



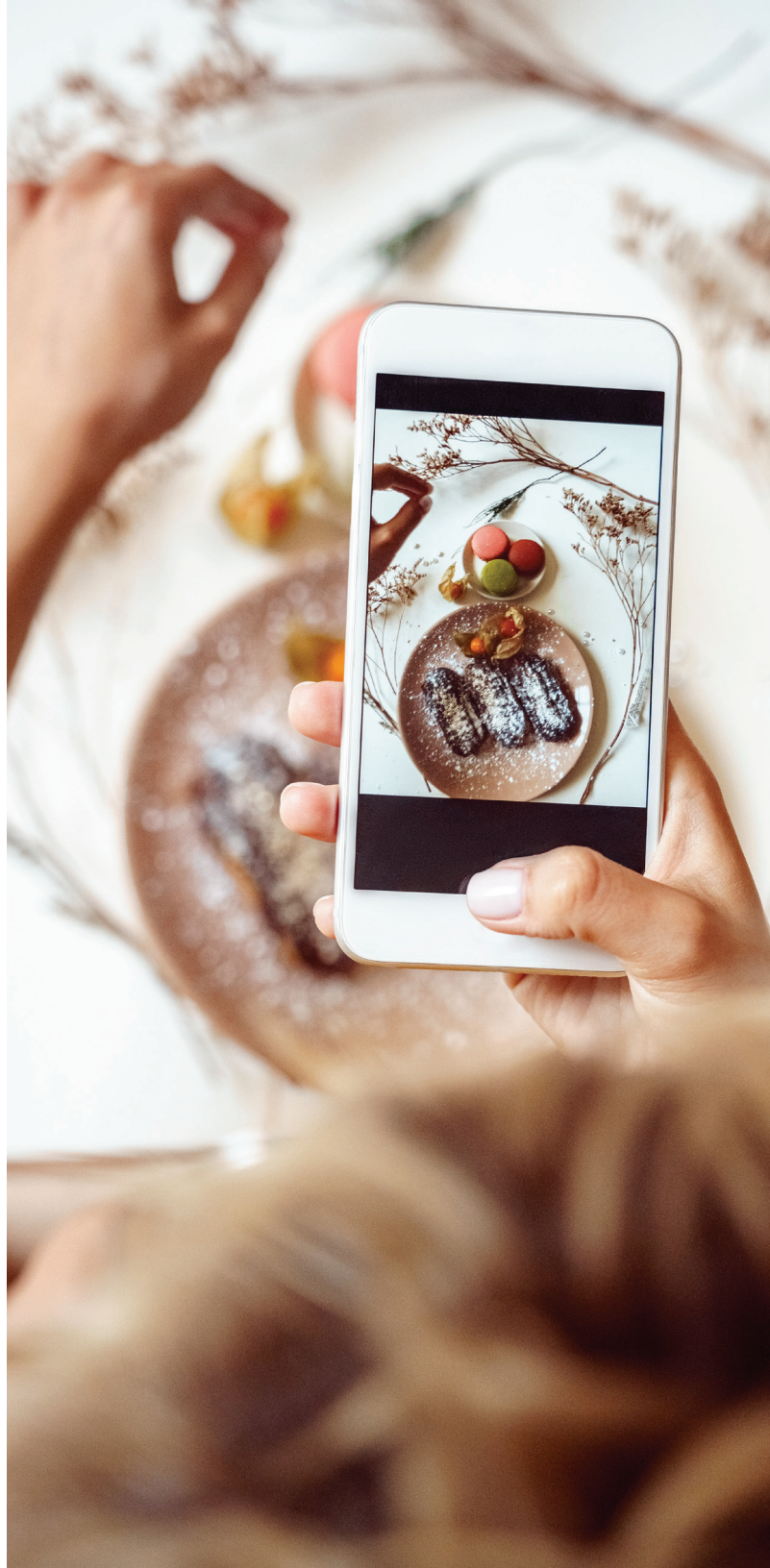
colinkurtis

2025

TREND PREDICTIONS

INTRODUCTION

The world is an endless buffet of trends, and as an advertising agency that specializes in food, beverage and nutrition marketing, ColinKurtis continues to learn and adapt our strategies to better serve our clients. Our experts highlight the top trending results right now and into the future, to deliver a comprehensive guide that industry leaders can use to empower their brands' marketing strategies.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

ColinKurtis Advertising has celebrated over 25 years of marketing success. From elevating brands' social and digital presence to helping them build a sustainable marketing strategy, our team of experts supports food, beverage and nutrition businesses in creating actionable plans and achievable goals that differentiate them from their competition. Staying in the loop on all things food ensures we produce relevant, engaging and profitable content for our clients.

WHAT'S ON THE MENU FOR 2025'S TOP TRENDS?

- 1 **COST & TASTE AS NON-NEGOTIABLES**
- 2 **TASTE MEETS FUNCTION**
- 3 **FOOD & BEVERAGE SUPPORTING WELLNESS**
- 4 **FREE-FROM FOODS & CLAIMS**
- 5 **STILL ON TREND**





1

**COST &
TASTE AS
NON-
NEGOTIABLES**

COST & TASTE AS NON-NEGOTIABLES

TASTE & COST ARE TOP DRIVERS

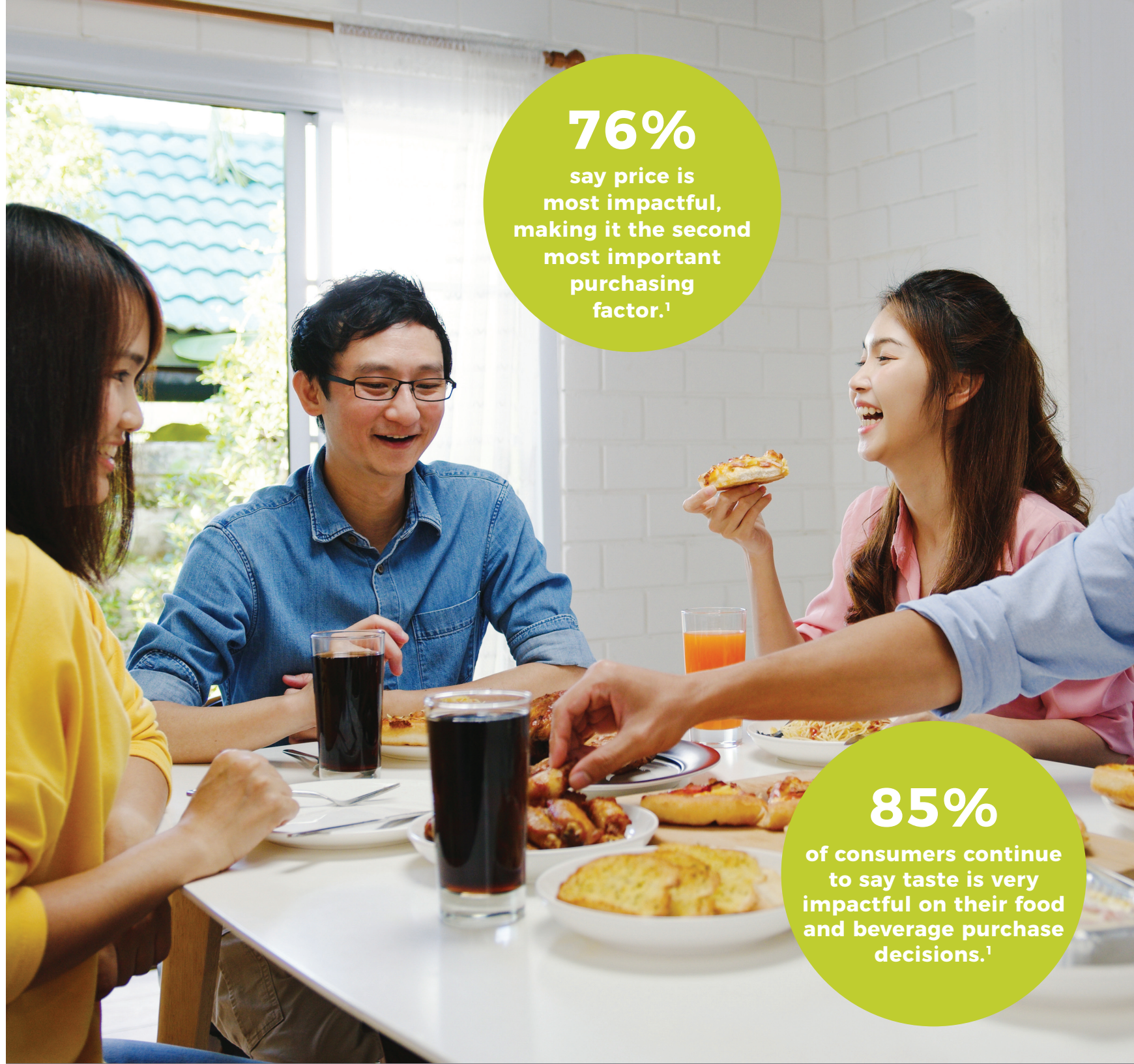
Traditionally, consumers' #1 purchase driver has been: the **taste experience** of food and beverage products.

Today, with inflation mounting and trips to the grocery store or restaurant more expensive than ever, American consumers are taking note and coping with a keener focus on cost savings.

At the same time, since great taste is still paramount, Mintel says 2024's essential value proposition is: "Food and drink must taste good and be worth the cost."²



Think! It's never been more important for food and beverage brands to deliver a great eating experience while keeping consumer prices in check.



76%
say price is most impactful, making it the second most important purchasing factor.¹

85%
of consumers continue to say taste is very impactful on their food and beverage purchase decisions.¹

COST & TASTE AS NON-NEGOTIABLES

BREAKING AWAY FROM NAME BRANDS

To fight inflation and rising grocery costs, more and more consumers are turning to private label products.

Even if inflation slips, **private labels are here to stay, with 90% saying they would be somewhat or very likely to continue buying store brands even if inflation or grocery prices come down.**²

Over half of shoppers plan to buy more private brands in the future.²

Who do private label products appeal to?

Millennials and Gen Xers without children comprise 36% of private label food and beverage sales.³

Households with kids made up another 35% of those sales.³

U.S. private label sales grew 6% last year, reaching \$217B.³



COST & TASTE AS NON-NEGOTIABLES

CHOCOLATE: A SWEET EXAMPLE OF THE IMPACTS OF INFLATION

Chocolate is a staple of a sweet treat. In fact, 46% of consumers say chocolate is their go-to comfort food.⁴

But chocolate sales are on the decline as cocoa prices hit a steep increase to an all-time high due to global supply shortage caused by droughts.

This leaves room for other sweet ingredients to make their way into formulations. **For example, sweet fruits such as berries, cherries and dates can provide the same indulgent sweetness as chocolate.**



Think!

Freeze-dried candies: these candies have become increasingly popular due to their unique texture, intense flavor and longer shelf life. These crunchy, melt-in-your mouth delights have been around for decades, but through social media, various types and brands have gone viral, gaining popularity.

46%

of consumers say
chocolate is their
go-to comfort
food.⁴



2

TASTE
MEETS
FUNCTION



TASTE MEETS FUNCTION

HEALTH >>> COST

Consumers want to keep eating, but they want to feel GOOD about it. We're not talking about "reduced sugar" formulations only—they want healthy options and they're willing to pay a pretty penny for it.

In fact, according to recent experiments, consumers would pay a 5.6% to 91.5% (mean 30.7%) price premium for healthier foods.⁵

Healthfulness: An Income-Dependent Purchase Driver

The health of a product as a purchase driver is highly dependent on the shopper's income level. Healthfulness is a key motivator for 55% of shoppers with the lowest household income, but rises to 75% for shoppers with the highest household income.¹

And for households with an income of \$100K+, **healthfulness surpasses price as a purchase driver.¹**



TASTE MEETS FUNCTION

SUPPLEMENT INDULGENCE

Consumers want more VMS products, but they prefer them in gummy formats, and are directing a larger share of their VMS spending towards gummies in contrast to other formats, such as capsules and tablets.⁶

And even more specifically, consumers want their supplements in a healthier gummy format, although they may taste and feel like candy. This is creating quite the opportunity for formulators to dive into new ingredient combinations, flavors and clean label options.⁷



Think!

- *Jelly IV to actively replenish the body after a night of drinking*
- *AG1 green drink powder delivers your daily dose of vitamins, minerals, probiotics & more*
- *The Good Patch topical patches deliver vitamins and botanicals through the skin*

Now, Think Beyond Gummy

Gummies aren't the only popular VMS format catching consumers' eyes. Science-backed products that make it easier to take and get fast results dominate the category.



3

FOOD &
BEVERAGE
SUPPORTING
WELLNESS



WELLNESS AS A WHOLE

Consumers are looking at the whole picture when it comes to their well-being—physical, mental and emotional facets each play an important role in their pursuit of overall wellness, and are affected by diet and nutrition and therefore consumers' food, beverage and nutraceutical choices. Today's shoppers are making eating decisions that support their wellness.

Healthy Aging

Top of mind, as the world's population ages.

Weight Management

Weight loss is the second biggest motivator for following a diet or eating pattern.¹

Gut Health

Including pre/pro/post biotics and microbiome support.

Food as Medicine

We're seeing more and more grocery stores adopt a "food as medicine" approach by adding registered dietitians, registered nurses, nurse practitioners, medical doctors and health coaches to their staff to drive their health and well-being initiatives.

92% percent of users agree that dietary supplements are essential to maintaining their health.⁸



WEIGHING THE BENEFITS: THE RISE OF GLP-1 WEIGHT LOSS MEDICATION

Popularity of GLP-1 drugs, such as Ozempic® and Wegovy®, and the continuous rise of obesity in America has brought a renewed focus on weight loss and functional foods innovated to support weight loss journeys.

It's not just a miracle drug; nutrition plays a crucial role when taking GLP-1 medication for weight loss. **GLP-1 users need nutrient-dense foods while on the medication to improve the effectiveness of the medication.**

More Than Medication

Functional foods that support weight management aren't just for people using GLP-1 drugs.

PREVIOUS USERS: Once off GLP-1 medication, former users need foods that support and maintain their lower weight.

CURIOS NON-USERS: Growing GLP-1 medication popularity has drawn in a lot of curiosity around the importance of appetite control.



1 IN 10
consumers say
they have tried a
prescription
weight loss drug in
the past year.¹

An additional
22%
say they have
considered it.¹

FERMENTATION FOR FEEL-GOOD GUT HEALTH

Attention has been drawn to fermented foods for being jam-packed with probiotics and their ability to bolster the body's microbiome.

Some Popular Fermented Foods in the U.S.:

- Kombucha
- Kimchi
- Sauerkraut
- Sourdough Bread

Some Benefits of a Healthy Microbiome:

- Improved Digestion
- Stronger Immune System
- Regulated Metabolism



Think!

Kimchi has had a long, delicious history in Korean cuisine. It's now gaining traction in the U.S. not just due to its versatile flavor, but also because of its functional benefits and nutritional value. It provides probiotics and other functional benefits including anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, cholesterol-reducing and anti-aging properties.



Nearly
15%
of American
consumers say they
actively include
fermented foods in
their diets to improve
digestive health.⁹

4

FREE-FROM
FOODS
& CLAIMS



FREE-FROM FOODS & CLAIMS

AVOID INGREDIENTS TO BUILD UP HEALTHY HALO

Free-from foods refer to the foods that avoid certain ingredients, such as gluten, sugar, lactose, additives and more. Consumers are increasingly choosing “free-from” foods as a part of lifestyle diets. This category started as a niche most important to consumers with allergies, but has expanded to a much larger base of health-conscious consumers.

From March 2019 to March 2024, multiple categories saw increases in free-from food claims:¹⁰

- +16% in Bakery
- +10% in Sauces & Seasonings
- +10% in Snacks

74%

of consumers are seeking out food and drink products that contain recognizable ingredients.¹⁰

73%

of consumers are looking for “natural” products.¹⁰

74%

of shoppers say that they check ingredient lists before buying.¹⁰



FREE-FROM FOODS & CLAIMS

FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND INGREDIENT BANS

California's Food Safety Act is America's first state legislation banning common, yet potentially harmful, additives. The ban will go into effect in 2027 and will inhibit the sale of food & beverage products containing:

- Red Dye No. 3
- Potassium Bromate
- Brominated Vegetable Oil
- Propylparaben

These ingredients have all been linked to health problems, and have been banned in other parts of the world, yet are deemed legal to use by the FDA in the U.S.

California is setting a precedent that may spread to other parts of the country. For example Illinois, Missouri, Washington and New York have since proposed their own ingredient bans.

Lunch Time!

Also in California, a bill has been proposed that would ban Blue Dye No. 1 and No. 2, Green Dye No. 3, Red Dye No. 40, Yellow Dye No. 5 and No. 6, and titanium dioxide from products sold in schools.



5

STILL ON TREND

WE'RE OVER HALFWAY THROUGH 2024.
WE'VE TALKED ABOUT WHAT'S NEW AND
UPCOMING, BUT WHAT'S STILL ON TREND
SINCE OUR LAST REPORT?



STILL ON TREND

EXCITING EATING EXPERIENCES

2024's demand for "exciting eating experiences" are still on consumers' radars. And with the blurring of "snacking" and "meal time," better-for-you snacking takes charge:

- 40% of consumers are interested in snacks that include vegetables¹¹
- 51% of parents are looking for BFY snacks their kids will actually eat¹¹

Spice Is Still Nice

Last year was all about complex heat. This year, consumers want their food "swicy" (sweet & spicy),¹² and the inspiration is why we foodies wake up in the morning.



Think!

- *Bloody Mary Mixes*
- *Hot & Spicy Gummy Bears*
- *Mango Pineapple Habanero Jam*
- *Spicy Maple Syrup*



STILL ON TREND

PLANT-BASED IS BLOOMING

Bloomberg predicts the plant-based foods market will hit \$162 Billion in the next decade as health and sustainability values continue to lead the way.¹³

Rooting for Mushrooms

Mushrooms are shaping up to be one of the hottest plant-based trends in 2024.¹⁴ Mushrooms are renowned for their taste, texture and aroma, and are sometimes used as a meat substitute. Although lacking in protein, mushrooms provide vitamins and minerals as well as **deep umami flavors** suitable for a variety of dishes.



Think!

Cookies & cream almond creamers, vegan Kraft mac & cheese, Oscar Mayer NotHotDogs and more!

STILL ON TREND

VALUES-BASED PURCHASING

The terms “zero waste” and “circular food” are gaining traction, with consumers choosing friendlier approaches to eating and cooking. And it’s no secret that the food industry sees tons of food waste annually, including packaging. Consumers learn to do more with less, seeking sustainable food trends that are both nourishing and eco-friendly.



Think!

- *Nose-to-tail and leaf-to-root eating*
- *Fermentation*
- *Using AI to meal prep*



SOURCES

- ¹ IFIC, 2024 IFIC Food & Health Survey, <https://foodinsight.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/2024-IFIC-Food-Health-Survey.pdf>
- ² Grocery Dive, More than half of shoppers plan to buy more private brands in the future, report finds, <https://www.grocerydive.com/news/fmi-private-label-report-2023/695672/>
- ³ Retail Dive, US private label sales grew 6% last year, reaching \$217B: report, <https://www.retaildive.com/news/private-label-retail-brand-sales-growth/709845>
- ⁴ Mintel, Chocolate Confectionery - US - 2024
- ⁵ Alsubhi M, Blake M, Nguyen T, Majmudar I, Moodie M, Ananthapavan J. Consumer willingness to pay for healthier food products: A systematic review. *Obes Rev.* 2023 Jan;24(1):e13525. doi: 10.1111/obr.13525. Epub 2022 Nov 7. PMID: 36342169; PMCID: PMC10909406.)
- ⁶ NutraIngredients, Gummy market dynamics: Insights and tips to achieve supplement Success <https://www.nutraingredients-usa.com/News/Promotional-features/Gummy-market-insights-to-create-supplement-success>
- ⁷ NPI, <https://www.naturalproductsinsider.com/supplements/delivery-formats-digital-magazine>
- ⁸ CRN, Three-quarters of Americans Take Dietary Supplements; Most Users Agree They are Essential to Maintaining Health, CRN Consumer Survey Finds, <https://www.crnusa.org/newsroom/three-quarters-americans-take-dietary-supplements-most-users-agree-they-are-essential>
- ⁹ Tilley Distribution, Fermented Foods: Market Trends & Opportunities, <https://www.tilleydistribution.com/fermented-foods-market-trends-opportunities/>
- ¹⁰ Food Ingredients First, Free-from food: Formulators eye functionality and texture amid diversifying consumer demands, <https://www.foodingredientsfirst.com/news/free-from-food-formulators-eye-functionality-and-texture-amid-diversifying-consumer-demands.html>
- ¹¹ Mintel, Better for You Snacking – US – 2024
- ¹² Food & Wine, 'Swicy' Foods and Doomsday Staples Are Among 2025's Biggest Food Trend Predictions, <https://www.foodandwine.com/dining-and-food-trends-2025-8671387>
- ¹³ Bloomberg, Plant-based Foods Market to Hit \$162 Billion in Next Decade, Projects Bloomberg Intelligence <https://www.bloomberg.com/company/press/plant-based-foods-market-to-hit-162-billion-in-next-decade-projects-bloomberg-intelligence/>
- ¹⁴ Hela Spice, 7 Plant-Based Food Trends To Look Out For In 2024, <https://www.helaspice.com/na/blog/7-plant-based-food-trends-to-look-out-for-in-2024/>