

Trend *to* Table

The top five trends driving consumer purchases

and how they can help ignite your innovation

Ardent Mills is here to help you stay on top of industry trends with the latest insights. We surveyed **more than 10,000 U.S. consumers** to better understand their shopping and eating preferences, and we combined those findings with industry market data and macro-societal trends. The result is a comprehensive look at the foods consumers love, what they can't live without and how you can satisfy their needs.

Today's complex foodscape is saturated with information surrounding health, wellness, nutrition, sustainability and ingredients, creating a complex path to purchase. **Trend to Table™** helps cut through the noise with research findings that bring you **five trends motivating consumer purchases**, and it breaks down the insights into practical ways that flours, grains and pulses* can help you create the foods today's customers want.



*Chickpeas, lentils, dry peas and dry beans



Trend 1

Ingredients Matter

Today's consumers are taking a closer look at every item on the ingredient list—they want specific ingredient details, and they take the time to investigate nutritional benefits, sustainable practices and food sourcing for each item on the list.



85% of consumers say that ingredients play a role in what foods they choose to eat



Nearly **60%** of consumers are willing to pay more for foods that use whole and/or less-processed ingredients

"Snacks, breads, pasta...how can I be sure I'm choosing foods made with ingredients that are best for me?"



Consumers want:

Ingredients that offer healthful benefits, as well as sustainable, safe and responsible sourcing

Trend 2

HERITAGE IS HERO

Consumers are evolving their food identities—the focus on culinary roots and ancestral cooking practices remains strong, but they are also eager to explore new cultures through flavors and formats.

"Food helps me define who I am today and where I'll go in the future."



Celebrating heritage:

Over half (51%) of consumers agree food is part of their identity

63% state that their upbringing influences what they eat

Younger generations are using food choices to define who they are:

Nearly two-thirds (64%) of consumers ages 18 – 34 agree that food is part of their identity, 44% higher than their counterparts 45 years of age and older (41%)



60% actively try new foods, flavors and ingredients because they want to expand their tastes



Top global cuisines U.S. consumers enjoy:



Trend 3

ADDING WITH INTENT

“True self-care is about adding in what makes me feel my best and helps me thrive.”

Today’s consumers are searching for goodness as they intentionally choose foods that align with their dietary goals—from overall health and wellness to environmental claims, mood-boosting properties and convenience—they are adding foods that will make a difference in their overall health.



80% agree that seeking “good for you” foods is important to dietary goals and priorities

52% agree that grain-based foods are an affordable way to eat nutritiously

46% of consumers

ages 18 – 24 say plant-focused eating is a dietary goal, over 2x more important than consumers 55 years of age and older (18%)



Most (84%) consumers check package information at least occasionally



Nutritionals are the #1 source of information checked (76%) and ingredients closely follow (75%)



Trend 4

DESIRE TO DO GOOD

Consumers want to support foods that align with their sustainability goals, but confusion surrounds sustainability and regenerative agriculture—and what they should be expected to pay for these benefits.

“I think this food is good for me and good for the planet; how can I know for sure that I’m choosing the products that matter most?”

Intentional selections:

53% agree that their food choices can have a positive impact on the planet

49% claim that foods grown using sustainable or regenerative agriculture practices are important to their dietary goals and priorities

41% say that foods with a lower carbon footprint are important to those same goals

The disconnect:

! 57% of consumers want more information on how their food choices positively impact the planet

Prioritizing the “right” choices:

48% of consumers' households with children under 18 seek out brands committed to: reduced environmental impact, fair employee treatment and community generosity



Indulge me

Today's consumers feel good about enjoying the foods they love, and a whopping **92%** agree that "great tasting foods" play a key part in their dietary lifestyles, whether connecting to nostalgia, celebrating or just prioritizing indulgent moments into their days.

"Tastes great, satisfies me, connects me to those I love—food that makes me feel good is always at the top of my list, no apology required."



Food makes people happy

92% state that "great tasting foods" are a key element to their dietary goals



Apology-free eating

68% report that "rewarding and treating" is a top dietary priority



63% of consumers

report eating store or restaurant bought sweet baked goods a few times per month or more often



Grains can help meet today's five trends

Grains, pulses and flours remain a foundation of the American food landscape.



Consumers love the tastes, textures and nutritional benefits they bring to foods—securing them in top positions on shelves:

72% Grains positively impact the taste of food

✓ Grains positively impact the texture of food at **62%**,

67% Flours and pulses positively impact taste

✓ flours positively impact food's texture at **58%**

✓ and pulses come in closely at **57%**

Information is key and can help consumers feel confident about foods they eat—and how they benefit the planet:

57% agree that grains play an important role in the benefit claims that grain-based foods often include on packaging

47% seek out food that is not only "good for you" but good for the planet and supply system

All data points are derived from Ardent Mills Proprietary Research, U.S. Consumers 18+, 2023



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