



Stay ahead of consumer tastes

We know how vital it is to anticipate industry trends and determine which recipe your consumers will love. Highlighting the key trends we have spotted with a focus on cocoa and chocolate, this trend report will provide a glimpse of the insights we can share to help you develop your next breakthrough innovation. And because chocolate is the number one flavour in almost all sweet categories, these are trends you simply cannot miss to remain ahead of consumers' tastes.

Indulgent, premium, healthy, sustainable and clean

Today's discerning consumer looks far beyond just value for money to consider both the contents of their food and its impacts on the future. Better informed and more switched on than ever before, they want food that:

- tastes good – giving them an ever-more **indulgent** experience
- is good – putting a clear value on **premium** and authenticity
- helps them be good – through **healthy** solutions that provide guilt-free pleasure
- does good – protecting the future by being **sustainable and clean**

In this Report, we build on these insights to focus on these four key themes that are shaping the food industry.



Indulgent

True indulgence knows no bounds. Across taste, texture and colour, today's consumer desires an ever-more indulgent sensory experience and it is inspiring a new level of creativity in sweet foods around the world.

1 Flavours that delight

With most sweet categories being driven by new flavour development, creating products that surprise and delight consumers is currently all the rage. Besides more traditional flavours that are still on trend – such as caramel, salted caramel, coffee and hazelnut – manufacturers are taking inspiration from other categories to come up with exciting new flavours. The trend for dessert inspired products shows no signs of slowing down, and for the sweet tooth, lemonade and cola, marshmallows and liquorice and milkshake and yogurt flavours are providing inspiration to innovate across categories. And for the more adventurous palette, innovative savory flavours are being increasingly associated with chocolate. Think salted biscuits, vegetables and even bacon! Across the trend, multi-flavours in a single product are hitting the spot, including flavours such as triple chocolate, very popular in cookies and ice cream. After all, why would consumers want to choose one flavour when they can have several in one product?

2 Surprising textures

When it comes to taste perception, texture is an important player. Front-of-pack texture claims are more and more prominent, and brands are finding new, creative ways to describe texture – including as part of the product name. Beside more traditional smooth and creamy textures, ever-more



creative textures are breaking new ground. Bigger, chunkier chocolate inclusions are adding more bite and creative texture combinations – such as crispy inclusions in a soft filling or a snappy chocolate topping on a creamy dessert – are adding an extra wow factor.

3 A full colour palette

Today's food world is looking brighter than ever. Plates are becoming more artistic as consumers seek out foods that look as beautiful as they taste. In coatings and fillings, the possibilities to play with colours are endless – from bright, rich or pastel colours which first originated in macaroons, to shimmering hues that really catch the eye. With the increasing trend for black and white products, cocoa powder also offers opportunities to play with shade and depth of colour.



Respond to the trends with Cargill Cocoa & Chocolate

You can create your next indulgent innovation with Cargill Cocoa & Chocolate's products and expertise:

Indulgent flavours

- Caramel Equilibre – our unique white chocolate with real caramel
- Salted caramel-flavoured coating and filling
- Hazelnut chocolate, coating and filling
- Gianduja
- Mocha chocolate
- Yogurt-flavoured chocolate, coating and filling

Exciting textures

- Textured fillings, from creamy to gooeey and aerated, are just the start
- Bake-stable fillings
- Wide range of crunchy chocolate inclusions

Inspiring colour options

- Naturally coloured coatings and fillings with plant extracts
- Gerken's® cocoa powders palette of colours from red to extra dark

Looking to set yourself apart with a unique and distinctive offering?

Our experts can help you develop your own signature tastes, textures and colours that will delight consumers.



Premium

With today's consumer looking to reward themselves with the ultimate in indulgent treats, demand for high-end, premium products is at an all-time high. The growing trend for moderation – driven by greater health awareness on the part of the consumer – is also contributing, with consumer demand for “less, but better”.

1 Passionate about provenance

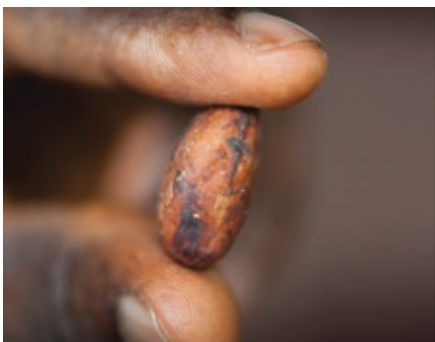
Today's consumers are more and more interested in where their food comes from. As companies respond, we are seeing information about origin more prominently promoted across a broader range of product categories.

Distinctive origin ingredients:

First observed in chocolate confectionery, single origin cocoa is now spreading to more and more sweet categories – from beverages to ice cream, biscuits and bakery. Specifying the origin of milk – for example alpine milk – is another increasing trend in premium products.

Chocolate origin:

Belgian chocolate – recognized for its outstanding craftsmanship – has been a long-standing claim on chocolate confectionery packaging in the UK, Belgium and the Netherlands. Now, we are seeing its use as a premium quality mark spread across new categories such as bakery, biscuits and dairy.



End-product provenance:

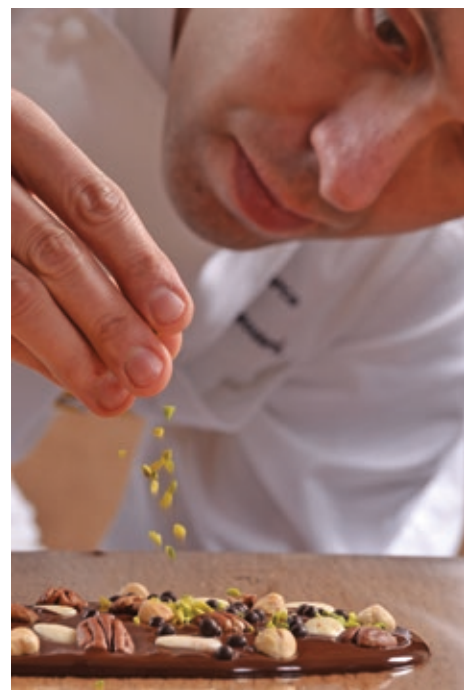
With consumers' will to support the economy by buying local, the need for manufacturers to communicate clearly where the final product was produced is particularly prominent across bakery, biscuits and dairy. Claims such as “Made in France” are booming and add a distinctive product positioning.

Engaging the consumer through technology

When it comes to engaging the consumer around provenance, we are seeing an increasing trend towards using tracking/QR codes on packaging. Developments in technology are offering clear opportunities to communicate transparent information on sourcing and ingredients, as consumer demands more.

2 Artisanal inspiration

In the growing quest to avoid overly processed foods, “artisanal” and “handmade” claims are on the rise. Manufacturers are communicating the processes behind their products more prominently on packaging – with details such as “stoneground”, “slow churned” and even the conching time of chocolate adding premium value to products.



Respond to the trends with Cargill Cocoa & Chocolate

Our experts can help you explore and develop opportunities to upgrade your products:

- Single origin cocoa powders and chocolates
- Belgian chocolates
- Alpine milk chocolates

A woman with dark hair in a ponytail, wearing a pink and white patterned top, is shown in profile drinking from a clear plastic water bottle. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting with green foliage.

Healthy

Today's health-conscious consumer is increasingly mindful of how diet affects health and wellness – leading them to avoid ingredients that are perceived as unhealthy and seek out foods enriched with healthy ones.

1 Fighting the sugar demon

As the global fight against obesity rages on, sugar-related claims in sweet applications are booming, especially in confectionery, cereals and beverages. In the battle against sugar, the most popular claim is “no added sugar”, which continues to increase its reach across these wider categories. Consumers appear to feel more comfortable with sugar that is naturally present and perceive sweeteners as artificial. However, this concern is reduced when natural sweeteners are used, such as stevia which is an increasingly popular option in chocolate confectionery.

2 Free-from alternatives

With diagnosis of food allergies on the rise, demand for allergen-free alternatives is at an all-time high. This trend is also being fueled by regulatory requirements to list certain ingredients as well as an increase in the perception that allergen-free products are healthier.

Besides the long-standing trend for gluten-free, lactose-free products are booming in many categories, including confectionery, dairy and bakery. With around 70% of the world's population suffering from lactase deficiency*, manufacturers have seen the importance – and the opportunities – in addressing this issue. For instance, there has been an explosion in the use of milk alternatives – from the ever-popular soy and almond milks to the trend of the moment, coconut milk.

3 Protein in the spotlight

The trend for protein-enriched foods is booming and shows no sign of abating. As the landscape evolves beyond the USA into European countries, protein products are going mainstream. Breaking free of their niche sports-nutrition image, protein claims are now entering snacks, biscuits and bakery and targeting the “guy next door” with claims more focused on satiety than on sports recovery. With chocolate the number one flavour choice for protein products, now is the ideal time to enter this growth market with its increasing consumer base.



4 Better fats

More and more manufacturers are switching to fats that are perceived as “good” – such as non-hydrogenated and low SAFA fats – as consumers increasingly question what is in their food.

5 Fruit and vegetable superpowers

In the quest for permissive indulgence, fruits and, more recently, vegetables offer exciting opportunities to innovate with chocolate products. Popular flavours such as citrus, coconut, banana and berries are definitely here to stay. And we are seeing vegetable combinations take off across several categories including confectionery, bakery and ice cream. Think beyond traditional recipes such as carrot cake, to a kale-flavoured filling in a chocolate tablet or an indulgent chocolate-beetroot cake.

Respond to the trends with Cargill Cocoa & Chocolate

Our technical experts can help you offer improved healthy solutions, without compromising on taste:

- Reduced-sugar chocolate, coatings and fillings
- Stevia-sweetened chocolate, coatings and fillings
- Lactose-free dark chocolate
- Source-of-protein coatings and fillings
- Coatings and fillings with no-hydrogenated fats
- Fruity-flavoured coatings and fillings, from popular strawberry to trendy lemon and many others

*According to EFSA



Sustainable and clean

Scandals about the sources of ingredients and growing interest in transparency show that consumers really care about where their food comes from, how it is produced and what its environmental and ethical cost really is.

1 Sustainability at the forefront of peoples' minds

With supply of cocoa being under pressure and demand for chocolate at an all-time high, securing a long-term cocoa supply is a key challenge. The industry at large has recognized this and is working on strengthening the supply chain for the future. Certified volumes, verified by UTZ, Fairtrade and Rainforest Alliance are booming and spreading their reach throughout various countries and categories, across not only chocolate tablets but also dairy, bakery, biscuits and ice-cream.

Besides cocoa, palm oil is also in the spotlight as new EU regulations compel manufacturers to specify which vegetable fat they use. Switching to sustainable solutions is right on trend, with companies increasingly choosing RSPO certified mass balance or segregated palm oil in their cocoa and chocolate products.



2 The rise and rise of organic

With organic seen as more healthy and natural, we are seeing continued boom in demand for organic cocoa and chocolate products. Mainly observed in Germany, France and the UK, the organic wave continues its progress across a broader range of categories, with the biggest growth expected to be in chocolate confectionery and ice cream.

3 Clean and clear labeling

As they seek out simple, less processed foods, consumers are increasingly scrutinizing ingredients lists and product packaging. A clear and understandable label provides clear opportunities to add value.

Real ingredients: With demand for natural colours and flavours at an all-time high, companies are seeking ways to avoid e-numbers and increasingly using real fruit and plant extracts that provide natural colouring. To reassure consumers, the claim "made with real fruit/vegetable" is increasingly common on front of pack.

New look at additives: Emulsifiers are also in the spotlight. Non-GMO soy is now mainstream and many companies are also transferring to sunflower lecithin, which is perceived as cleaner and healthier. Going one step further, some manufacturers are removing lecithin completely from their cocoa and chocolate products.

Raw cacao: In line with the trend for unprocessed foods, raw cacao is a niche but growing trend originating from cereals and chocolate confectionery. Made by cold-pressing unroasted cocoa beans, raw cacao addicts claim the process preserves the nutritional content of the bean.

Respond to the trends with Cargill Cocoa & Chocolate

We can help you make the switch to more sustainable and clean solutions:

Sustainable

- Certified cocoa, verified by UTZ, Fairtrade and Rainforest Alliance
- Coatings and fillings made with RSPO certified palm oil – mass balance or segregated

Clean

- Organic chocolates and cocoa powders
- Naturally coloured coatings and fillings with plant extracts
- Sunflower lecithin in chocolate, coatings and fillings

The Cargill 
Cocoa Promise

The Cargill Cocoa Promise is our commitment to help develop a sustainable supply of cocoa while improving the livelihoods of thousands of cocoa farmers, their families and their communities. Working together with you and our partners on the ground, we can continue to make a genuine difference.



**Want a deeper dive into the insights
that can help your business *thrive*?**

Contact your Cargill Cocoa & Chocolate
sales representative today for more
specific information on:

- Cocoa and chocolate ingredients
- Trends in your specific category
- Our ready-to-implement concepts

Visit our website to discover how
we translate these key trends into
winning product specialties.

www.cargillcocoachocolate.com