



Watch: Experts Give Insight Into Specialty's 5 Year Forecast

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Fancy Food Show

Though the Hartman Group and Mintel don't have a crystal ball, the research firms feel pretty confident in predicting the future of the specialty food industry.

During the Summer Fancy Food Show in New York City last month, Shelley Balanko, of the Hartman Group, and David Lockwood, of Mintel, gave a presentation on the current state of the specialty food industry, and spoke about how they think it will fare in years to come. The duo crunched the numbers, surveyed and conducted numerous focus group interviews to create sales projections for each category for the next five years. The presentation was part of the show's Level Up Experience, a multi-faceted, future-focused, multimedia-driven attraction that made its debut at the show.

Balanko spoke first about the current state of the industry and how niche products are meeting consumer demands. She said packaged food will remain a main component of specialty food sales, and due to the innovation within that space, the sector will apply more pressure to legacy snack brands to evolve in order to keep its market share. Lockwood then took the stage for forward-looking statements. He stated that specialty sales made up 14.8 percent of grocery sales in 2016, and that he expects specialty to reach 18 percent by 2021.

The NOSH team met up with Balanko and Lockwood after their presentation to chat about the future of specialty and what categories are expected to see continued growth in today's evolving retail landscape— a topic that was [especially top-of-mind at the show](#) post [Amazon's acquisition of Whole Foods Market](#). Watch the video below to hear what they had to say.