



**Bluegrass**  
INGREDIENTS®



**ENHANCED  
CREAMINESS**



**CONSISTENT  
FLAVOR**



**CUSTOM  
DAIRY BLENDS**

## 2023 TRENDS

# Realized on Trade Show Floor

Winter Fancy Food Show, Southern California IFT Supplier's Night and Natural Product Expo West...oh my! It's been a busy Q1 on the trade show circuit for the Bluegrass Ingredients team. We've talked to countless food companies, sampled unbelievable amounts of products, and most importantly, got to see if the predicted trends for 2023 and beyond were manifesting themselves in new product launches.

### Spoiler Alert: They were.

The amount of new product launches we saw was staggering. They spanned from mushroom-infused coffee to adaptogen-filled bakery foods. We saw an equal amount of promotion for plant-based foods as we saw for real, whole foods. Here are some of our key observations and trends we noticed from the trade show floor.

## Everyone Loves Cheese

Cheese was pervasive at all three trade shows. Real cheese, powdered cheese, plant-based cheese, cheesy snacks and cheesy entrees were everywhere. However, each show had a different cheese focus.

- **Winter Fancy Food Show:** Real cheese ruled the day, as did elevated entrees and prepared foods with cheese powders.
- **Natural Products Expo West:** Plant-based cheese and cheese products could be found in every aisle, atop frozen pizzas, in vegan mac and cheese and schmear on a bagel.
- **Southern California IFT:** Our powdered cheese blends drew interest from snack manufacturers looking to build custom flavor profiles in a convenient format.

People have always loved cheese, but its prevalence at this year's trade shows proves that we're still in the "comfort food" phase of exiting the pandemic. We don't anticipate new product development to slow in this area and our [Agile Kitchen™ team](#) has been busy creating new formulations and inspiring ideas using our complete line of [cheese powders](#) and [plant-based cheese and creamer powders](#).

**One of our favorite formulations has focused on a traditional and plant based cheez sauce.**

## Expo West is No Longer the Granola Show

Natural Products Expo West is still growing (900 new exhibitors in 2023!), but more importantly, it's diversifying. Exhibitors used to mainly consist of granola, cereal, baked goods and healthy snack food makers. This year, those categories were overshadowed by beverages, entrees and confections.

Food and beverage companies are redefining the market for natural foods and banking on consumer acceptance in every aisle of the supermarket. And with advances in ingredient technology, it's now possible to create stable, clean label products with all-natural ingredients. [Contact us](#) to learn how.

## Healthy Snacking Made Palatable with Cheesy Blends

Healthy snacks have evolved from fried potato chips to baked chips. We noshed on chicken skin chips, mushroom jerky and puffed beans. We can confidently say that potato chips are still our favorite, however, if you season anything with a good cheese blend we discovered that it can taste great.

The response from food companies to consumer cravings for cheese proved spot on in with healthy snacking brands. [Cheese blends](#) provide the perfect opportunity to mask off flavors and provide a familiar flavor profile to a non-traditional base product. Cheese blends also allow food companies to create a complex eating experience, as you can use multiple cheese types to impart front- and back-end notes, as well as deliver salty and savory flavors.

## The Expected Demand for Vegan Chocolate

A 5-minute stroll through Natural Products Expo West and Winter Fancy Food Show would lead you to conclude that more than 50% of our population was living a plant-based lifestyle. They're not, but food companies are banking on consumers of all stripes opting for plant-based chocolate.

On one hand, we get it. The plant-based chocolate we tasted was excellent. We've also worked with confectioners to formulate plant-based chocolate with [oat milk powder](#), and we know how good it is. On the other hand, we wonder how many consumers are willing to try vegan products when they have no qualms about consuming chocolates using dairy ingredients?

Only time will tell, but we're not betting against food companies. The new products we saw at these trade shows have really captured consumer cravings for today and tomorrow's eating occasions.



Our Agile Kitchen team can help your company stay on top and ahead of food trends. [Contact us today for a virtual consultation.](#)

The Agile Kitchen at Bluegrass™ is a creative space that blends innovation and insights to deliver formulations and products that align with pressing consumer trends. Bluegrass Ingredients food scientists and culinary experts partner with customers to use these powders and all our products to invent and improve the future of food.

### Delivering Great Taste

Bluegrass Ingredients operates at the cutting edge of taste and flavor trends. The Bluegrass Agile Ingredient Innovation® Model is custom built to help brands and flavor houses achieve the rapid food innovation they need to stay ahead of today's dynamic consumer taste and dietary demands.

### Contact Us

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