



Bluegrass
INGREDIENTS™

Tastes Worth Talking About – Citrus and Spice Deliver Better Flavor Experiences

“You have to try this.”

Consumers are always on the lookout for the next noteworthy flavor. We’re hardwired to seek out exciting foods both new and familiar. Increasingly, that demand has expanded beyond foods that merely taste good.

Consumers today want amplified flavor experiences. They want tastes worth talking about.

Innova Market Insights identified this demand of better food experiences as one of the top food trends of 2022. There are multiple forces driving this trend, not the least of which is COVID-19. Even as restrictions ease and food manufacturers and shoppers find their way back to normal, the pandemic is poised to have lasting effects on [how we eat](#) and the flavors we crave. Less frequent travel and the rise in remote work has driven many consumers

to look to enhance the quality and variety of food they enjoy at home. They’re looking to recreate the excitement and new experiences that can be found in restaurants and cuisines from other parts of the world at their own dining room tables.

While COVID-19 has reshaped habits in the grocery store and beyond, food has always fundamentally been a tradition best shared. From the first Thanksgiving to the Last Supper, food has united and connected us. At the height of the pandemic and throughout history, we’ve sought out shared experiences through food. Today, social media has enhanced how we see and share notable food experiences, increasing our exposure to new products and flavors while elevating our ability to showcase what we’re cooking and eating.

It’s easier than ever to find and share bold new experiences around flavors and food.



The Combined Power of Citrus Powders and Spicy Seasoning Powders

Food manufacturers have rushed to meet the growing demand for products that deliver elevated experiences. One trending flavor combination that satisfies this trend is combining citrus and heat. Individually, the profile of spicy flavors like chili, habanero, and jalapeno is rising quickly, as are fruit flavors like lemon and lime. But when combined, their popularity is seeing unparalleled growth. Formulations like chili-lime first started [gaining traction](#) a few years ago and have since become a defining flavor combination.

Flavors combining citrus and fruit with chili and other spicy tastes are trending in a big way. Chili lime snack offerings outnumbered all other flavor combos in new snack product launches in each of the last three years, according to Innova.

And it's not just in the snack category – from seasonings and sauces to beverages, citrusy heat is having its moment in the spotlight.

Citrusy Heat and the Building Blocks of Great Food Experiences

It's no coincidence that consumers looking for elevated food experiences are reaching for citrus and spice. Combinations like chili-lime or mango habanero check several boxes that ensure an elevated experience. Here are a few elements of great experiences food manufacturers should be focused on.

A New Twist on the Familiar

There's a reason why Oreo has released dozens of new and novelty flavors over the years. People are eager to taste (and talk about) new flavors and variations of the foods they know and love. Citrusy heat pays off this demand for updated versions of old favorites with a fast-growing combination that's drawing a lot of consumer attention.

A Regional Association

The pandemic has driven interest in international and more exotic flavors on our grocery store shelves. Citrus and spice flavors like chili-lime have a distinct association with Latin American cuisine. Unlike other iconic global flavors, it's the combination of recognizable flavors that makes citrus spice novel – and a more predictable experience for less daring eaters.

A Visceral Flavor Response

TV shows and social media have taken adventurous eating to extreme levels. But from snacks that set your tastebuds on fire to soups that warm your belly, there's no doubt food that prompts a physical reaction delivers an experience. Spicy foods are one of the most effective ways to create that response. In fact, of the 10 new flavor combinations in snack products introduced in the last three years, half contained "chili" in one form or another, according to Innova research.





The Power of Flavor Powders in Elevating Food Experiences

As food manufacturers look to craft products that deliver favorable food experiences, many are turning to flavor powders as a key ingredient in their innovation efforts. Citrus fruit powders and spicy seasoning powders have become instrumental in developing chili-lime flavors and other citrus and spice combinations. Blending citrus and spicy seasoning powders allows for rapid prototyping and consistent, exciting flavor modeling while reducing the costs and logistics associated with traditional citrus fruit and chili vegetable products.

At Bluegrass Ingredients, our team of application experts and culinary specialists identified the demand for citrus and heat flavors and products through in-depth market research.

Bluegrass Ingredients is addressing this continuous industry evolution as the agile ingredient innovation company.

We've worked side by side with partners and customers to develop the highest quality, custom formulations tailored to precise specifications that satisfy this trend, with applications centered on new or existing products.

Talk to your Bluegrass Ingredients representative or reach out to one of our experts to explore a partnership to concept, test and create better flavor experiences using citrus and spicy ingredients.



To learn more about Bluegrass Ingredients' market-driven product development solutions and product offerings, [Contact Us.](#)