

Top Five Naturally Trending™ Themes

The natural food and beverage market is constantly changing, and we got a chance to explore the latest and greatest trends at the recent Natural Products Expo West. At the show, we identified five emerging food and beverage innovation themes in the natural products space that will surely shape the industry for years to come. Here is a snapshot of five major themes.

1

Clean Label Evolution: The movement toward food and beverage free from unhealthy ingredients continues to take on new meanings. Some trends in this category are clean label products containing functional benefits—as well as incorporation of ingredients that are good for the world by aligning with sustainable agricultural, social, manufacturing and business practices.



2

Plant-Based Revolution: An explosion of plant-based products was apparent at the Expo. In addition to meat alternatives, we saw more plant-based dairy products than ever before, as well as plant-based egg substitutes. This category also showed creative innovation on product form and function to create new points of differentiation, beyond replacing meat.

3

Hero Ingredients: Products with innovative “hero ingredients” is a trend to watch. Consumers have increasing awareness around ingredients—and associations between ingredients and wellness benefits. Demand for foods with hero ingredients like ancient grains, alternative legumes and hemp is growing, and reaching target markets about this trend and product inclusions will be important.



4

Functional Hydration: A huge transformation area right now is beverages adding health and wellness benefits through formulations that include innovative ingredients with functional claims—such adaptogens to help with stress and nootropics to improve mental processes. This category creates endless new opportunities for innovators to target a wide range of beverage moments.

5

Sustainability: Consumer awareness and demand for product sustainability has gone far beyond recyclable packaging. Now many products are weaving sustainable product messaging, claims, marks and highlighted ingredients into the very ethos of their brand. Practices such as waste minimization, upcycling, regenerative agriculture, and social sustainability were some highlighted themes.



Market research can help your brand stay ahead of these trends. By employing approaches like white space discovery or implicit testing—or leveraging the InsightsNow Clean Label Enthusiasts® community or Innovation Center—you can get the insights on consumer behavior you need to innovate successfully.

Want to learn more? [Reach out to us today!](#)