



TASTY, HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE FOOD

The top 5 food trends for 2022

Dear reader,

While the food industry has always been a trend-sensitive market, the coronavirus pandemic and the climate crisis have intensified the phenomenon. That has resulted in an interesting mix of trends, with three main ingredients: sustainability, health and taste.

So how are consumer needs changing? And how can food producers respond to these changing needs or, better still, anticipate them?

Snick EuroIngredients dishes up the top 5 trends in the world of food, spiced with interesting examples and figures taken from the [Innova Market Insights](#) annual report.

Bon appetit!

- #1 Sustainable production and communication
- #2 The relationship between nutritional value and taste
- #3 Plant-based: on the increase, but also under fire
- #4 Back to the roots
- #5 Exotic influences and combinations

> Click on a title to go immediately to the trend of your choice.

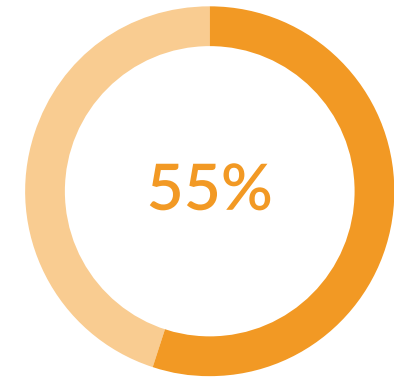


#1 Sustainable production and communication

What worries consumers most? The health of the world's population or that of our planet? In 2020, human health was the decisive winner but in 2021, the growing concern about the health of our planet prevailed. So how should producers respond to this increased attention to sustainability and climate?

Transparency reinvented

In last year's trend report, we explained how crucial transparency is if you want your customers to endorse your brand's sustainability narrative. Certification is one way of achieving this, but 55% of consumers say that the proliferation of labels means they can no longer see the forest for the trees. A single sustainability label – similar to the Nutri-Score for nutritional value – is a valid option, but obviously producers don't have much input in this.



of consumers think there are too many sustainability labels

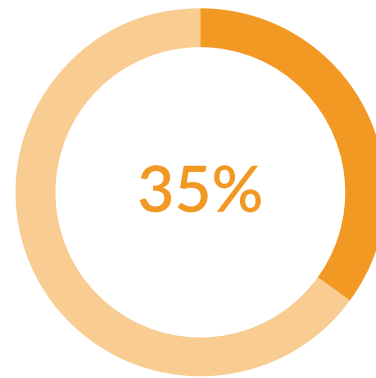


Another option is to tell your story in a different way. **The Vegetarian Butcher** lets consumers calculate the impact of going meat-free on the company's website. More and more producers are communicating about their CO2 emissions on product packaging, especially if they emit hardly any or none at all, of course.

The emergence of upcycling

'Upcycling' has been a trend in the circular economy for some time now, especially in heavy industry and the construction industry. Recently, however, upcycled food have become a burgeoning category in the food industry. Surplus food or food ingredients that would have **previously been discarded as food waste** are now given a **new life** in food products.

35% of consumers say they prefer a product with upcycled ingredients. The success of upcycling has inspired the Upcycled Food Association (UFA) to develop – yes, you guessed it – a **new label**. You can add it to your existing collection of certifications or focus on it exclusively, making it your USP.



of consumers consciously choose upcycling products

Colruyt has also invested in up-cycling with its **enVie soups**. The Brussels start-up uses fresh vegetables that were left unsold after an auction for its soups. Colruyt sells these soups under its Boni private label, saving more than 35,000 kg of vegetables a year. EnVie is also a social project: the start-up helps people return to work after long-term unemployment through a training programme.

[Read more about enVie](#)



Avoid a proliferation of labels and share your sustainable narrative in a more transparent manner



#2 The relationship between nutritional value and taste

For several decades, technology has been a driver of innovation in our industry, but the pace has really picked up in recent years – just think of the rapid growth in plant-based products ([see trend 3](#)). Striking the right balance between nutritional value and taste continues to be a major challenge, however. What solutions can technological developments offer?

Prioritising nutritional value

‘Nutrition hacking’ was already a trend last year, and this is set to continue in 2022. Consumers want their food to be as **tasty and nutritious as possible**. Recently, the **Nutri-Score** has become the preferred method for assessing a product’s nutritional value by far, so producers are urgently looking at ways to make their score as good as possible .

Making a product more nutritious is not that difficult: all you need to do is eliminate nutrients that are less healthy, such as salt, sugar and fats, where possible. But, and **there is a but**:

- 1 Many of these ingredients often **influence the taste** of your product.
- 2 Substitutes also tend to be **more expensive** than salt, sugar and fat.
- 3 And what about your product’s **shelf life, texture and other technical properties**?



Taste is making a comeback

The right ingredients for your product need to be **tasty, functional and nutritious**. **Fibre** is a frequently added ingredient in recent years. But while fibre ticks the last two boxes, it also tends to make food dry. Which is why not everyone is a fan.

This also explains why food producers are increasingly turning to soluble fibre as an alternative. **Inulin** is a soluble fibre – often sourced from chicory root – is made up of fructose molecules. While inulin is not naturally sweet, it adds **sweetness** in product formulations. That is why it is often used in breads and pastries, dairy foods, breakfast cereals and bars.

Healthy substitutes for salt and fat are also readily available. Some are natural and easier to use. Just think of soy and kelp as alternatives to salt and tapioca starch for fat. Other substitutes require more **research and development** in the lab to approximate the taste, texture and functionality of the original product.



Are you looking for ways to increase the nutritional value of your products without compromising on taste? Ask us a question and we will help you as soon as we can.

Conduct research into healthy alternatives to salt, sugar and fat – or ask an expert for help



#3

Plant-based: on the increase, but also under fire

Sustainability (see trend 1) and nutritional value (see trend 2) combine to explain the sharp increase in the popularity of plant-based food. But is plant-based food as climate-friendly and healthy as it is supposed to be? Let's take a critical look at plant-based trends

Improved texture, taste and colour

A third of consumers are deterred by the taste and texture of plant-based products. But plant-based foods have come a long way since the early days. A few years ago, any product – be it meat or cheese – would have had the same texture and colour. Thanks to processes such as **high moisture extrusion** – a technique whereby protein is pushed through a mould – we can now produce a wide range of **very specific textures** for different products.

Thanks to the wide range of options for improving texture, plant-based alternatives to **fish and seafood** are now also on the verge of a breakthrough, following meat products. In 2021, Aqua Cultured Seafoods developed a fully-fledged alternative to sushi using fermentation. Evolutions in terms of taste and colour have also contributed to the success of plant-based fish. **At Snick, we have recently developed tasty alternatives to tuna and fish sticks.**

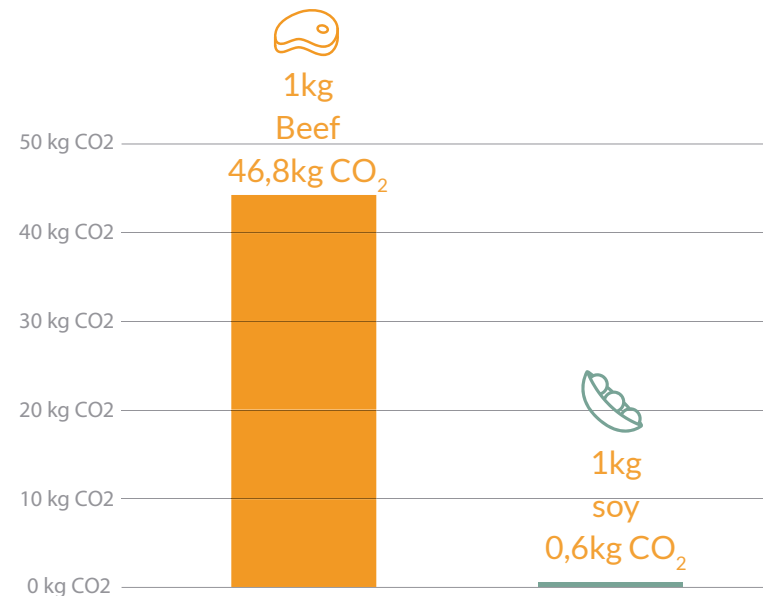
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consumers never eat plant-based due to poor taste and texture



Does sustainable eating equate healthy eating?

Many plant-based products claim to be sustainable and healthy. But are they really? Much less water and land is needed to produce plant-based food and greenhouse gas emissions are also lower compared with meat. Sustainable meat substitutes can thus help curb the world's growing meat consumption. There is also an increasing demand for plant-based raw materials with a regional certificate, such as the Donau Soy and the Europe Soy-certificate.



Beef production emits 98.7% more CO2
than soy production

The effect of a plant-based diet on our health, especially in terms of **allergies**, raises more questions, however. People with peanut allergy should avoid **excessive consumption of peas**, an increasingly popular ingredient in plant-based products.

And can a plant-based diet also have **long-term effects**, just as eating too much meat is harmful for our cholesterol levels in the long term? Not much is known about this yet. One thing is clear, however: a varied diet is strongly recommended. Producers of plant-based food thus need to focus on these and many other health-related questions.



Take allergies into account in the development of plant-based products and monitor studies on long-term effects.



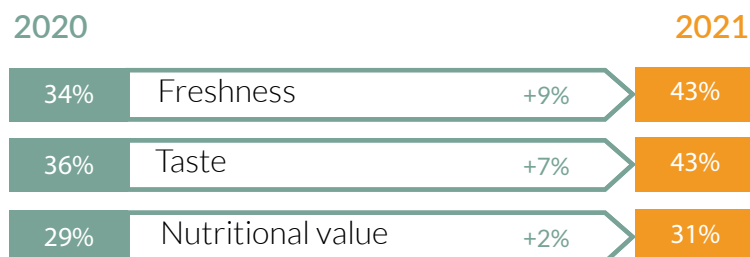
#4 Back to the roots

The coronavirus pandemic has had a tremendous impact on our industry. Products and processes have changed, as have consumer needs. Consumers are increasingly returning to traditional, local products. What are the reasons for this and how can food producers cater to this demand?

Fresh and high quality

Although we have mainly experienced the coronavirus pandemic as negative, there are positive notes too. The pandemic has also fuelled our sense of community. The local hospitality industry has had to come up with inventive solutions, such as **takeaway** meals, and consumers loved it. Cheap lasagne and pizzas made way for **better quality ready meals** on supermarket shelves.

Consumers also want to be able to enjoy restaurant-quality food at home. **Freshness** is an especially important factor in their choice of products and ingredients but **taste** and **nutritional value** –there they are again – are more important than ever in their purchasing behaviour.



Another striking observation is that consumers rediscovered a taste **for food classics**. French cuisine and traditional fare are experiencing something of a revival. Fresh vegetables, stocks to produce flavoursome sauces and so on: here, too, the emphasis is on quality and freshness.

View our brochure about Stocks and Broths

Learn more about our production process and discover our range of stocks and broths.

The meal kits produced by German companies HelloFresh and Marley Spoon are well established on the Belgian market. But more and more Belgian initiatives are cropping up, such as Foodbag, Foodmaker's Dagelijkse Kost meal kit or Colruyt's Lekker Koken meal kit. All of these meal kits prioritise fresh, quality and locally produced ingredients.



Back to basics: focus on freshness, quality and taste



#5 Exotic influences and combinations

2021 was a popular year for traditional, local products (see trend 4). But we also witnessed another phenomenon this year that seems almost contradictory at first glance. Just over half of all consumers indicate that they are interested in experimenting more with food and drink. So how do producers satisfy this desire for new taste experiences?

A voyage in our own kitchen

Lockdowns continue to play a part in our lives. As a result, many of us have been unable to travel, especially those who like to seek out more exotic destinations. Fortunately, discovering new flavours – an important aspect of travel for many consumers – is also possible in the comfort of your own home. Many well-known brands have recently responded to this consumer need. Magnum, which launched a 'Destinations' range with flavours from Tahiti, New York, Las Vegas and Amsterdam, is a good example.

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consumers want more adventurous food and drink



There's nothing new about exotic flavours or products. Influences come from all around the world, but Asia has become particularly popular in recent years. Soy, fish sauce, miso, rice extracts... these days you no longer have to shop in speciality stores for Asian ingredients. In fact, many supermarkets now make fresh sushi in store.



Asian flavour enhancers are also becoming increasingly important at Snick. Discover our range of soy sauces and other Asian ingredients.

Popcorn beer and noodle soft drinks

Another way of offering consumers new experiences is to present them with surprising combinations. British manufacturer Joe & Seph's has developed a new type of popcorn with a coating of Budweiser beer, for example, while Lay's has teamed up with three well-known fast-food chains for its 'Iconic Restaurant Flavours': KFC, Subway and Pizza Hut.

Japanese brand Nissin – the trendsetter in the instant noodle market with its Cup Noodle brand – transcended product boundaries last year to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary. The company launched a completely new product in the form of a range of soft drinks. Cup Noodle Soda is available in the four most popular noodle flavours: natural, seafood, curry and chili tomato.



Offer consumers new experiences, exotic flavours and surprising combinations."

Let's get started!

Have these trends inspired you? We look forward to helping you incorporate them into your products. Ask us a question and we will get in touch as soon as possible.

[Send us an e-mail](#)

About Snick EuroIngredients

SNICK EuroIngredients has been producing and supplying high-quality culinary and functional ingredients, compounds and blends to food companies in the Benelux region since 1993. With over 25 years of experience and a strong team of food technologists, we help food companies grow in a trend-sensitive and rapidly changing market. Trust and integrity are the keywords in our sustainable partnerships.



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