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**2024**

**Top Food and Beverage Trends!**

Cargill is a family-run company that provides food ingredients, agricultural solutions, and industrial products that are vital for living. This past month they sponsored a webinar in which they brought together industry leaders from the food and beverage industry to share their:

*“Top Food and Beverage Trends for 2024”!*

This report summarizes the Top 5 key trends discussed.

## SUMMARY!

### 1. Better For You Products

- Consumers seeking to expand their health span:
  - Products high in protein and fibre.
  - Added functional ingredients.
  - Introduction of pharmaceuticals into weight loss (i.e. Ozempic – what categories do they affect)?
  - Cleaner label.
  - Home meal replacements.
  - Mood support beverages.
- The addition of ginger and turmeric into food and beverages.
- Plant-based foods. The addition of functional benefits. Less reliance on processed foods.
- The emergence of plant-based foods into categories you never anticipated.
- The push against the use of oil seeds – highly processed food.
- The growing use of palm oil. Manufactured in certain parts of the world, they have become more sustainable.
- Consumers seek products they can indulge in, yet better for them.
- Consumers seek smaller grab-and-go snack options

### 2. Sustainable Based Products

- Plant-based, and Up-cycled foods: foods that up-cycle ingredients that were destined for landfills.
- Regenerative agriculture: Regenerative agriculture is not a specific practice itself. It mitigates climate change through carbon dioxide removal, (i.e. it draws carbon from the atmosphere and sequesters it).
- Taste is still supreme. If it has no taste, it will not be purchased a second time.

### 3. Sugar Reduction

- One of the most vilified ingredients.
- Though consumers seek products with reduced sugar levels, there is a pushback against sugar substitutes.
- Consumers seeks natural sweeteners. **Honey** and **Dates** are 2 ingredients manufacturers are utilizing in place of sugar. Both are deemed to be a healthier format.
- There is a “swing away” from the Keto and Paleo diets. Consumers are okay with some sugars, at a certain level.
- Consumers are becoming less tolerant of monk fruit. They seek sweet, savory, products that taste great at a reasonable price point.
- The “No Added Sugar” concept is gaining traction.

#### 4. Technology

- The role technology plays in the taste, smell, and look of foods.
- i.e.: How can technology help in the seasoning of snacks, or infuse them with global flavours.
- The role it can play in the creation of up-cycled ingredients.
- The role it can play in plant-based alternatives, i.e. meat, seafood, crab, and dairy.
- The role it can play in the tracking of product ingredients.
- Retailers and brands are utilizing technology to ensure their assortments, products, and line extensions mirror consumer values.
- Consumers are purchasing brands that align with them. Technology helps brands identify what their core consumer seeks. It is not just the “one-size” fits all model.

#### 5. Sustainable Packaging

- Sustainable packaging (compostable) is not as thick as traditional packaging. The packaging is flimsier which impacts the product’s shelf life.
- More technology advances are paramount moving forward for compostable packaging with strong moisture and oxygen barriers.
- Compostable packaging costs **500%** more. It is not a financially viable option.
- Is 100% recyclable packaging an alternative?

### **FOOD DISTRIBUTION GUY’S FIVE SENTIMENTS!**

1. Most consumers have different conceptions of the term clean label. Brands should continue to place their marketing on the product’s core benefits, rather than simply promoting the product as clean.
2. Sustainability is a trend, not a fad. It is the expected norm, not a point of differential.
3. Sugar is a volatile ingredient. Seek alternatives such as dates. Lower sugar content, higher fibre and protein levels.
4. Though up-cycled ingredients are a strong solution to food waste, education is paramount as the majority of Canadians do not understand the terminology.
5. Brands need to embrace AI technology. There are many benefits it brings. Unilever is utilizing this technology as a means to increase productivity.

## RICHARD BAKER

### Food Distribution Guy,

I am the President and Founder of Food Distribution Guy. Our mandate is to ensure our principles' success is sustainable long-term in the Canadian grocery sector.

Food Distribution Guy's Value Proposition for Our Client's Success:

1. Fifteen + (15+) years of branding, marketing, and sales expertise in Canada's grocery sector.
2. Our "4" Keys to Success:
  - a. What is your brand's unique point of difference?
  - b. What value does your brand bring to the category?
  - c. Is your brand's suggested retail competitively priced?
  - d. How will the brand support its launch to increase consumer awareness?
3. We keep our principals up-dated on the "Pulse" of the: 1) Canadian grocery sector, 2) Canadian consumer, and 3) Their respective category.
4. We keep our clients abreast of the activities in the Canadian grocery sector for their top 3 competitors.
5. We align and manage our principal's sales (broker, and / or distributor), marketing (if required), and logistic solutions which allow our principals to manage their day-to-day business.

We understand the grocery landscape, and we will assist you in navigating through it. Your brand will receive the attention to detail it requires.



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