

# 20 TREND INSIGHT 17 REPORT



## 7 CONSUMER TRENDS IN CLEAN: SUGAR AND SPICE ... EVERYTHING NOT SO NICE?

Poor little sugar bowl. A staple on the kitchen table for generations, the sugar bowl has lost its status for many families, relegated to the top shelf at the back of the cabinet, most likely not to return in the foreseeable future. American consumers are more mindful than ever of the food they choose either at home or when dining out.

And as we mentioned in our latest clean [reports](#), many consumers are actively seeking healthy ingredients and avoiding the ones that don't move them closer to their goals. Sugar is one of the top ingredients consumers are snubbing because of evidence linking it to hypertension, diabetes, inflammation, certain cancers and of course, weight gain. With 84% of US consumers reducing the amount of sugar in their diets and 79% scanning food/drink labels for types of sugar/sweeteners used, it's clear that consumers aren't as sweet on sugar as they used to be.<sup>1</sup>

# THE SWEET TALK

What exactly is going on with sugar, and how will it impact your product development? What opportunities exist, and what solutions will help you maintain your taste through sugar reduction? Let's first take a look at consumers and sugar. <sup>1</sup>

- **In 2012**, US consumers were consuming  $\frac{1}{2}$  pound of sugar PER DAY which is the equivalent of 180 pounds per year.<sup>2</sup>
- **The recommended** daily amounts of sugar are 25 grams for women and 35 for men. To put that into perspective, one donut has approximately 11 grams of sugar.<sup>3</sup>
- **In 2013**, scientists discovered that rats were as attracted to a popular chocolate sandwich cookie as they were to cocaine, leading some to conclude that a high sugar/fat diet stimulates the brain similarly to the addictive drug.<sup>4</sup>
- **The percentage** of consumers managing their sugar intake grew 17% between 2007 and 2016.<sup>5</sup>

## ***Sugar is the Latest Bad Guy—Now What?***

We should clarify. Unnecessary sugar is, well...unnecessary. And as consumers' make more noise and demonstrate their avoidance of the white stuff, the world is taking notice. The UK has announced a 20% reduction in sugar by 2020 to give manufacturers in nine categories time to comply. Their choices: reformulate; reduce package size; move consumers to healthier choices they offer; or completely develop healthier alternatives. The nine categories include breakfast cereals, yogurts, along with pudding, cakes, ice cream and more. The focus is on total sugar, not added sugar.<sup>6</sup>

Across the pond from the UK, the city of Philadelphia made a clear statement about sugar by issuing a tax on sweetened non-alcoholic beverages. This prompted beverage companies like Pepsi to sit up and take notice. Pepsi eliminated six-packs and 2 liter bottles in the City of Brotherly Love and made pack sizes smaller. Since January 2017, Philadelphia estimates an initial 27% drop in sales and as much as 50% is reported by some distributors.<sup>7</sup>



# DEVELOPERS' SOUR TASK

Consumers' ever-changing eating choices are continually a challenge for developers, and sugar is no different. Developers, tasked with anticipating consumers' taste preferences, are finding the toolbox shrinking when it comes to sweetening products. Consumers don't want to find sugar in the places where they perceive it as unnecessary (i.e. spaghetti sauce). Ironically, this changing attitude doesn't mean that consumers have abandoned indulgence—on the contrary. They understand sugar's presence in sweet treats, but they don't like finding in unexpected places. So what are the no-no sugars and what alternatives are consumers sweet on?

## **High Fructose Corn Syrup**

60% of consumers indicate they are trying to limit it which is an increase of 38% from 2013-16<sup>8</sup>

## **Artificial Sweeteners<sup>9</sup>**

- **54%** are trying to limit their consumption of sweeteners like aspartame. (A 51% increase between 2013 and 2016.)
- **61%** of consumers completely/somewhat agree with the statement "I'm concerned about the negative side effects of artificial sweeteners."
- **Consumer usage** of Splenda and Nutrasweet have decreased almost 50% between 2007 and 2016.

## **Natural Sugars**

- For the first time ever, honey has overtaken table sugar and all artificial sweeteners with 47% of consumers using it on a regular basis.<sup>10</sup>

## **Added Sugars Go Transparent**

You're likely already planning for FDA-mandated label changes regarding added sugar. While welcomed by the 53% of consumers checking for sugar content in their food or beverage, it presents some challenges for food companies. The added sugar content may adversely affect the way consumers perceive several categories such as yogurt, breakfast cereals, fruit juices and snack bars.<sup>11</sup>

More than half of US consumers believe that a healthy diet equates with low sugar. Add in the new labeling guidelines and pressure is on manufacturers to get this right.<sup>12</sup> It is speculated that media attention to "added sugar" on the labels could increase consumers' attention and heighten interest, similar to the gluten-free movement.



# WHAT'S TICKLING CONSUMERS SWEET TOOTH TODAY?

**Monk Fruit** – Growing a whopping 200% in new product introductions between 2012 and 2017, this no-calorie fruit extract from Southeast Asia is taking the US by storm.<sup>13</sup> We expect consumers to become more comfortable with monk fruit as a sweetener especially given its zero impact on daily caloric intake.



**Natural Sugars** - We've already tooted honey's horn as being consumers' favorite sweetener du jour. Along the same lines, the number of consumers using stevia since 2007 has almost quintupled. Raw sugars are being used on a regular basis by 25% of consumers.<sup>14</sup> Other alternative sweeteners like organic cane sugar syrup, organic agave nectar, honey and vanilla products are being incorporated into categories like snack bars, nutritional drinks/bars, and shelf stable juices and drinks at rapid rates; in 2016 alone they grew 19% over 2015 and 200% compared to four years ago.<sup>15</sup>

## Some Sweet Notes [source Mintel GNPD]

- **Lucini Tuscan Marinara Organic Sauce** is made with fresh Tuscan tomatoes, vegetables and herbs. This USDA organic certified product has been crafted in small batches with 100% organic, premium and fresh ingredients and only during tomato harvest to capture a garden-fresh flavor. It contains no added sugar, dehydrated herbs or anything artificial.



- **Simple Mills Organic Chocolate Frosting** is now available. The USDA certified organic product is made with coconut oil and with eight simple ingredients including being sweetened with monk fruit. It is free from gluten, gum and GMO and has only 6g of sugar per serving.



	% Daily Value
Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 7g	35%
Trans Fat 0g	0%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 14mg	1%
Total Carbohydrate 7g	2%
Dietary Fiber 1g	0%
Sugars 6g	
Protein 1g	
Vitamin A 0% • Vitamin C 0%	
0% • Iron	



- **Bai Black Simbu Citrus Sparkling Antioxidant Infusion** has only five calories per can and is free from sugar and artificial sweeteners. It contains 45mg per can of natural caffeine like a cup of green tea, and is non-GMO, low glycemic, gluten free, soy free and suitable for vegans.



- **Califia Farms Go Coconuts Coconut Milk & Coconut Water Blend** features a smooth and delicious taste. This kosher certified and 100% vegan product contains 45 calories per serving and is free from soy, gluten, lactose, dairy, carrageenan, and added sugar. This non-GMO beverage is ahead of the game already calling out the added sugar line on the label.



# FONA + YOU: A SWEET PARTNERSHIP

Consumers soured on the sugar levels in your product? Working with natural sweeteners and getting lackluster impact? FONA has the solutions you need. We understand how to mesh the complexities of flavor and the challenges of reducing sugar in different applications. We'll consider your technical, regulatory and, most importantly, taste requirements to deliver a complete flavor solution. Add to this FONA's portfolio of taste modifiers and sweetness enhancers and you've got one sweet solution for your sugar challenges.

We're more than just great flavors — we deliver complete market solutions. Your priorities are our priorities. Your challenges are our challenges. Let's talk.

**Contact our Sales Service Department at 630.578.8600 to request a flavor sample or visit [www.fona.com](http://www.fona.com).**

## SOURCES

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