



ALL ABOUT THE KIDS

PART 2: SWEET & SOUR, PLANT-BASED POWER AND THEIR DIGITAL WORLD

With changing times in an ongoing pandemic, online learning, and remote working for parents, kids are adapting every day, and fast. From toddlers to teens, kids are facing daily lifestyle changes that are adjusting the ways they eat, learn and play. In [Part I](#) of our consumer insights reporting into today's kids, we took a deep dive into kids' tastes and preferences, from their favorite flavors to openness to new ingredients and dishes. Today, we're covering kids' love of sour and sweet, interest in plant-based products and their connection to the digital world. Let's take a closer look to see how your product development might be able to cater to today's kids' needs.

RECAPPING KIDS' FAVORITES

As we mentioned in our [Part 1](#) report, there are two main defined generations of youths in the current marketplace: those born between 1997 and 2012, known as Generation Z, and those born after 2012, who are part of the Generation Alpha, or iGen, age group. Their parents are split between Generation X and Millennial age groups.

- Gen Z now number around 24 million in the U.S. They will soon make up 40% of all consumers for a \$3 trillion market.
- The population of Generation Alpha – also sometimes called iGen – is predicted to reach 2 billion globally by 2025. Kids in Generation Alpha are still quite young – the oldest are 7 or 8

Kids today are open to new flavors and cuisines, but they also enjoy all-time kid classics like mac n cheese, pizza and chicken nuggets. And with parents usually as the primary purchaser, that often means health, convenience and taste are prioritized.

Let's dive into a few more trends we've spotted.



PUCKER UP

Sour and tangy foods have been trending among adults recently, but kids have long been drawn to these flavors. What started with candy has moved into other foods and drinks that children, tweens and teens find appealing.

- Yuzu fruit, tamarind, lemongrass and vinegar are flavors expected to gain in popularity among Gen Z.
- Hitching onto the popularity of Sour Patch candy among kids, a new Sour Patch store has opened in New York City, featuring an array of sour and sweet and sour goodies.



PRODUCTS OF NOTE



SOUR PATCH KIDS COOKIES BY MONDELEZ INTERNATIONAL are Chips Ahoy! Cookies combined with sweet and sour gummy candy bits.

39% of consumers responded they would likely or definitely buy this product.



NATURE'S PROMISE KIDS SOUR GREEN APPLE SPARKLING SELTZER WATER is a naturally flavored water that contains other natural flavor and has zero calories per can with no synthetic colors or artificial flavors.

45% of consumers responded they would likely or definitely buy this product.

THE SWEET BEAT

Children have always had a sweet tooth and even in today's health-conscious climate, still gravitate to sweet treats like candy, cookies and ice cream. Many sweets, such as over-the-top milkshakes, have the visual appeal that is also important to today's youngsters who like to document what they eat and drink.

The Sour Patch store in New York City also offers social-media-ready desserts, including whimsically-named "Pour Some Sugar on Us" and "Rainbows, Cakes and Shakes, Oh My."

PHOTO SOURCE: SOURPATCHKIDS.COM



PRODUCTS OF NOTE



SOUR PATCH KIDS 2 FLAVORS IN 1 SOFT CHEWY CANDY HEADS are re two times bigger than original Sour Patch Kids. The candy combines two artificial flavors in one including pink lemonade with blue raspberry, pineapple with redberry and peach with orange.

52% of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.



DISNEY PIXAR THE INCREDIBLES JACK-JACK COOKIE CRUMBLE LIGHT ICE CREAM features a chocolate and vanilla light ice cream with chocolate cookie swirl and chocolatey mask pieces.

40% of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.



SOUR PATCH KIDS MARSHMALLOWS feature sour coated marshmallows that are sour and then sweet. Flavors include blue raspberry, redberry, orange, lime and lemon.

40% of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.

PLANET PLANT-BASED

“Eat your vegetables” used to be an admonishment from a parent or grandparent. These days, many kids are voluntarily eating fruits and vegetables and others are consuming products with vegetables and fruits incorporated (and sometimes hidden) as good-for-you ingredients.

Even as they grow up at a time when plant-based foods are expanding in popularity and availability, kids can be enticed even more with an emphasis on fun colors and flavors that combine the familiar and exotic.

- A recent study confirmed that pairing vegetables with something that kids already like to eat, such as Brussels sprouts served with cream cheese, is a successful way to get them to eat more vegetables. (Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics)
- When kids were asked in a recent poll how many times they ate a vegetable the previous day, 26% said they had veggies three times or more, 16% said they had vegetables twice, 25% reported eating one serving and about 33% said they didn't eat any vegetables.
- 72% of Millennials with kids are consuming plant-based meats more often, compared to 60% of Millennials with no children, underscoring the increased introduction to meat alternatives in family's homes.

PRODUCTS OF NOTE



PEPPERIDGE FARM GOLDFISH SWEET CARROT VEGGIE CRACKERS have been added to the range of Goldfish Veggie Crackers. The baked snack crackers provide one third serving of carrots per serving.

58% of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.



KIDFRESH HOMESTYLE WAFFLES are made with “hidden” butternut squash along with eggs and milk and provide 8 grams of protein and 5 grams of whole grain per serving.

43% of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.



MATERNE GOGO SQUEEZ HAPPY TUMMIEZ ORGANIC APPLE, STRAWBERRY, POMEGRANATE, SPINACH POUCHES are a blend of 100% fruit and veggies and plant-based prebiotic fiber and are a no-spoon, no-mess product sold in a recyclable package.

31% of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.

RETHINK THE DRINKS

Beverages like milk, apple juice and fruit punch are still popular with the young crowd, but, as with foods, children's choices are broader. Water isn't just water: it's flavored water, fortified water and flavored seltzer water. Dairy milks have staged a bit of a comeback during the pandemic, but there is still strong interest from kids in nondairy milks made from nuts, soy or oats. Meanwhile, there's a juice for just about anything that can be juiced.

- Juice is the top beverage option for kids, consumed by more than half of children.
- Dairy is the second most popular children's beverage, consumed by 51% of kids.



PRODUCTS OF NOTE



NESTLÉ PURE LIFE FRUITY WATER NATURAL WATERMELON-FLAVORED WATER BEVERAGE is a purified water aimed at kids. It contains electrolytes for taste, is free from juice, sugar, sweeteners, colors and preservatives and provides zero calories per box.



KARMA WELLNESS KIDS TROPICAL TWIST WATER is naturally flavored and contains spring water and a variety of vitamins. It is free from juice, artificial colors, sweeteners, preservatives, GMO, gluten, and lactose, and is suitable for vegans and children aged four years old or above.

38% of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.



ZEVIA KIDZ is a new zero-sugar, naturally Stevia-sweetened fizzy beverage line developed for kids that features Disney characters. Flavors include Orange Cream Fruit Punch, Fizzy Apple and Strawberry Lemonade.

SCROLLING, SURFING AND SOCIALS

As one would expect from digitally native generations, today's kids are influenced by social media and are, in turn, influencing food choices in their own households. Social media platforms, including Instagram, Snapchat and Tik-Tok, are important sources for kids and what they consume. A lot of kid-centric trends start there, from whipped coffee to chicken "nuggs."

- 70% of teens polled in a recent survey said they engage with food and beverage brands on social media. Younger teens (age 13-14) engaged with brands as frequently as older teens (age 15-17)
- Another study found that social media users are more likely to eat fruits and vegetables or, conversely, indulge in junk food if they see or believe their peers are doing the same things.
- Using information and recipes from social media, many teens today are taking on more food preparation, according to a survey of Gen Z consumers between the ages of 12 and 20.

“Whether entertainment, introduction or inspiration, they look to their phones first”

- THE HARTMAN GROUP



THE TAKEAWAYS

Today's kids are changing with the times, and that includes their food choices and preferences. While sweet and sour and lunchbox favorites remain true, those apart of younger generations have opened their minds to adventurous foods and alternatives like plant-based meats, nondairy milks and a wide array of beverage choices. And with their techy nature, kids today are influenced by what they see on social media, from trendy Tik-Tok recipes to engaging with food and beverage brands. While parents may be the primary purchaser, kids have influence on food and flavor choices. Food developers can find opportunity in making fun and interesting flavors, colors and formats related to social media trends or in playing off of those kids favorites that never die.



YOU DESERVE MORE. LET'S GET STARTED.

What does true partnership look like? You deserve a flavor partner ready to turn these trends into the tangible.

Let FONA's market insight and research experts get to work for you. Translate these trends into bold new ideas for your brand. Increase market share and get to your "what's next." Our technical flavor and product development experts are also at your service to help meet the labeling and flavor profile needs for your products to capitalize on this consumer trend. Let's mesh the complexities of flavor with your brand development, technical requirements and regulatory needs to deliver a complete taste solution.

From concept to manufacturing, we're here for you — every step of the way. Contact our sales service department at 630.578.8600 to request a flavor sample or chat us up at www.fona.com/contact-fona/

SOURCES

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- Millennial Marketing
- McKinsey
- Healthy School Recipes
- Whole Foods
- Forbes
- Business Insider
- Fuchs North America
- The Hartman Group
- IFT
- Journal of the
- Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
- McCrindle Research Company
- Pew Research Center
- Rady's Children's Hospital
- Technomic
- University of Connecticut
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- Y-Pulse

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