

THE GLOBAL APPETITE FOR ALMONDS

Developing for Consumer Demand in 2021



As food and beverage trends evolve, almonds continue to possess undeniable consumer appeal, aligning with growing demand for transparency,

plant-forward innovation, holistic and personalized nutrition, and tantalizing sensory experiences.

In fact, Innova research shows that global almond product introductions continue to rise. Almonds experienced double-digit growth (+13 percent) between 2018 and 2019, with 12,206 new almond products introduced globally.

Confectionery, followed by snacks, bakery, bars, and dairy alternatives were categories with the highest growth in new almond product launches in 2019, and almonds are the most widely used nut in bars, dairy, and cereal, contributing endless nutrition, taste and texture benefits.

Looking ahead, Innova Market Insights recently unveiled its annual Top Ten Trends for 2021, which serve as a framework for tracking new product development in the context of societal and food industry changes. Out of those Top Ten Trends, Innova has identified five key trends to consider when formulating with almonds.

Transparency Triumphs



This leading trend incorporates both clean living lifestyles and demands for information on sustainable sourcing. Three in five global consumers say that they are interested in “learning more about where their food comes from and how it is made.” Consumers want to know what a product contains, including

health-driven factors such as natural, organic, no additives or artificial ingredients, as well as clean label features that include ethical and environmental factors, human and animal welfare, and supply chain transparency.

GMO free is one of the leading transparency claims, and North America leads in GMO free claims on almond product

launches when compared to other regions – these claims appear on 41 percent of US almond product introductions. Organic, another transparency claim, appears on 37 percent of all almond introductions tracked in 2019.

Transparency can also be noted through product names. [Endangered Species Chocolate Dark Chocolate With Cranberries And Almonds](#) (North America, Middle East) calls attention to the company’s financial donations toward wildlife efforts. Several UK launches carry names that echo transparency, including [Asda Extra Special Free From Amaretto, Apricot And Almond Shortbread](#) (free from gluten, egg, and milk), [Eat Natural For Breakfast Almonds, Seeds And Honey Protein Granola](#) (no artificial colors, flavors, or preservatives), and [Probios Go Vegan Bio Organic Ciocck Bianca Almond Spread](#) (suitable for vegans and vegetarians).

Plant-Forward



The increasingly mainstream appeal of plant-based products and ingredients is driving expansion to more market categories and regions. Both vegetarian and vegan claims are plant-forward by design and are prevalent on product launches with almonds. In 2019, vegan was the fifth most used health claim on

all product introductions. Vegetarian was the second top health claim in total product launches with almonds, the first claim on

snacks, and the third most widely used claim in bakery products. India and the UK stand out for high percentages of vegetarian almond product launches, at 96 percent and 45 percent respectively.

Plant-forward claims like vegan and vegetarian were among the top health claims in new confectionery products with almonds in 2019, and can be seen on products such as [Veganz White Roasted Almond Chocolate](#) (Germany) and [Harts Natural Vegana Almond Chocolate Protein Vegan Bar](#) (Brazil).

Tailored to Fit



Personalized nutrition is in the spotlight as consumers look for foods and beverages that fit their unique lifestyles. Consumers also desire personalized nutritional experiences that are based on their individual diet needs. This trend explains in part the runaway popularity of almond product launches with keto

claims, up 165 percent (2016-2020 YTD).

Snacking expands opportunities for consumers to tailor their eating pattern to meet their personalized needs. One-third of

global consumers surveyed say that “snacks support my busy lifestyle profile.” Younger consumers look for healthy and on-the-go snack and meal options and seek balance with opportunities to unwind and relax with premium, indulgent treats.

Almonds are featured in several lifestyle categories and sub-categories, including confectionery, snacks, cereal bars, energy bars, and nut mixes, the preferred savory afternoon snack for the on-the-go, health-seeking consumer. In Chile, [Your Goal Dates](#) and [Almond Paleo Bar](#) is positioned as a snack-worthy product for followers of the Paleolithic diet.



Mood: The Next Occasion



Holistic well-being, including mental health, is more important than ever. Over half of global consumers seek products that are good for their body and give them energy, while one-third want foods and beverages that make them happy. Chocolate is considered a

mood booster, and it is a long-time partner of almonds.

Chocolate almond butter, for example, combines the mood benefits of chocolate with textural pleasures from almonds, whether creamy or crunchy. Adaptations positioned for paleo and keto diets further increase appeal.

Chocolate-almond confectionery is a popular vehicle for mood-boosting ingredients such as hemp and CBD. [Hemptastic Cocoa](#) and [Almond Hemp Bar](#) (Germany) and [pH Secrets CBD Chocolate](#) and [Almond Squares](#) (US) are two examples in a growing marketplace for chocolate-almond confectionery products that support mood.



Product Mashups: When Trends Collide



Innova sees continued popularity for hybrid innovation. High percentages of global consumers surveyed are “interested in trying new sensory experiences” in aromas, tastes, textures, colors, and sensations. They also love to experiment with new food concepts, including hybrid products.

Almonds are frequently paired with fruit to create delightful taste and texture combinations. Innova data show a 12 percent average annual growth in global snack launches with almonds tracked featuring fruit ingredients (CAGR 2015-2019), including combinations like white chocolate with salted almonds and blackcurrant pieces, a nut bar with almonds, dried cherries, and

dried lemons, and dried apricot, almond pieces, and mandarin peel rolled in poppy seeds.

Between 2018 and 2019, confectionery launches with almonds and grains grew 33 percent. Innovative products incorporate less common grains like quinoa ([Ritter Sport Almond Quinoa 50% Cocoa Vegan Chocolate](#) (Ukraine)) and amaranth ([I Amaranth Almond And Cocoa Chunks Vegan Amaranth Cookie](#) (Mexico)).

In category fusion, [Be and Cheery Almond Crispy Candy](#) (China) combines nuts and confectionery. Taste profile mashups such as the sweet and salty [Nestle Kitkat Snak It](#) (Australia) and [Noi Crispy Seaweed with Almond Slices Hot and Spicy](#) (Myanmar and Singapore) catch the attention of the adventurous consumer. [Fabelle Choco Deck](#) (India) blends two types of chocolate, milk and the newer ruby variety.



Looking Ahead

Innova’s Top Ten Trends for 2021 highlight numerous paths for manufacturers to meet evolving consumer demands. Year after year, almonds prevail through shifts in the food and beverage landscape, shining as an ingredient that continues to deliver

innovative and unique products for global consumers who are increasingly seeking to balance health and indulgence.