

TOP 10 TRENDS FROM NATURAL FOODS EXPO WEST

2023

The natural products industry gathered in Anaheim a couple of weeks ago for Expo West, the largest trade show in the United States for natural, organic, and healthy products. The event attracted over 100,000 attendees and featured more than 3,000 exhibitors showcasing the latest innovations and trends in the industry. I had the opportunity to connect with some of the most innovative companies in the world, and I wanted to capture some of the most exciting takeaways I had from walking the floor for three days. From plant-based proteins to sustainable packaging, here are the top 10 trends that jumped out at me from Expo West 2023:

01

Plant-based proteins continue to dominate the market

Plant-based proteins have been trending for the last few years but are not slowing down. At Expo West, plant-based meat alternatives were a hot topic, with many companies showcasing their new and improved offerings. Beyond Meat and Impossible Foods unveiled their latest creations (even as their stock prices have taken a beating), while smaller players like Rebellyous Foods and New Wave Foods also made a splash with their plant-based chicken and seafood alternatives.

02

The rise of regenerative agriculture

Regenerative agriculture is gaining traction as a sustainable farming practice that not only reduces the impact of agriculture on the environment but also improves soil health and biodiversity. At Expo West, several companies, including Patagonia Provisions and Dr. Bronner's, showcased their commitment to regenerative agriculture and their efforts to support farmers who are adopting this approach. My favorite company in the space had to be Roam Free Ranch, an early-stage company that is veteran and woman-owned, that has a retail and foodservice line of Bison chili and jerky.

03

Innovative packaging solutions

The food and beverage industry has been under increasing pressure to reduce its plastic waste, and many companies at Expo West showcased innovative packaging solutions. From edible packaging made from seaweed to compostable packaging made from plant-based materials, companies are finding new ways to reduce their environmental footprint. One company, in particular, that caught my eye, Twenty Fifty, had compostable cutlery.

04

Functional foods

Consumers are increasingly looking for foods and beverages that offer more than just nutrition. At Expo West, many companies showcased their functional food and beverage offerings, including products that support gut health, boost energy, and improve cognitive function.

05

CBD-infused products

CBD-infused products: CBD is still a hot topic in the food and beverage industry (although its presence at the show saw a SIGNIFICANT decline vs. Expo West in 2019), with many companies showcasing their CBD-infused products. From CBD-infused beverages to snacks, companies are looking for ways to capitalize on the growing interest in CBD.

06

Non-dairy milk alternatives

Non-dairy milk alternatives: Dairy-free milk alternatives are not new, but they continue to grow in popularity. At Expo West, companies showcased a wide range of non-dairy milk alternatives, including oat milk, almond milk, sesame milk, and coconut milk.

07

Sustainable seafood

Sustainable seafood: Sustainable seafood is becoming a top priority for many consumers, and companies at Expo West showcased their commitment to sustainable fishing practices. From plant-based seafood alternatives to sustainably sourced tuna, companies are finding new ways to offer consumers more sustainable seafood options.

08

Snacks with a twist

Snacking is big business, and companies at Expo West showcased their latest and greatest snack offerings. From savory granola to sweet and spicy trail mix and pretzels, companies like Pop Daddy Snacks are getting creative with their snack offerings to meet the changing demands of consumers.

09

Probiotics beyond the yogurt aisle

Probiotics are not just for yogurt anymore. At Expo West, companies showcased a wide range of products that contain probiotics, including drinks, snacks, and supplements.

10

Personalized nutrition

Consumers are increasingly interested in personalized nutrition, and companies at Expo West showcased their efforts to meet this demand. From customized meal kits to personalized supplement plans, companies are finding new ways to offer consumers tailored nutrition solutions.



IN CONCLUSION

Expo West 2023 showcased the latest and greatest innovations in the natural products industry, highlighting the continued growth of plant-based proteins, sustainable farming practices, and innovative packaging solutions. As consumer preferences continue to evolve, companies are finding new ways to meet the changing demands of consumers and shape the future of the food and beverage industry.



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