

Emerging Consumer Behavior Shifts: Six Ways Food & Beverage Innovation Is Evolving in the Face of COVID-19

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ADM has identified six emerging behavioral changes that will power innovation and growth in the months ahead.

“Consumers’ attitudes, priorities and behaviors are shifting significantly,” said Ana Ferrell, VP of Marketing, ADM. “This evolution is providing a unique opportunity for forward-looking food and beverage companies to bring a suite of trailblazing new products to market.”

Recent ADM OutsideVoice® research shows that 77% of consumers intend to make more attempts to stay healthy in the future. Food and beverage manufacturers who successfully balance consumer health concerns with affordability are most likely to win with consumers.

ADM has identified six behavioral shifts that will create opportunities for food and beverage manufacturers to gain market share in an increasingly uncertain business environment.

1. Increasing Focus on the Gut Health and Immune Function Connection

Globally, 57% of consumers report being more concerned about their immunity as a result of COVID-19

¹. As consumers strive to enhance their immunity, they are becoming more knowledgeable about how the human microbiome supports the immune system and overall wellbeing. Products containing probiotics, prebiotics and postbiotics can benefit the microbiome and are already gaining momentum in the marketplace.

2. Plant-Based Becomes Mainstream

In the U.S., 18% of alternative protein buyers purchased their first plant-based protein during COVID-19, and 92% of those first-time buyers report they are likely to continue purchasing meat alternatives². In Germany, the U.K. and the Netherlands, 80% of consumers state they are likely to continue eating plant-based meat alternatives beyond COVID-19². With health, safety and convenience as top purchase motivators, products that deliver exceptional nutrition and a high-quality sensory experience will be poised for success.

3. A New Perspective on Weight Management and Metabolic Health

The pandemic’s consequences for individuals with hypertension, diabetes and cardiovascular disease have consumers viewing weight management and metabolic health in a new light, with 51% of consumers indicating they are concerned about being less active or gaining weight during the pandemic. That worry is likely to increase demand for functional solutions supportive of metabolic wellness and healthy weight management.

4. Finding Balance: Self Care, Emotional Wellbeing and Nutrition

The difficult circumstances stemming from COVID-19 have increased feelings of anxiety and stress as 35% of consumers report being concerned about mental health². People are looking for new ways to improve their mental wellness during these stressful times, including granting themselves permission to consume indulgent, comforting food and beverages. However, they are tempering this desire with weight management needs and seek a careful overall balance of indulgence and good nutrition.

Food and beverages designed to elevate mood, sustain energy and reduce stress will grow in popularity in the months and years to come. ADM also projects new opportunities for comfort foods, snacks and baked goods offering nutrient-rich ingredients and functional health benefits.

5. Nutrition, It's Personal

As COVID-19 increases consumer awareness of individual health risk factors, demand for products offering tailored, highly personalized health and wellness solutions will take off. ADM research shows that 49% of consumers feel every individual is unique and requires a customized approach to diet and exercise, and 31% of consumers are already purchasing more items tailored for health and nutrition. Products that focus on improving nutrition, self-care and general wellness will increasingly attract consumers' attention².

6. A Shift in Shopping Values

An increased focus on health is triggering a windfall in consumer health and wellness spending. Forty-eight percent of consumers plan to purchase more items related to health and wellness². Concurrently, manifesting concerns around widespread economic decline have prompted a shift to value-based shopping, including growing demand for basic pantry staples, stimulating trade-downs to private labels and increasing traffic to value retailers.

These behavioral shifts are likely to persist well after the pandemic crisis peaks. ADM has responded by developing tailored solutions aimed at giving brands an edge in an ever-changing marketplace.

About ADM

At ADM, we unlock the power of nature to provide access to nutrition worldwide. With industry-advancing innovations, a complete portfolio of ingredients and solutions to meet any taste, and a commitment to sustainability, we give customers an edge in solving the nutritional challenges of today and tomorrow. We're a global leader in human and animal nutrition and the world's premier agricultural origination and processing company. Our breadth, depth, insights, facilities and logistical expertise give us unparalleled capabilities to meet needs for food, beverages, health and wellness, and more. From the seed of the idea to the outcome of the solution, we enrich the quality of life the world over. Learn more at www.adm.com.

¹ FMCG GURUS: Twelve Step Guide for Addressing COVID-19 in 2020 and Beyond, April 2020

² ADM OutsideVoice?

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