



Functional Foods Report 2019

# Putting Food to Work in the Age of Wellness

[www.tastewise.io](http://www.tastewise.io)

# About Tastewise

Tastewise brings the power of data to the art of food and beverage intelligence. Our AI-powered platform analyzes billions of food data points - including social, menus, and home recipes - to provide real-time insights for hospitality and food brands.

Tastewise empowers leading food brands by providing them with data for business critical decisions - from product development to marketing strategy.



**2B**

Monthly Social Media Interactions



**180K**

Restaurant Menus, Updated Weekly



**7000+**

Indexed Ingredients



**500M+**

Data Points per Query



**2.2M+**

Recipes with Live Usage Stats



# The era of functional foods

Consumers crave new culinary experiences, and bring to each meal a heightened understanding of health and wellness. Enter the era of functional food: a category of ingredients, meals and preparations that serve a particular function and purpose beyond mere sustenance.

For F&B brands, understanding motivations and identifying the desired functions of food and beverage has become a crucial step in producing new, engaging products. Over a third of consumers are looking for functional benefits from their food. The functional food market globally is projected to reach more than \$275B. Consumer interest is headed nowhere but up, and F&B companies must follow.

Knowing that sauerkraut is trending is just step one. Understanding that it is trending because people are turning to fermented, probiotic-rich foods for their positive effects on gut and brain health, helps brands determine which ingredient will trend next and how they might effectively tap into it. Similarly, an increased interest in skin care has been a major factor in the growing use of collagen.

**Source:** Tastewise; USA Nationwide; Menu & Social Data; Q3'2018 - Q3'2019  
Menus from 183,394 restaurants nationwide





Once you know which functions interest consumers, you can create products to suit growing consumer needs in the relevant format.

Tastewise's AI-powered engine identifies emerging trends and understands the motivations behind consumer preferences. Tastewise fuses data to the specific functions that interest consumers (weight loss, gut health, sleep, etc.) and enables users to see the growth and opportunity for each individual function.

**Not only do we now know what is trending; more importantly, we know why.**

The following report, *Putting Food to Work in the Age of Wellness 2019*, highlights the functions that interest consumers and the food that meets their needs.



# Functional Food Landscape

By 2025, the **global functional foods market** size is projected to reach more than

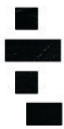
**\$275B**

**37%**

of consumers are looking for **functional benefits** from their food and drinks

**+23%**

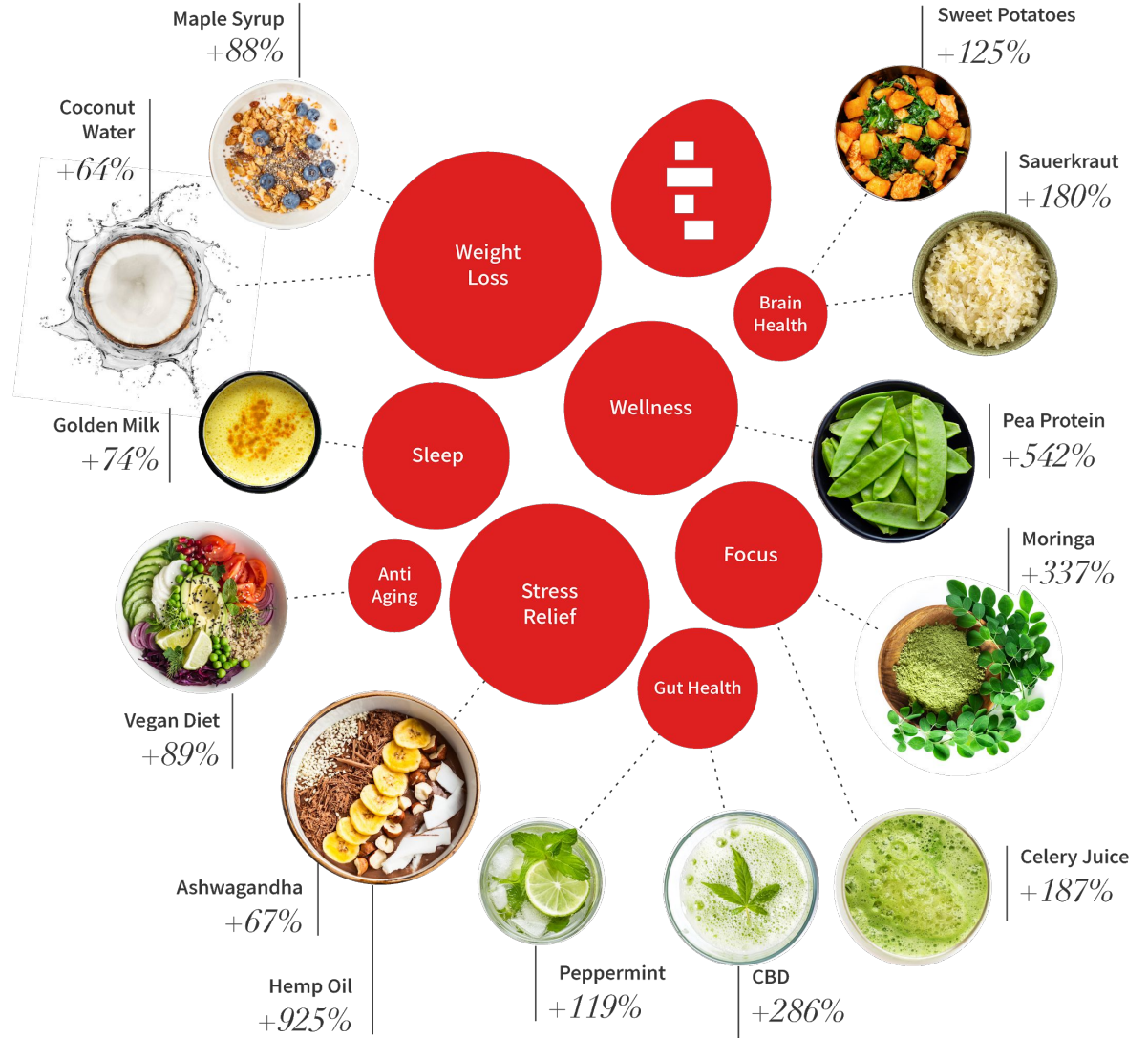
Increase in number of consumers this year that are looking for **wellbeing functions** from their food and drinks



# Spotlight: Influential Functions

**1 out of every 3 conversations about food centers on the functionality of food.**

Consumers want to know what benefits their food will afford them — will it improve gut health? Promote healthier skin? Increase focus? — and make their choices accordingly. In the past year we saw 23% increase in the number of people that discussed the wellness related functions detailed in this report. Understanding these functions and how they interact with ingredients offers a developmental, economic, and marketing edge to in-the-know F&B companies.



# Sleep

With abundant distractions available 24/7, finding time to properly unwind before bed and maximize one's sleep isn't an easy task. Aids like apps that measure sleep quality are emerging to help consumers take ownership over their sleep habits. Food and beverages can also encourage healthy sleep, and consumers are aware of it; social mentions of 'sleep' in relation to food are up 28%, year-over-year. Asparagus joins turmeric concoction 'golden milk' to promote sleep naturally among increasingly growing audiences.

Tryptophan-rich 'moon milk', a sleep-inducing recipe for warm milk that's sipped before bed, is up 70% on social media in the past year.

54 restaurants offer moon milk on their menu (+15% since last year)

Asparagus

+100%

Moon Milk

+70%

Golden Milk

+74%

# Weight Loss

2019 has seen a cultural shift away from fast-dieting and unrealistic beauty standards, and toward body positivity of all shapes and sizes. People interested in weight loss are also shifting away from the old vanguards of the weight-loss industry, and towards natural and healthier alternatives like cranberries and provolone. Maple syrup, up 88% in the last year on social media, moves beyond its association with breakfast foods, serving instead as a natural sweetener that can replace unhealthy, processed sugars.

Coconut water, known for its hydrating properties, is up 64% on social media amongst consumers thinking about weight loss in the past year.

2,534 restaurants offer coconut water on their menu (+13.5% since last year)

Coconut Water

+64%

Cranberries

+63%

Maple Syrup

+88%

Provolone

+109%

# Wellness

The pursuit of wellness -- the feeling of total health, beyond the absence of illness -- has become a powerful entity; today's health movements are often dedicated to well-being beyond the physical, including practices for improving mental and spiritual health as well. Food and beverages have an important part to play, with clean eating of particular interest for consumers -- social mentions of 'wellness' and food are up 40% since last year. Smoothies and herbal tea have experienced marked growth in the category over the past year.

Pea protein, typically consumed as a neutral-flavored powder, is finding new popularity; mentions of the protein in connection with wellness are up 542% in the past year.



Herbal Tea

+197%

Smoothies

+121%

252 restaurants feature pea protein on their menu (+20% since last year)

Pea Protein

+542%

Clean Eating

+50%



# Energy

Consumers are looking for potent sources of energy that last all day - and without the side effects of chemically altered energy supplements. 'Energy' is up 23% more over the last year on social media in relation to food, marking a clear interest among consumers. Natural energy boosts abound; peaches, green tea and sesame experience significant growth as consumers turn towards innovative forms of food and beverage to power up.

Nutrient-rich wheatgrass is the new energy source for many consumers; social year over year growth of the sprouted leaves is up 265%.

468 restaurants offer wheat grass on their menu (+9% since last year)

Wheatgrass  
**+265%**

Sesame

**+73%**

Green Tea

**+51%**

Peaches

**+48%**

# Stress Relief

American culture is stressed out like never before — over 60% of American workers spend 3 or more days each week feeling under strain — and consumers are looking for natural ways to combat the pressure. People are turning to food to affect their moods; ‘stress relief’ is up 7% in mentions on social media in the last year. Plant-based stress busters ashwagandha and reishi join lavender, a calming classic, in consumers’ stress-reducing regimens.

Hemp, a parent plant for certain types of CBD, produces oil that can have a similar, calming effect. Consumers are enamored with hemp oil, talking about its stress-relieving qualities at a staggering increase of 925% on social media in the past year alone.

92 restaurants feature hemp oil on their menu (+13.6% since last year)

Hemp Oil  
**+925%**

Ashwagandha  
**+67%**

Lavender  
**+64%**

Reishi  
**+95%**



# Anti Inflammatory

An anti-inflammatory-oriented diet can help promote general wellness and reduce episodes of chronic illness. People suffering from illness overtime can benefit from ingredients that provide both nutritive and anti-inflammation benefits, both alone or in tandem with their medications. Consumers looking for anti-inflammatory foods are turning to pomegranates, mangos and walnuts to reduce inflammation in their bodies and promote overall health.

Pumpkin has become much more than just a festive, autumnal classic; consumers are mentioning pumpkin and its anti-inflammatory benefits 243% more on social media than last year.

155 restaurants highlight the anti-inflammatory benefits of the items on their menu (+57% since last year)

Walnuts

+105%

Pomegranate

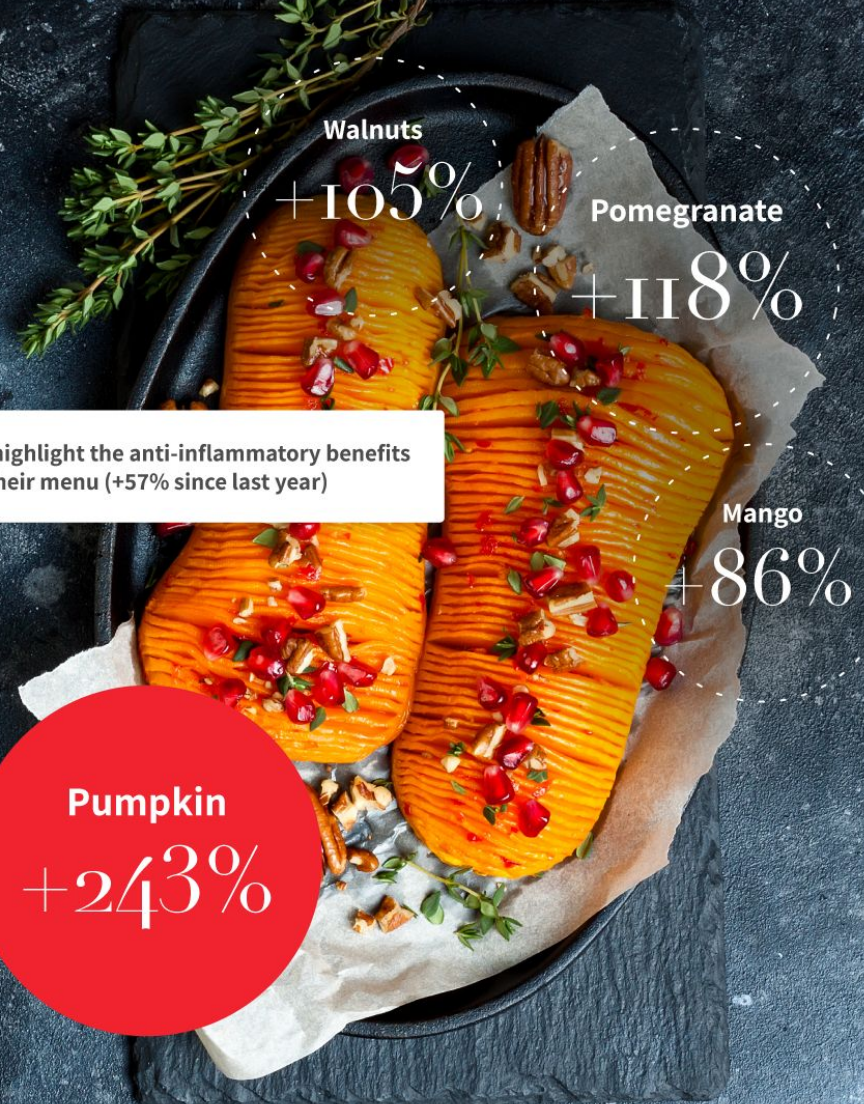
+118%

Mango

+86%

Pumpkin

+243%



# Anti-Aging

Anti-aging has long been a goal of much of the makeup and skin-care industries; now, consumers looking to reduce the appearance of their age or delay the aging process altogether are turning towards natural ingredients for help.

Papayas, up 154% in mentions related to anti-aging in the past year, are increasingly popular amongst consumers as ingredients in both skin treatments and food, while vegan lifestyles are touted as especially beneficial for anti-aging regimens.

Consumers are taking advantage of the anti-aging properties of blackberries; social year-over-year growth of the berry and its properties is up 179%.

Blackberries  
**+179%**

Papaya  
**+154%**

Vegan  
**+89%**

7,045 restaurants feature vegan on their menu (+13% since last year)

# Focus

With so many distractions in today's ultra-connected world, it can take a lot of effort to stay focused. Consumers with their sights set on productivity pick pantry staples olive oil and coffee to enhance focus.

Moringa, derived from the Moringa Oleifera tree grown in South Asia, has antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties in addition to an energy-producing effect. Consumer mentions of moringa on social media are up 337% in the last year, making moringa an increasingly popular option for natural energy.

40 restaurants feature moringa on their menu (+57% since last year)

Moringa

+337%

Coffee

+76%

Olive Oil

+104%



# Brain Health

From memory to organ function to sleep patterns and beyond, a healthy brain keeps our systems running twenty-four hours a day, affecting all aspects of life. Consumers looking to bolster and protect brain health through everyday lifestyle choices are embracing natural ingredients for their brain-boosting qualities; mentions of the brain and food are up 46% in the past year. Nutrient packed dates, sauerkraut, and ginger are particularly in demand.

Consumers are increasingly choosing sweet potato for brain health. Social year-over-year growth of the versatile root is up 125%.

26,808 restaurants offer sweet potatoes on their menu (+1.4% since last year)

+180%

Sauerkraut

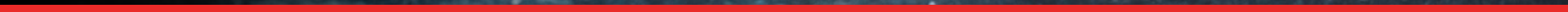
Sweet Potatoes  
+125%

Dates

+135%

Ginger

+135%



# Gut Health

Gut health has a direct line to overall health; everything from anxiety disorders, chronic headaches, skin issues, hormonal imbalances and more, have been linked to how the gut is functioning. Food and beverages are intimately related to the health of the digestive biome, and consumers are drawn towards ingredients that support positive gut health; social media mentions of 'gut health' are up 42% in the past year. Ingredients like watermelon and leafy greens offer the fiber needed for healthy digestion and are increasing in popularity.

Peppermint, long understood by naturopaths to soothe digestive discomfort, is becoming more mainstream for gut health; social media mentions are up 119% amongst consumers in the last year.

506 restaurants offer leafy greens on their menu (+5.7% since last year)

Leafy Greens

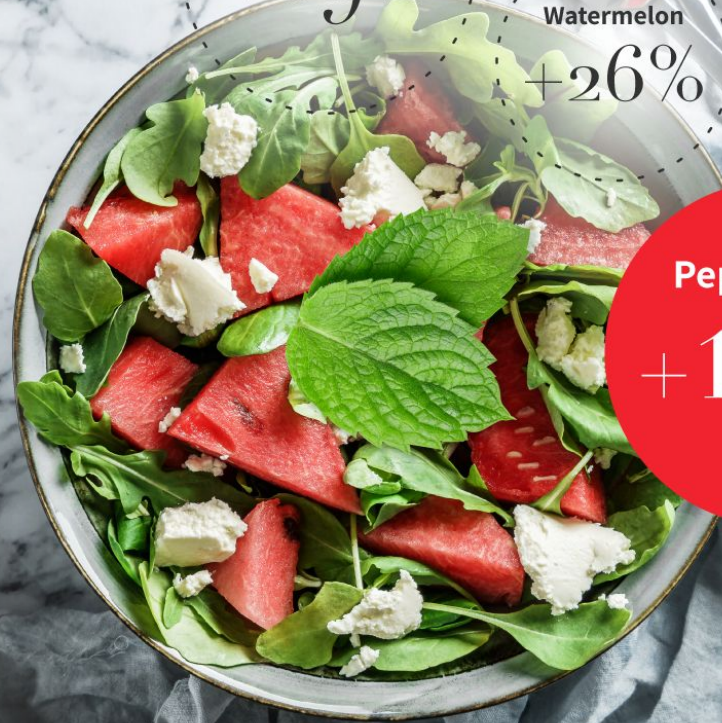
+59%

Watermelon

+26%

Peppermint

+119%



# Skin Care

Plant-based skincare products are having a moment. Skin care mentions on social media in the last year relating to food are up 44%, and it is easy to see why: ingredients you can eat have significant and long-lasting impact on the body's largest organ, the skin. People are getting their fruits, vegetables and proteins from both the supermarket and their skin creams, turning to goji berries, collagen, and avocado for healthy, radiant skin.

Kiwis are rich in vitamin C, making them appealing to skin care aficionados.

Year-over-year growth of social mentions of kiwi and skin care is up 204%.

Collagen

+45%

68 restaurants feature collagen on their menu (+54% since last year)

Goji Berries

+196%

Kiwi

+204%

Avocado

+52%



# Depression

Depression is far more than a blue mood: it is a chemical imbalance in the brain that leads those affected to suffer from anxiety, irritability, and difficulty concentrating. Several ingredients can combat these troubling symptoms before onset, providing the brain and body with much needed blasts of natural chemicals, vitamins and probiotics. Brazil nuts and kefir are popular amongst consumers looking to prevent depression, each experiencing notable year-over-year growth.

Maca, a root native to Peru that is typically consumed in powder form, is thought to increase energy, fertility and mood; mentions of maca in relation to depression are up 422% in the past year.

287 restaurants feature maca on their menu  
(+16.4% since last year)

Maca

+422%

Brazil Nuts

+168%

Kefir

+526%



# Sickness

The supermarket contains aisles of germ-busting, cold-crushing, immunity-boosting products... and not just in the pharmacy section. Folk remedies have long relied on natural ingredients to promote recovery from illness; these items are becoming widespread within the broad category of sickness treatment and prevention. Elderberry, beloved for its health-protecting qualities, peppermint, and artichoke are steadily rising in use.

Ancient Chinese health practitioners used bok choy to treat various illnesses; today's consumers are becoming savvy to its capabilities, with social media mentions of the vegetable up 268% this year.

233 restaurants feature elderberry on their menu (+13% since last year)

Elderberry  
+129%

Artichoke  
+250%

Peppermint  
+302%

Bok Choy

+268%



# Immune System

The immune system protects us from injury and disease, and helps us recover when we've fallen ill.

Within the broad category of illness-prevention, immunity-protection has become an important topic. Certain foods naturally bolster the immune system's germ-fighting power, and have long been relied upon to prevent illness. Cloves and beets are currently proving popular, demonstrating nearly doubled growth or more over the past year.

Superfood kiwi is jam-packed with fiber, antioxidants and vitamin C, making it a good choice for those looking to stave off illness. Consumer mentions of the fruit alongside the immune system are up 149% on social media in the last year.



**Kiwi**  
**+149%**

**Cloves**  
**+95%**

**Beets**  
**+136%**

## Ingredient deep-dive

# Celery

Celery juice seemingly does it all in 2019: Fans of the squeezed herb claim it accomplishes everything from reducing water weight, easing arthritis, lowering blood pressure and decreasing cortisol, to general cleansing, detoxifying and more. Celery contains luteolin and polyacetylenes, anti-inflammatory compounds that are credited for much of the plant's health-promoting qualities.

Taken on an empty stomach, the juice offers short-term benefits — think reduced bloating and increased energy — but the bulk of purported benefits lie in the long term. Consumers use celery juice overtime to promote weight loss (consumer mentions of weight loss and celery juice in the last year are up 209%), reduce inflammation, treat illnesses, increase focus, and combat depression, making it a force to be reckoned with; social mentions over time are up 34%.

1,730 restaurants offer celery juice on their menu (+9.5% since last year)

Depression  
+137%

Sickness Treatment  
+75%

Anti-inflammatory  
+106%

+34%

Weight Loss  
+209%

## Ingredient deep-dive

# CBD

CBD is a hardworking cannabis compound with numerous functions across the health spectrum; it is easily consumed and has access to many bodily systems due to its chemical makeup. It has come a long way from its original, primary application against stress; today's CBD offers a host of potential health benefits including digestive health (up 268% in social mentions in the last year), anti-inflammation, pain management and more. Additionally, consumers take CBD in various forms to improve immunity, increase energy, and support good sleep.

CBD comes in oils, tinctures, drinks, snacks and more, and can be found in everything from beer to gummies to ice cream to soap. Continued consumer interest in CBD is clear: Social mentions of CBD over time have increased 215%.

54 restaurants feature CBD on their menu  
(+222% since last year)

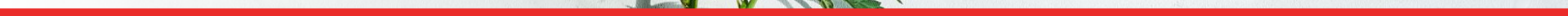
Gut Health  
**+286%**

Energy  
**+70%**

**+215%**

Immune System  
**+138%**

Sleep  
**+201%**





## Want to Know More?

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contact us | [insights@tastewise.io](mailto:insights@tastewise.io)