predicts the market to grow \$631.1 million through 2024, with a 13% CAGR.



“Pumpkin seed milk has officially been studied in U.S. clinical trials exploring zinc’s effect on reducing coronavirus symptoms and has been proven to reduce inflammation and improve one’s immune system. Even if you don’t have COVID-19 symptoms, the drink helps promote bone, urinary, and prostate health among several other factors, making it an exciting, healthy drink to keep an eye on.”

- Eat This, Not That!



PRODUCTS OF NOTE



SILVER HILLS ORGANIC SPROUTED POWER 20 GRAIN TRAIN SPROUTED WHEAT BREAD contains pumpkin seeds, flax, quinoa, sunflower seeds, chia seeds, khorasan and more and is said to provide high levels of nutrition and absorption.



CRAVEOLOGY IS A NEW FRUIT AND NUT SNACK MIX from Ocean Spray, made with pumpkin seeds picked from members of the farmer-owned cooperative.

Photo Source: Craveology



LANDISH VANILLA FLAVOURED SPIRULINA NUTRITIONAL SHAKE is a plant-based shake formulated with California spirulina and seed proteins from hemp, pumpkin and sunflower seeds. It can be added to smoothies.



BRAD'S PLANT BASED EVERYTHING ZUCCHINI VEGGIE FLATS are made with real veggies, including zucchini, chickpeas, pumpkin seeds, garbanzo beans, carrot, sunflower seeds, flax seeds, red bell pepper, sesame seeds, chia seeds, and poppy seeds.

LEMON BALM



Sure, it smells fragrant and has a consumer-friendly name that denotes serenity in uncertain times. But lemon balm is also said to contribute to immune protection due to its antiviral properties.

The herb contains a compound called rosmarinic acid that offers antioxidant and antimicrobial benefits. Lemon balm also has been shown to improve the functionality of the circulatory and digestive system and to relieve tension.



“Lemon balm extract is a concentrated source of potent essential oils and plant compounds that have antiviral activity. Test-tube research has shown that it has antiviral effects against avian influenza (bird flu), herpes viruses, HIV-1, and enterovirus 71, which can cause severe infections in infants and children.”

- Healthline



PRODUCTS OF NOTE



WAKU RASPBERRY ROSE PLANT BASED TONIC is a vegan product formulated with a combination of 20 super herbs and flowers including mint, a mix of flowers, spearmint, lemon balms and flaxseed, which have anti-inflammatory properties.

14% of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.



MANGO LEMON BALM PREBIOTIC SUPERBOOST HERBAL TEA from Teccino is made with lemon balm and contains fruity notes from mango over roasted chicory with a sweet taste from dates and figs.

Photo Source: Teccino



GHIA IS A NON-ALCOHOLIC BITTER APERITIF DRINK that is made with gentian root, lemon balm, fig, elderflower and no added sugar. It can be mixed into cocktails or enjoyed straight.

Photo Source: Ghia

THE TAKEAWAYS

Consumers are getting savvier about foods that can help support their immune health, recognizing the importance of nutrients like vitamin C, vitamin D and zinc and seeking out foods and beverages touted for antiviral or anti-inflammatory properties. In addition to bellwether foods linked to immune support like sweet potatoes, red peppers, oranges and elderberry, among others, expect to see more ingredients made with beneficial root vegetables, herbs, seeds, adaptogens and superfruits. From herbal teas to mushroom burgers and immunity shots, we're spotting lots of innovation in this space. The opportunities are seemingly endless, and product developers can find opportunity by creating products that meet the consumer search for immunity *and* great taste.

YOU DESERVE MORE. LET'S GET STARTED.

What does true partnership look like? You deserve a flavor partner ready to turn these trends into the tangible.

Let FONA's market insight and research experts get to work for you. Translate these trends into bold new ideas for your brand. Increase market share and get to your "what's next." Our technical 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. Let's mesh the complexities of flavor with your brand development, technical requirements and regulatory needs to deliver a complete taste solution.

From concept to manufacturing, we're here for you — every step of the way. Contact our sales service department at [630.578.8600](tel:630.578.8600) to request a flavor sample or [chat us up at www.fona.com/contact-fona/](https://www.fona.com/contact-fona/)

SOURCES

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