



# The 5 Things Everyone Was Talking About at Natural Products Expo West

It was our first year exhibiting at Natural Products Expo West, and a couple of weeks later, we're still recovering. Halfway through day two, we already had lost track of how many hands we shook, how much food we served and how many steps we logged.

Alas, we survived, and traveled back to Bowling Green, Kentucky, with a head full of ideas, opportunities and new contacts. We also jotted down a list of topics people couldn't stop talking about on the show floor and in the many excellent educational sessions. Here's our top 5 topics of conversation from Natural Products Expo West.



## ONE

### YES, YOU CAN MAKE AN AMAZING VEGAN MAC & CHEEZ

We knew it was a risk to add our Vegan Mac & Cheez to the show menu. People have strong opinions about mac and cheese, especially the failings of vegan versions they've had in the past. We proved them wrong and converted many naysayers while educating them on the power of dairy-free cheese concentrates.

**OUR FORMULA USES A COMBINATION OF [BGI VEGAN CHEEZ CONCENTRATE](#), [BGI OAT POWDER](#) AND [BGI LEMON POWDER](#) TO PROVIDE A CHEESY FLAVOR, CREAMY MOUTHFEEL AND POP OF FRESHNESS THAT'S SECOND TO NONE.**

## TWO

### EVERYTHING IS THE SAME, BUT DIFFERENT

True innovation seemed to take a back seat to new products that reinforced trends that started to dominate conversations in 2023 and 2024. Protein was everywhere as expected, as were mushrooms and probiotic sodas. The show floor seemed to be a greatest hits from the last couple of years, with just more players, neon colors and bright branding.

## THREE

### PLANT-BASED INNOVATION OUTSIDE TRADITIONAL CATEGORIES

We didn't sample as many plant-based meats or milks as we have the last couple of years, but we definitely got our fair share of plant-based confections and baked goods. With vegan meats and milks struggling to gain traction in retail, plant-based chocolates and desserts have stepped up to help drive the category. It was great to see so many vegan chocolate products using [oat milk powder](#), as it's an ingredient that our [Agile Kitchen™](#) team uses frequently to craft exceptional vegan confections.

## FOUR

### STRONG OPINIONS ON GLP-1S, SEED OILS AND TARIFFS

Looking for hot takes? Ask someone how they think GLP-1s will impact the food industry. Better yet, ask them if they use seed oils and why or why not. And, if those don't elicit a response, ask them if the tariffs are going to impact their business.







## FIVE

### CAN YOU MAKE IT TASTE LIKE A PICKLE?

Pickles proved to be one of the biggest flavor trends at this year's Natural Products Expo West, and we were prepared to satiate the demand by sampling a Chickle Dip that garnered rave reviews from all. What's a Chickle Dip?

**CREAM CHEESE**

**SOUR CREAM**

**BGI STOUT PICKLE SEASONING**

**BGI VEGAN MAC & CHEEZ (FLAVOR)**

**BGI BROWN BUTTER CONCENTRATE**

**LACTIC ACID**

Cheese and pickles may not seem like a natural pairing, but this dip tells a different story. It's rich and savory as well as slightly sour and acidic. Simply put, it's delicious.

Want the full formula? [Contact Bluegrass Ingredients](#) for the Chickle Dip and Vegan Mac & Cheez formulas, or to chat about how we can help you capitalize on the big trends set to dominate the food industry for the next couple of years.

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FLAVOR  
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