

# Flavor, convenience are key to helping consumers eat more plants

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*This post is sponsored by Sempio Foods Company.*

The American diet is slowly shifting as consumers make an effort to eat more plants, and shoppers are on the lookout for products and solutions that make it easier and more delicious to work more fruits and vegetables into their diet.

Twenty-one percent of consumers said they have been eating more [vegetarian](#) sources of protein in the past few years, according to a Packaged Facts Online Consumer Survey conducted February-March 2017. Sustainability, health and curiosity about new foods and flavors are driving interest in [plant-based](#) cuisine, but several factors are keeping consumption of plants relatively low, despite consumers' efforts to eat more of them, according to research from The Hartman Group. The perceived taste and texture of vegetables as well as issues of convenience -- how long it takes to prepare vegetables and the ability to eat plant-based foods on the go -- are among the barriers that consumers say are keeping them from incorporating more vegetables into their diets.

Retailers and food brands are providing solutions for time-crunched consumers that make plant-based foods easier to access. Packaged snacks such as chips and crackers that incorporate fruits or vegetables are shelf-stable options that suit on-the-go eating occasions, while frozen and semi-prepared fresh produce eliminate some of the prep work for consumers who want to cook at home.

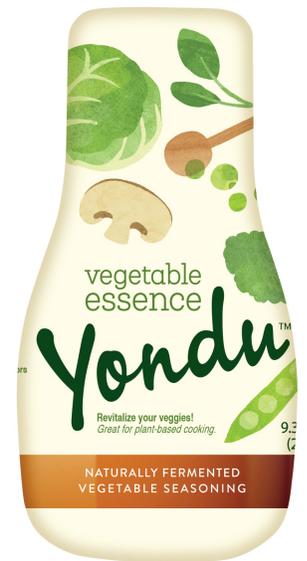
For home cooks, access to produce is only part of the equation. For the plant-based trend to continue to grow, consumers will need the tools to turn fruits and vegetables into dishes they -- and their families -- want to eat. While health and sustainability considerations are helping drive plant-based eating, flavor is imperative to making plant-focused foods appealing to consumers, chefs and foodservice operators said during the 2017 [Menus of Change](#) conference at the Culinary Institute of America, where plant-based eating was a main topic of discussion.

This need for flavors to apply to the blank canvas of plant-based cuisine inspired Korean company [Sempio Foods Company](#) to launch its Yondu liquid vegetable seasoning in the US. Designed with plant-based dishes in mind, the fermented liquid vegetable seasoning allows consumers to add complex flavor to vegetable dishes without added salt or fat. Sempio will preview the liquid vegetable seasoning at [Expo East](#) this week at booth #6556 in the Hot Product Pavilion before launching it this fall in select retailers in New York City and on Amazon.

“With more and more people eating plant-based dishes or adapting a more vegetable-centric diet, Yondu vegetable essence can become a staple that helps them enjoy a variety of vegetables,” said Marc Shin, president of US operations for Sempio.

Fermented ingredients are already popular with US consumers whose hunger for global flavors has driven interest in fish sauce. However, unlike fish sauce, Yondu liquid vegetable seasoning is made from vegetables so it is suitable for vegetarians. Its savory flavor works in a wide range of dishes, Shin said, from steamed broccoli to vegetable risotto.

“Being part of the Sempio family, we are devoted to the study of vegetables and fermentation, and we saw there was a gap in the marketplace for healthful seasonings that focus on transforming vegetables by deepening their flavors,” Shin said of Yondu liquid vegetable seasoning, which is made from non-GMO organic soybeans that are fermented over the course of 100 days, then blended with the savory extracts of onions, white radishes, leeks, cabbage, carrots, shiitake mushrooms, ginger and garlic. “Starting a first-of-its-kind flavor category, Yondu vegetable essence is like a secret ingredient for cooks, making it easier to eat more plant-based dishes.”



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