



ROOM 214

## Food Trends Report

A Monthly Glance at Top Food Trends and Research

# Food Science for the Farm-to-Table Set

The relationship between science and food has been fraught for decades, particularly when it comes to conscious consumers (think concerns over GMOs, pesticides, processed foods). Every service out there). The cook-at-home meal kit provider reportedly ships 8 million meals a month and generated upwards of \$1 But a new breed of lab-designed meat and dairy substitutes is emerging, and the brands behind the science are appealing directly to food aficionados. This isn't microwave popcorn or processed cheese - these new foods are going gourmet.

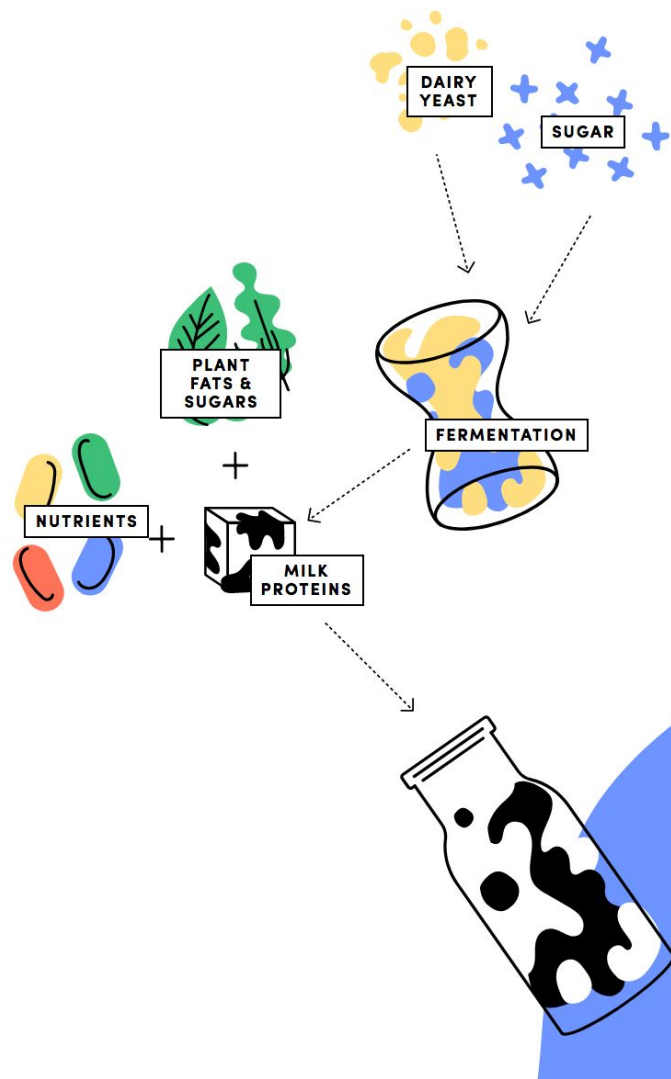
- **Emerging names** - [The Impossible Burger](#), [Perfect Day "Animal-Free Milk"](#), [Memphis Meats](#), [Beyond Meat](#), [Soylent](#)
- **Designer foods** - You'll note that these brands tend to feature a clean, stylized graphic look - no farms or fields here. This is "food by design." Instructions for each recipe. For many, individually wrapped servings of butter is just over

**What Next?** But the brand reduces food waste by sending you just enough, so Some of the most influential names in culinary culture are embracing it...

"Lab-to-table" - Momofuku is one of 11 restaurants serving Impossible Burgers.

## What Next?

As a result, we anticipate that conscious consumers will begin embracing science-driven foods as Silicon Valley positions itself as the next (lab-grown)/ breadbasket of America. But be assured that there will be vocal skeptics concerned about health, safety and sustainability. For now, we've tasted the Impossible Burger and can say that it's delicious!



# Cottage Cheese Has Its Moment

Consumers seek variety in flavor and texture in cultured dairy, which may be one reason why cottage cheese has been taking off. Brands and media are responding with new flavors and recipes:

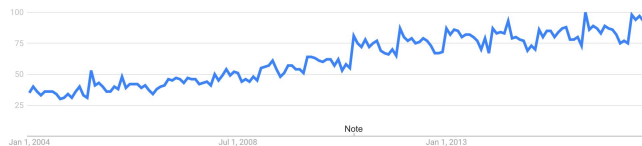
- Google search volume for cottage cheese has grown consistently for a decade, with annual spikes around New Year's resolutions
- Brands are giving consumers a new way to consume cottage cheese: transport-friendly single-serve cups
  - [Artisa Cottage Cheese](#), launched a fruit-on-bottom line
  - [Muuna](#), led by an Israeli dairy brand, offers single-serve options in over 4,000 U.S. stores
  - [good culture](#) sales were up 17x in 2016, and expects triple-digit growth this year
- Dr. Oz published a list of the benefits of cottage cheese in February, touting it as a fat-burning food high in Vitamin B and probiotics
- Epicurious' senior editor made a claim for cottage cheese in the knowingly titled, "[I Love Cottage Cheese \(and I'm Not 86 Years Old\)](#)". The publication has 1.15M Facebook followers

## What's Next?

Expect to see more varieties of savory cultured dairy single-serves on shelves this year as cottage cheese reclaims the health food spotlight.

Sources: [Google Trends](#), [Dr. Oz](#), [Dairy Foods](#), [Epicurious](#), [Food Navigator](#)

Cottage Cheese Google Search Interest  
(2014 - 2017)



Cottage Cheese with Apple, Ginger Honey Crunch  
(Via [Green Kitchen Stories](#))



# Cauliflower Smoothies

Yes, you read that right. This trend is sweeping social media in the form of brightly filled and artfully decorated smoothies.

- **Cauliflower accepted full-heartedly** - In recent years, cauliflower has been dubbed “the new kale:” there’s riced cauliflower, cauliflower cream sauce, and cauliflower mash, along with more traditional dishes. It’s acceptance by the public has made way for its use in even more creative outputs, including sweet recipes like smoothies
  - Search interest in “cauliflower” surpassed search interest in “spinach” in the United States for the first time in January 2017 along with “kale,” and “Brussel(s) sprouts”
- **Cauliflower rice went mainstream** - In September 2016, Green Giant added cauliflower rice products to its line up. In the same year, Kroger introduced their own product, and Taylor Farms jumped on board
- **Why cauliflower?** - When blended, cauliflower becomes creamy and smooth. It’s subtle flavor lends itself well to being turned into whatever you can dream up
- **The verdict** - We, of course, had to test this out before putting it into a report and it was pretty good, so don’t be afraid to try it for yourself!

## What Next?

Expect smoothie shops and ready- made smoothie kits to pick up on this trend and add it to their menus.

Sources: [US News](#), [NY Daily News](#), [Forbes](#), [Google Trends](#)



**Try it Out:** [Malted Chocolate Cauliflower Smoothie](#)

# Peak Gluten-Free May Be Behind Us

We believe we've seen peak gluten-free, with much of the hype and hyperbole behind us. But this isn't all bad news for purveyors of all things free o' wheat.

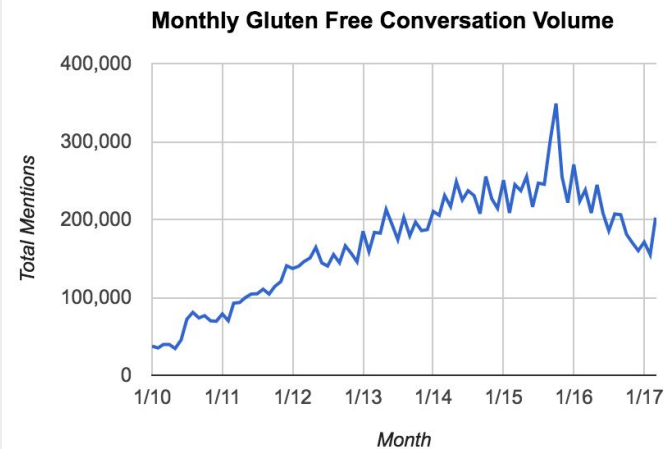
While "gluten free" search volume peaked in 2014, it has held relatively steady since. However, online conversation volume around the topic peaked more recently after years of steady growth. It has since tapered off to levels we saw in 2014.

- **The hype has passed** - We see fewer news stories and pop culture references cluttering conversation. Instead, we believe it's gluten-free loyalists driving online conversation now, with fewer memes, jokes and misleading headlines diverting people's attention.
- **Alternative grains are trending** - Beyond the ubiquitous quinoa, we see farro, sorghum and other ancient grains gaining attention.
- **Vegan + gluten free go hand-in-hand** - "Vegan" is one of the most common terms associated with gluten free conversation online.
- **Comfort food commands attention** - Pizza, cookies, brownies and other indulgences are the top foods mentioned in current gluten free conversation.

## What's Next?

While the gluten-free market may not be expanding based on these indicators, we believe the core audience is still committed and active online. Brands may have a clearer path to engagement now that much of the media hype has passed.

Sources: *Crimson Hexagon, Google Trends*



## Team Member Recipe: Rhubarb Jam

*Inspiration: It's finally here. Rhubarb.*

*I visited three grocery stores over the weekend, in addition to the local Farmer's Market, and only one store carried rhubarb. I was overjoyed when I saw it sitting there on the shelf, and every time I'm reminded of the first time I saw rhubarb: working as a cashier at a market along the Yampa River, wondering why the celery was so large and so red.... The market also sold a strawberry rhubarb pie -- which was my first experience of the dynamic duo -- and it's been love ever since.*

### **Ingredients:**

2 1/2 pounds fresh unpeeled rhubarb, chopped  
1 cup white sugar  
1 cup brown sugar  
2 teaspoons orange zest  
1/3 cup orange juice  
1/2 cup water

[Get Chrissy's recipe here.](#)



Room 214 specializes in social media marketing, and digital advertising -- including custom content for CPG brands. If you're excited about food trends and the metrics behind them, please get in touch!

### Contact

Caitlin Sherwood

[csherwood@room214.com](mailto:csherwood@room214.com)

303.444.9217



