

How Fusion Seasoning Flavors Are Unlocking Consumer Cravings

When it comes to eating, experiences matter more than ever.

For today's consumers and diners, eating isn't just a way to feel full anymore. It's a way to feel excited. It's a way to feel challenged. It's a way to feel involved.

From fine dining to fast-casual, indulgent snacks to post-workout smoothies, experiential eating has become a defining element of modern food culture. Food manufacturers are working fast to stay ahead of the trend and give consumers the flavors – and experiences – they crave.

One key focus is on fusion flavors and cuisines.

Trying a new flavor or flavor combination is an experience unto itself. It's part of a broader trend driving consumers to seek out fusion options. Per [Innova's Top Ten Food and Beverage Trends 2025](#):

"CONSUMERS ARE EAGER TO EXPLORE UNEXPECTED FLAVORS, FUSION CUISINES, COBRANDING, UNUSUAL FORMATS, CROSS-CATEGORY MASHUPS, AND LIMITED EDITIONS. OVER HALF OF GLOBAL CONSUMERS ARE INTERESTED IN TRYING FLAVOR FUSIONS, AND 37% FOLLOW VIRAL FOOD AND BEVERAGE TRENDS ON SOCIAL MEDIA. IN A CROWDED MARKET, BRANDS CAN STAND OUT BY DELIVERING THE "WOW" FACTOR AND SURPRISING CONSUMERS WITH FUN AND INDULGENT EXPERIENCES."

For many of these consumer interests, culinary and dairy seasonings bring powerful potential for surprising and unique flavor combinations. Here's a closer look at what's driving the rise in popularity of fusion flavors and how food manufacturers can capitalize on the trend, with a focus on seasonings and achieving cost savings.





FUSION IN FOCUS

The growing popularity of fusion flavors and savory, culinary flavors in experiential eating is being driven by a few factors.

✓ GREATER ACCESS TO GLOBAL FLAVORS

Not all that long ago, if you wanted to sample the cuisine of another culture, you had to travel to that country or region. These days, you simply have to visit your local grocery store or open your food delivery app to experience flavors from all over the world.

With more global flavors available locally, consumers are becoming savvier when shopping and dining. One way to meet these consumers is through more authentic ingredients and flavors and more localized cuisine. Another is with fusion flavors serving up new and unexpected flavor combinations. In either case, it all comes back to providing an experience worth talking about (and posting about).

✓ SHAREABLE BITES ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Eating has always been a communal experience, and the experience of food is often defined by the people sharing the meal. In the era of social media, “sharing” has taken on a whole new meaning. Today, people see what their immediate circle is eating as well as countless influencers and food accounts from around the world.

CASE IN POINT: 87% OF PEOPLE HAVE VISITED A NEW RESTAURANT BASED ON FINDING IT ON SOCIAL MEDIA.

✓ THE RISE OF FUNCTIONAL FLAVORS

Consumers are focused on functional ingredients and the potential benefits beyond flavor and nourishment. Per Innova’s “Precision Wellness” trend: “Information culture raises the bar by challenging brands to meet targeted nutritional needs, at any life stage.” Today’s consumers are looking for wellness benefits specific to their needs, from age and gender to lifestyle and medical condition.

Many ingredients and flavors we relate to wellness benefits have strong associations with global cuisines. Think fermented Korean foods or turmeric and ginger in Indian cooking. Fusion flavors and seasonings can combine these functional flavors in applications that align with consumers’ preferences and lifestyle.

ON-TREND
ENHANCED
CONSISTENT
RICH, FLAVORFUL

SPOTLIGHT ON SEASONINGS

Seasonings offer powerful potential for food manufacturers to harness demand for fusion foods and experiential eating. From snacks and dips to baked goods and prepared meals, seasonings create space for exciting and experiential new flavors in recognized applications.

Take an application like pickle-flavored potato chips. It combines a well-known snack (chips), with an exciting new flavor that lends itself to being positioned as a fusion snack. The packaging alone promises a unique experience that can be shared and talked about.

Dairy seasonings are especially effective in delivering fusion flavor trends. Adding cheese and other dairy flavors to cuisines from Korean to Indian can pay off that promise of discovering a new flavor through fusion foods. At the same time, leaning on dairy seasonings to deliver recognized flavors creates space for exciting new flavor combinations in traditionally dairy-forward cuisines (think Mexican or Italian).

Cheese seasonings offer other benefits across flavor, form and function. For instance, many food manufacturers will add blue cheese powder to cheddar cheese snacks to help potentiate the cheddar flavor. Adding dairy to spice blends can accentuate specific spices, creating a more craveable finished product. At the same time, the fat content in cheese helps potentiate flavors in many different applications. All of these attributes can help enhance fusion offerings.



EXPERTS IN BRINGING FUSION FLAVORS TO LIFE

At Bluegrass Ingredients, we partner with customers every day to bring new applications and twists on classic flavors to life. We offer a wide range of dairy seasonings, culinary insights and savory flavor solutions. And if we don't have the right seasoning in place, we collaborate with customers to identify the market opportunity and develop the right ingredient solution. The Agile Kitchen at Bluegrass has an extensive toolbox of dairy, citrus, non-dairy and savory ingredients to tackle any "taste challenge" or other collaborative ingredient development effort.

Our expertise and state-of-the-art capabilities in blending, seamlessly integrated with our customer-focused approach, allow us to quickly innovate and formulate trending flavors and seasoning blends with a focus on craveable dairy and spice combinations.

From delivering iconic seasonings to precise flavor-matching and innovative new combinations, Bluegrass partners with customers to develop and deliver seasonings that satisfy market demands and move flavor forward.