



U.S. consumers are increasingly scanning labels to check that products do not contain certain ingredients, such as gluten, GMOs, antibiotics, pesticides and allergens, according to Bloomberg. The trend is having a huge impact on how manufacturers source, prepare and package foods and beverages.

Sales of these “free-from” foods are expected to grow 15%, or \$1.4 billion, between 2017 and 2022 — with the U.S. as the largest global growth market, according to Euromonitor data.

The gluten-free market in particular has been on the rise. Gluten-free labeling claims saw a 24% average annual growth rate between 2013 and 2017. That’s despite the 35% of U.S. consumers who don’t have any particular dietary reason to buy these products, a study from The Hartman Group found.

Oats are naturally gluten-free but are often contaminated with it through the fields where they are grown, the trucks in which they are transported, and the facilities where they are milled. General Mills spent five years building a sorting facility to try and ensure that not even a speck of gluten got into the 1 billion pounds of oats it uses each year to make Cheerios

As long as products sporting free-from labels continue to attract consumers — and potentially premium prices — food and beverage makers are going to continue to be interested in meeting demand and searching for innovative ways to do it.

Read full, original article: [How free-from foods are changing manufacturing](#)