



## The New Sought After Snacks

Consumer friendly labels help shoppers find the familiar, nutritious ingredients they want in snacks.

Snacks are no longer exclusively meant for snacking, as consumers have broken meals into multiple, smaller meals throughout the day in recent years. Consumers are looking for a punch of nutrition or an extra sprinkle of quality with their snacks.

Today, snacking is more purposeful.<sup>1</sup> “Consumers are seeking fresher, less processed snacks that include some aspect of nutrient density,” says Melissa Abbott, Vice President, Culinary Insights, The Hartman Group, Inc., based in Bellevue, Washington.<sup>2</sup>

According to Innova Market Insights, when comparing 2014 and 2015, the U.S. snacks category has seen an increase in product launches with pulses (+54 percent), sea salt (+11 percent) and ancient grains (+7 percent).<sup>3</sup>

Additionally, a Canadean survey performed in the second quarter of 2015 found that American consumers consider the following types of products, in general, very appealing:

- “a product that is naturally high in nutrients (65 percent).”
- “a product with on-package information that allows you to see where it was made (52 percent).”
- “a product that is formulated with the lowest number of ingredients (41 percent).”
- “a product that has been fortified with added nutrients (27 percent).”<sup>4</sup>

“From these results, we can see that consumers are more interested in products that are naturally high in nutrients — which helps explain the recent innovation in plant proteins in snacks, etc. — than products that may simply have fewer ingredients or products that are fortified with added nutrients,” says Tom Vierhile, Innovation Insights Director, Canadean, a market research and analysis firm based in Fairport, New York.<sup>5</sup>

What’s on the label?

## Recommended Articles



### Chocolate Cupcake With Salted Caramel Icing

Prototype Case



### The Millennial Influence

Millennials are an important cohort of today’s consumers that is...



### Reducing Sodium in Children’s Foods

Food manufacturers expand choices for kids

Shoppers look for fresh, nutrient dense snacks when making their snack selections.<sup>6</sup> Which snack ingredients are most sought after usually depend on the occasion for the snack itself.<sup>7</sup>

“The same consumer might seek non-GMO corn in chips for their kids, while they seek naturally inherent protein such as nuts, seeds and pulses in a bar, cracker or cookie for themselves,” says Abbott.<sup>8</sup>

Consumers treat each snack category differently when examining product labels.<sup>9</sup> “For example, in the salty snack space, seeking sea salt is a cue that the product is possibly of higher quality,” notes Abbott.<sup>10</sup>

Cargill® Salt is a leading supplier of sea salt to the food manufacturing industry with a portfolio of sea salts that can be used in a variety of applications.<sup>11</sup> From purified sea salts to flaked varieties, Cargill® Salt offers an **assortment of choices** for food manufacturers. Here are just a few of the sea salt products offered by Cargill® Salt:

- **Purified Sea Salt Fine**
- **Sea Salt Extra Coarse Topping**
- **FlakeSelect® Sea Salt**

Explore the full line of Cargill® Sea Salt products [here](#).

### Prioritizing ingredients

“Ingredients like almonds and Greek yogurt are trending partly because of the perception they are high in protein,” says Vierhile.<sup>12</sup> “According to the International Food Information Council Foundation’s 2016 Food and Health Survey, 64 percent of American consumers say they are trying to consume protein — the top nutrient and component in the entire survey.”<sup>13</sup>

Ingredients such as lentils, legumes and vegetables, including root vegetables, are emerging in snack foods.<sup>14</sup> The use of fruits and vegetables as ingredients is growing in popularity, which is helping drive innovation in the snack category, moving beyond the typical corn or potato-based snack.<sup>15</sup>

More than ever, consumers want inherently nutritious options with consumer friendly ingredient labels.<sup>16</sup> “The takeaway is that consumers continue to eat many of the same snacks, they are just less processed overall — from better ingredient sourcing and improved nutrition panels,” says Abbott.<sup>17</sup>

Snack manufacturers can see this as an opportunity to innovate and create snack foods formulated with protein and other nutrients. Focusing on specific ingredients that consumers are seeking is another option to help meet the needs of today’s shoppers.

---

[↑ Back to Top](#)

### Sources

[1] Abbott, Melissa. Email interview. 17 Jun 2016.

[2] Abbott, Melissa.

[3] Tremellen, Natalie. Email interview. 16 Jun 2016.

[4] Vierhile, Tom. Email interview. 20 Jun 2016.

[5] Vierhile, Tom.

[6] Abbott, Melissa.

[7] Abbott, Melissa.

[8] Abbott, Melissa.

[9] Abbott, Melissa.

[10] Abbott, Melissa.

[11] Cargill Salt. "Cargill Sea Salts." 2016. Cargill, Incorporated. Accessed on 26 Jun 2016. Retrieved from: <http://www.cargill.com/salt/wcm/groups/public/documents/document/na3010646.pdf>

[12] Vierhile, Tom.

[13] Vierhile, Tom.

[14] Vierhile, Tom.

[15] Vierhile, Tom.

[16] Vierhile, Tom.

[17] Abbott, Melissa.

