

A RETURN TO INNOVATION

Hartman Group's Ideas in Food 2025

After years of slowing innovation in food and beverage¹, we anticipate that the pendulum will swing back toward new product development in 2025 as inflation subsides and consumer sentiment rises. While nothing is ever certain (particularly in an election year), we expect to be entering a post-pandemic era where innovation is back to normal.

In 2025, we will see themes of inclusion, extreme experiences and technological change continue to mature and drive innovation and development of products and services across food, beverage and related industries. In the latest installment of Ideas in Food, Hartman Group's annual trends report, we explore how these themes are playing out in the areas of:

Experience & Exploration

Supportive Wellbeing

Intentional Consumption

Hartman Group's unique insights and perspective enables those in the food and beverage industry to not only have a firm understanding of what the key trends are, but WHY they are happening in order to meaningfully participate.

Reach out today to learn more about how we can support your business.

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The virality of fluffy coke and dirty soda signals Americans' readiness to accept new types of global trends

Fizzy dairy drinks have long been part of other global cultures and are popular in Asia and the Middle East. Yet launches in Western countries of carbonated fruit and dairy drinks have flopped, such as Coca-Cola's US introduction of Vio in 2009, or Britvic's "Tango Strange Soda" in the UK in 2014.¹

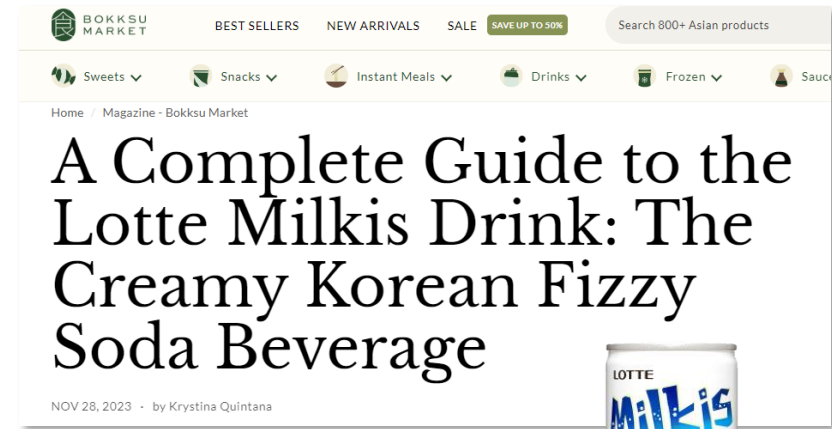
However, the virality of Utah's "dirty soda" and fluffy coke—both of which combine fizziness with creaminess—may represent a turning point in American's relationship with creaminess and soda. Spurred by the trend toward extreme indulgence that stems from an intersection of iterative and viral DIY social media recipes, this could ultimately open opportunities for new inroads into the US for aspects of global food culture that were previously a hard sell in this market.

As a result, brands will have ever-greater license to highlight how their products and ingredients facilitate experimentation in unconventional ways and to introduce new flavor and sensory combinations that may have not been accepted before. Especially if these new products and uses blend visually appealing presentation with unique sensory experience.

20.7 million posts and searches for fluffy coke on TikTok alone²



Twister's Soda Bar in Indiana illustrates soda's traditional "refreshment" positioning, and its sensory juxtaposition with creamy marshmallow fluff



Written for the American consumer, Online Asian retailer Bokksu Market's guide to Lotte Milkis drinks illustrates growing interest in global fizzy dairy drinks.



Fluffy Coke! You can add the Fluff to any drink for just...
twistersod... 2.1M



DIRTY SODA with MEMAMA...
not.eg 3.6M

Sources: 1. www.fooddive.com/news/can-fizzy-milk-make-dairy-popular-again/506005; 2. abcnews.go.com/GMA/Food/fluffy-coke-millions-views-marshmallow-mess-worth-hype/story?id=112189783#:~:text=Despite%20the%20mixed%20reactions%20from,and%20creamer%20or%20other%20sweeteners

NEXT IN FUNCTIONAL INGREDIENTS

Products aligned with GLP-1 depend on authenticity for success

GLP-1 medications continue to attract significant media attention and some food and beverage manufacturers are catering specifically to consumers taking these drugs with products that tend to emphasize nutritional balance and smaller portion sizes.

A growing number of functional food and supplement brands are taking a different tactic, with products claiming to naturally help the body secrete more of its own GLP-1 hormone and therefore suppress appetite. While there is evidence that foods high in fiber and other key nutrients do raise GLP-1 levels, the effects are minor in comparison to those of the prescription medications, and the evidence to support benefits from other functional ingredients like berberine and specific probiotic strains remains limited.

Companies should use caution when making claims related to GLP-1s, as consumers have high expectations for efficacy when this term is used. Products that use connections to GLP-1s in marketing—whether they are foods to support patients taking the prescription medications products claiming to mimic the effects of these drugs—should align with consumer ideas around efficacy and a healthy ingredient profile, or risk misalignment with consumer needs.



6%
of consumers
have used
GLP-1 drugs
and, of them,

72%
reported
eating
healthier
foods while on
the
medication¹

Supergut makes bars and supplements marketed as natural GLP-1 boosting, but is likely to raise questions about efficacy and its long list of ingredients, many of which will not be perceived as natural to consumers, even if labeled otherwise.



Daily Harvest (below) and Nestle's new Vital Pursuit brand (above) are both designed to support patients taking GLP-1 medications

BUNDLE

GLP-1 Support

\$139.99

A balanced diet is essential to your weight management journey while using GLP-1 medications like Ozempic®, Mounjaro®, or Wegovy®. Our dietitian-curated collection includes pre-portioned, calorie-conscious meals that are delicious, high in fiber, low in saturated fat, free of cholesterol, and have no added sugars.



Made with 100% Natural Ingredients

INGREDIENTS: Supergut™ Resistant Starch Fiber Blend [Soluble Vegetable Fiber (Maize), Green Banana Powder Resistant Starch, Beta Glucan (Oats), Soinul™ (Resistant Potato Starch)], Protein Blend [Whey Protein Crisps (Whey Protein Isolate), Whey Protein Concentrate, Tapioca Starch, Calcium Carbonate, Sunflower Lecithin], Milk Protein Concentrate, Yogurt Confectionery Coating [Maltitol, Palm Kernel Oil, Yogurt Powder (Whey Protein Concentrate, Nonfat Milk, Yogurt Cultures), Nonfat Milk Powder, Whole Milk Powder, Sunflower Lecithin, Salt, Vanilla Powder], Natural Sweetener Blend (Allulose, Rebudioside M), Creamer Blend [High Oleic Sunflower Oil, Glycerin, Sunflower Lecithin, Almond Butter, Vitamin E Mixed Tocopherol (Antioxidant)], Almonds, Cranberry, Natural Flavors, Himalayan Pink Salt, Malic Acid, Natural Color, Citric Acid.



DAILY HARVEST

WASTE NOT

A new look for “old-school” resource conservation

Many recent solutions to waste have been centered on the removal of waste that has already been created, such as efforts to improve recycling infrastructure and increase consumer participation in recycling programs. Cleanup of plastics in the ocean and direct carbon capture from the air are other examples of this approach.

While important, these solutions can in themselves be resource and labor intensive. Alternative approaches focused on not creating as much waste in the first place can work in concert with these approaches. Using the entire animal/plant, focusing on more local production and distribution, improving movement of inventory with seasonal or spoilage timelines and delivering products in reusable containers are only some of the more prominent examples.

These more straightforward and traditional approaches—now aided by technology and social media virality—are focused on going “back to the basics” of resource conservation and doing more with what companies and individuals have already.

TikTok’s
“Underconsumption
Core”

i don’t want to CONSUME



In reaction to commoditized influencer culture, post-pandemic “revenge spending,” climate change and inflation, TikTok’s “underconsumption core” encourages users to more carefully consider their purchases, with an eye toward longer-term use. As one creator writes, “underconsumption [recognizes that] sustainability is a practice, not something you buy.”¹



Aldi started a trial of “crownless pineapples” in the U.K. to further reduce its carbon footprint. Removing pineapple crowns prior to shipping will save an estimated 187 metric tons of cardboard annually as well as fuel and shipping costs. The crowns will either be used to cultivate new crops or converted to animal feed, saving an additional estimated 1,400 metric tons of food waste in the U.K. alone.²

To curtail both food and fashion waste, **Walmart** has begun piloting the use of artificial intelligence in Canadian stores to advise employees on when to take various actions, such as marking down a product or pulling it for donation. **Albertsons** (right) has likewise begun experimenting with new ways for merchandizing produce like ripe bananas.

