

# Food trends : an inspiration source for ingredients ?

Major consumer trends are being confirmed, while others are taking shape. But they all underline the need for a shift in the food supply towards products more in line with consumer expectations. This is an opportunity for ingredient manufacturers to enhance their offer and demonstrate their creativity.



In an ever-changing context, shaken by successive crises - health, climate, conflict in Ukraine, inflation, etc. - that are profoundly altering consumers' daily lives, the food system has revealed its limits, making change vital. - The food system has revealed its limits, making change vital. What are consumers' new aspirations in the light of current events? How can the food industry seize on their expectations to change course? Can new trends be a source of opportunities for ingredient manufacturers? These are the views of two experts in food innovation: Vincent Lafaye, Managing Director of Foodinnov Group, and Xavier Terlet, Senior Advisor at ProtéinesXTC.

## A CONTEXT CONDUCTIVE TO NEW FOOD REQUIREMENTS

### • **Food for pleasure**

When everything's going wrong, food is a safe haven and, for many consumers, the only daily source of pleasure, according to Xavier Terlet: *«This is the number-one demand of consumers when we talk to them about food. They're not primarily looking for functionality, as they are for dietary supplements. If the food can help solve a health problem or contribute to respect for the environment, why not, but above all it must offer a satisfying taste experience»*. Product launches confirm this. In France, 57% of innovations are dominated by pleasure, according to the 26<sup>th</sup> Global Food Innovation Barometer (ProtéinesXTC). The top 3 product launches for 2022 include a bubble tea, a chocolate snack bar and a flavored beer. Simple, convivial pleasures are also making a strong comeback. And when it comes to flavors, *«the trend is to seek out sensory experiences with tastes that are sometimes highly segmented, such as truffle, ginger, saffron, peanut and black garlic»*, analyzes Xavier Terlet. These are familiar tastes, probably chosen for reassurance, but to be rediscovered. *«These ingredients are often characterized*

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*by a powerful or exotic taste, an interesting texture, a balanced nutritional profile and a virtuous culture, like peanuts or buckwheat, which are very present in current innovations». Their use is, of course, adapted to the local food culture. «Food is the only field where globalization cannot create standardization, unlike the dietary supplements sector, which is usually the same from one country to another», adds Xavier Terlet.*

• **Reduced prices**

Another requirement linked to the multiple crises concerns price. *«French people have lost an average of 20% of their purchasing power over the last year and a half, and this is particularly true of low-income households, where food accounts for a larger share of expenditure»,* says Xavier Terlet. The fall in the organic market is indicative of this demand. *«Consumers no longer want to pay more for products that are environmentally friendly, healthy, practical or ethical. They see these added values as a matter of course, and as the responsibility of companies»,* he analyzes. In response to inflation, some well-known brands are offering simple, less expensive basic products (Lesieur's Olizéa). Others are catering for small budgets by selling products individually.

• **More simplicity and naturalness**

Consumers expect greater simplicity in the food offer and in the communication that accompanies products. *«Consumers are not nutrition specialists, and scientific terms are unfamiliar to them. They expect simple communication, with few ingredients whose names they recognize and which are of natural origin»,* says Xavier Terlet.

*«Naturalness has been a major trend in recent years, across all sectors,»* confirms Vincent Lafaye. *«The reduction in the presence of additives, or even their elimination, has been the result of the influence of certain food deciphering applications»,* he adds. For its customers, Foodinnov has created the additives screener app, which identifies 80 additives to be banned, based on scientific studies. *«Several distributors have subscribed. We've also been working on ultra-processing, which is another area of concern,»* reports Vincent Lafaye. The search for natural alternatives to additives and preservatives is gathering pace, opening up new opportunities for ingredient manufacturers.

• **More plants**

Although veganism is a major trend, the market for plant-based proteins has not yet exploded: *«Vegans are a very small minority of the population. Vegans are a very small minority of the population, and it's flexitarians and their desire to reduce their meat consumption who are the target of the market»,* explains Vincent Lafaye. Even so, we can't say that there's a place for insect proteins. *«Even though five or six Novel Food files ...*

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- *have been successfully submitted for human nutrition, insect protein-based products are slow to develop due to a problem of consumer acceptability.*» Retailers are preparing to anticipate the need for plant proteins. «Carrefour has launched an international coalition to accelerate sales of plant-based alternatives by 2026, with the support of seven industrial partners: Danone, Unilever, Bel, Andros, Bonduelle, Nutrition&Santé and Savencia», he adds. Pulses are often associated with plant-based products, as they taste good and have a traditional image, as well as being rich in protein and virtuous to grow. «Their growth is supported by the development of a French industry in the Grand Ouest region. He notes the parallel emergence of hybrid products, blending these legume proteins with animal proteins: «These blends reduce the texture and taste problems associated with vegetable products, and reduce the ecological footprint of products while maintaining a balanced nutritional profile, with full essential amino acids, more fiber, fewer saturated fatty acids and fewer calories.

### THE FOOD INDUSTRY ADAPTS TO CONSUMER ASPIRATIONS

#### • **A customized offer**

Personalized offers are appearing in both food and dietary supplements, even if they continue to be discreet. «Senior citizens are a focus of marketing interest because of their greater financial resources,» says Vincent Lafaye. On the Spanish market, Auchan has created a range of private-label products specially designed for this category - creamy/puree textures, high-protein composition, source of fiber and low in salt - which displays the word «senior» on the packaging. In France, the Emile Noël and Quintesens brands market vegetable oils rich in omega-3, vitamin E and DHA for the over-50s.



Personalization is also eagerly awaited by healthcare establishments. Foodinnov recently joined the Fork&Care innovation program, which brings together the CHU de Nantes, the Institut de cancérologie de l'Ouest, food and healthcare manufacturers and start-ups. «The inclusion of Fleury Michon and Eureden in the consortium, and thus their commitment to supporting promising health food start-ups, bears witness to the food industry's interest in health food and the particular needs of certain categories of the population, such as senior citizens, but also subjects with pathologies such as cancer», analyzes Vincent Lafaye, before adding that «women's health and pregnancy are also emerging areas of development in the food industry».

For Xavier Terlet, the personalization of products is clearly a promising trend, and one that can draw inspiration from dietary supplements. He cites the British brand Get Nourished, which composes gummies in seven layers after analyzing a questionnaire on consumers' lifestyles

### TRADUCTION DES TENDANCES ALIMENTAIRES

La quête du plaisir - pour la supplémentation, cela peut passer par la recherche de galéniques également plaisir et sensorielles, la foodification (les gummies et leur succès en sont la parfaite illustration). Simplicité et naturalité - elles sont la base line des formules de compléments alimentaires. D'où le clean label et la recherche d'ingrédients les plus naturels possibles. Personnalisation - elle existe et est à l'origine du succès de marques (souvent jeunes). Les seniors - l'offre de compléments alimentaires ainsi positionnés est par trop timide (cf Dossier ce numéro).



### TRANSLATING FOOD TRENDS

The quest for pleasure - when it comes to supplements, this can mean looking for formulas that are also pleasurable and sensorial, foodification (gummies and their success are the perfect illustration of this). Simplicity and naturalness - these are the base line for food supplement formulas. Hence the clean label and the search for the most natural ingredients possible. Personalisation - this exists and is behind the success of (often young) brands. Seniors - the range of food supplements positioned in this way is far too limited (see Dossier in this issue).

and goals. For the past two years, personalization has gone even further. «In the United States, dietary programs are offered based on DNA Nudge's analysis of your DNA, or Versaware's analysis of your personal characteristics. We can imagine that, in the future, foods will be personalized according to your DNA.»

In France, however, genetic testing outside a medical context is prohibited.

• **Better nutritional balance**

The nutritional composition of food products is increasingly scrutinized. «This is due to the influence of rating applications and NutriScore®, which provide consumers with access to independent information», says Xavier Terlet. To meet the requirements of the NutriScore®, reformulations have been made, and a NutriScore® A is now displayed on Herta pizza dough and Royal Bernard cordons bleus. «Snack products are also undergoing a transformation, incorporating vegetables to make them more balanced, like Beech-Nut nutrition's hidden vegetable brownies, which contain 30% fruit and vegetables,» notes Vincent Lafaye.

• **A promise of immunity**

The immunity promise has been a major trend since the Covid pandemic. «In the food sector, the number of launches with this promise has increased eightfold in one year», says Xavier Terlet, citing as examples Lactel's Kefir fermented milk, which supplies lactic ferments, and Kellogg's All Bran Immune Care cereals (L. Lactis and wheat bran arabinoxylans), marketed in Japan. Natural ingredients with an impact on immunity also have their part to play.

• **Fermentation for more sustainable production**

Fermentation is a fast-developing field, supported by public-private programs and partnerships such as «Ferment du futur», supported by INRA and ANIA. «Fermentation makes it possible to produce foods of high nutritional quality, and to recycle and valorize by-products through fermentation, as Green Spot technologies, for example, has done with our Ferment'Up range,» confides Vincent Lafaye. Fermentation, an ancient technology, improves the taste quality of plant proteins (neutralizing undesirable notes) as well as their digestibility.

So-called «precision fermentation» also addresses the ethical concerns surrounding products derived from animal exploitation. «Nestlé and Bel have signed agreements with American start-up Perfect Day to use precision fermentation to produce caseins and whey proteins that will be used in the design of animal-free dairy products,» says Xavier Terlet. The advantages of these 'animal-free' dairy products: sustainable, ecological production with no compromise on taste, flavor or texture. •

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