*Created by*

MorganMyers, a G&S Agency




# 2027 Food & Flavor Trends Report

***How Marketers Can Turn Today's Trends Into Tomorrow's Staples***

MorganMyers
a G&S. Agency

# Why Some Flavors *Stick* and Others *Fade*

## Flavor trends move fast.

One day they're taking over TikTok feeds, menu boards and grocery aisles. The next, they're gone – replaced by the next viral ingredient, global influence or social media obsession.

But capturing attention is only part of the story. Why do some flavors spark a moment while others earn a permanent spot in consumers' carts, kitchens and routines? What makes a flavor stick?

As a food and beverage marketing agency, these are the questions piquing our interests – and their answers are where we believe brands can have the biggest impact.

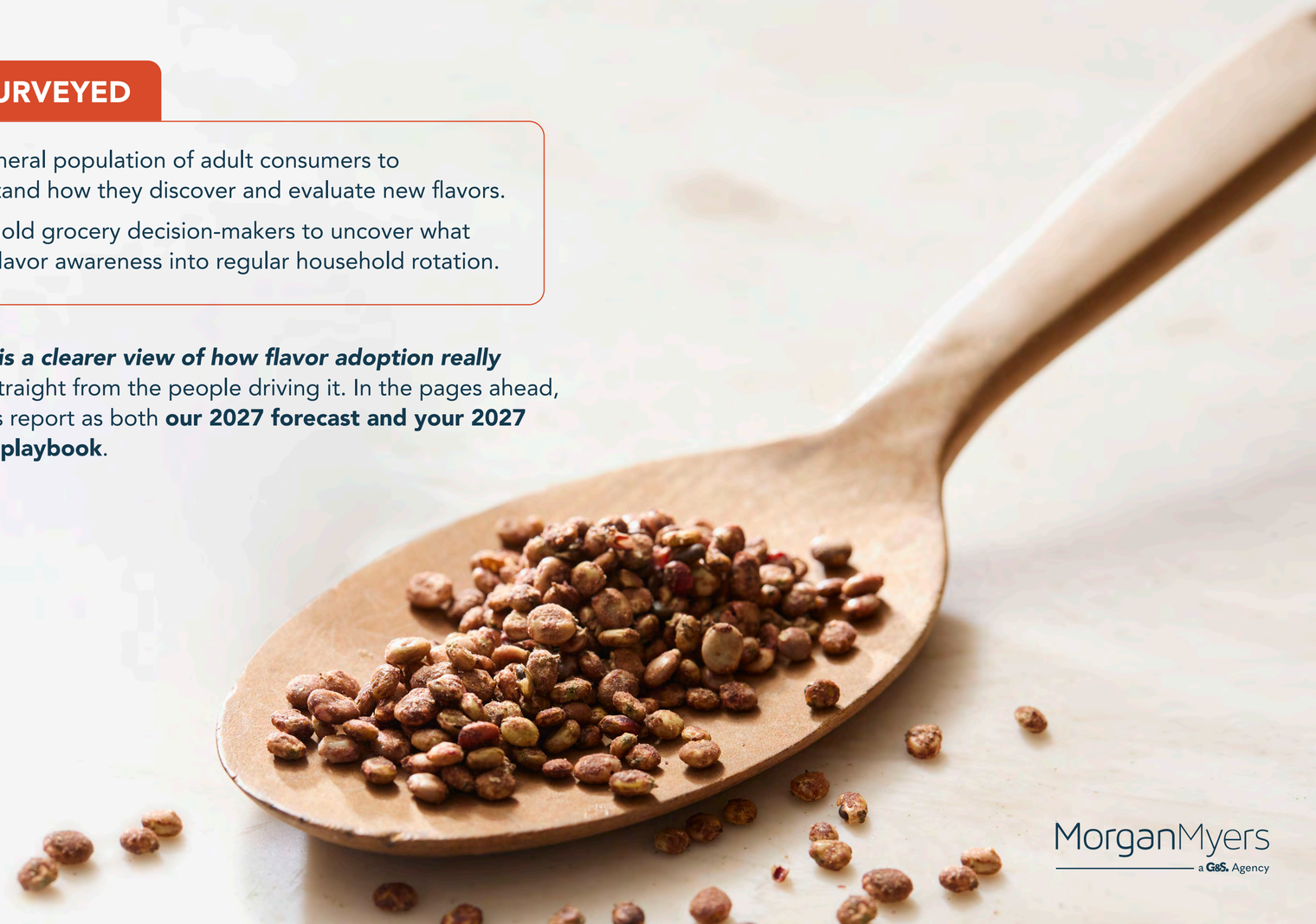
So, that's where we've focused the **2027 MorganMyers Food & Flavor Trends Report**. To uncover the forces turning flavor trends into household staples, we combined cultural and culinary trend analysis with original, nationwide consumer research.

**WE SURVEYED**

The general population of adult consumers to understand how they discover and evaluate new flavors.

Household grocery decision-makers to uncover what drives flavor awareness into regular household rotation.

***The result is a clearer view of how flavor adoption really happens***, straight from the people driving it. In the pages ahead, think of this report as both **our 2027 forecast and your 2027 marketing playbook**.



MorganMyers
a G&S. Agency

# What's Inside

Last year, our inaugural Food & Flavor Trends Report introduced a framework for how flavors move from spark to staple. This year, we're going deeper.

In this report, we profile the 10 flavors we believe deserve attention in 2027, including our Flavor of the Year. We also take a look at what consumers tell us at four distinct points in their flavor adoption journey:

**THE SPARK**
How a food or flavor gets on the consumer's radar.

»

**THE PANTRY TEST**
When consumers decide whether that flavor is worth their money and another purchase.

»

**THE REPEAT BUY**
When a flavor begins moving beyond trend status and has true staying power.

»

**THE STAPLE STATUS**
When the customer purchases it on the regular without thinking about it.

At each stage, we give practical recommendations food and beverage marketers can use across product innovation, retail, foodservice, earned media, social, creators, sampling, and consumer outreach.

Finally, we revisit our 2026 forecast, examine real-world trends that endured or fizzled, and look at several larger forces that could reshape food and flavor in the year ahead.


**03** The Top 10 Flavors to Watch in 2027

**12** The Playbook for Turning Trends Into Staples

**13** Stage One: The Spark

**17** Stage Two: The Pantry Test

**21** Stage Three: The Repeat Buy

**25** Stage Four: The Staple Status

**27** The Flavor Journey

**28** The Flavor Graveyard

**29** Last Year's Forecast: Where Our 2026 Trends Stand Today

**30** Looking Ahead: Forces Shaping Food and Flavor in 2027

**31** Research Methodology

**32** About MorganMyers



# The Top 10 Flavors to Watch in 2027

**Retail trends, menu adoption and consumer interest all point to these flavors breaking through in 2027 and beyond.**



2027 FLAVOR OF THE YEAR

# Black Garlic

**Garlic may hardly need an introduction, but black garlic does.**

Created through a controlled aging process that transforms fresh garlic into soft, dark cloves with a uniquely sweet-savory profile, black garlic has long been familiar to chefs. Now, it's becoming considerably easier for home cooks to find at their local grocer – whether in the global flavors, spices, condiments or produce aisles.

It's also easier to use. Retail sauces, seasonings and condiments are helping transition black garlic out of fine dining and into everyday eats. It can add umami to meat, burgers, pasta and vegetables, be blended into butter or dressings, or become the foundation for sauces and marinades.

**50% of consumers surveyed are interested in trying black garlic in the year ahead.**

# Chili Crisp

**Chili crisp reflects a broader shift in how consumers want to experience heat**, offering flavor, texture and versatility in every bite.

Spicy, crunchy, savory and versatile: Chili crisp can finish noodles and eggs, enliven pizza, add kick to an aioli or dressing, or provide texture and heat to an otherwise familiar dish. The flavor has also moved well beyond niche retail, with widespread product availability and rapid menu growth.

Our research suggests Chili Crisp may have another important advantage: It's shareworthy. **Among our 10 flavors tested, it generated the strongest consumer excitement for telling others or sharing socially.**

# Labneh

A staple across Middle Eastern cuisines, **labneh offers something marketers increasingly need:** novelty and uniqueness that's easily understood.

The strained yogurt cheese delivers a thick, creamy texture and can be served as a dip, spread, bowl base or substitute for cream cheese. Its protein-forward positioning as a "thick, creamy strained yogurt" also connects it to growing consumer interest in satiety and nutrient-dense foods.

# Sumac Spice

**Sumac delivers a familiar sensory cue through an unfamiliar ingredient.**

Its bright, citrus-like character makes it easy to understand once consumers know what it does. Used throughout Middle Eastern cuisines, Sumac can season meats and vegetables, finish hummus and grain bowls or add acidity to dressings and sauces.

With more brands marketing the spice, look for its lemony flavor and simplicity to position it for further market breakthrough.

# Dates

**Dates have spent years hiding in plain sight.**

Now, the fibermaxxing movement is positioning them front and center. **U.S. retail sales rose roughly 30% in 2025**, while dates are appearing in syrups, snacks, baked goods, smoothies and other applications. We love wrapping them around one of last year's flavor trends: macadamia nuts.

Dates have an additional advantage: Consumers don't have to learn what they are. They just need to figure how, when and where to weave them into their meal and snack planning. In other words, we've been dating dates for a while, but in 2027, we expect a long-term commitment to take hold.





# Manuka Honey

**Manuka Honey brings together indulgence and functionality**, two motivations consumers increasingly expect food to simultaneously deliver.

Known first for its association with wellness, Manuka Honey is finding more culinary applications in beverages, desserts, breakfast foods and savory dishes. Analysts expect the North American market to double in size over the next 10 years.

**Awareness, appeal and willingness to try all ranked near the top of the 10 flavors tested**, giving Manuka Honey multiple paths to staple status.



# Espresso

**Espresso is bringing a new kind of energy to the flavor scene.**

It's familiarity, with premium appeal – delivering a distinctive "grown-up" flavor cue that can signal richness, energy, and indulgence across categories and dayparts. With versatility in desserts, baked goods, cocktails, mocktails, sauces and protein-forward applications, consumer testing suggests strong potential because awareness is already high and trial requires little explanation.

# Masa Corn

**Masa is already foundational to Mexican and other Latin American cuisines**, but growing consumer interest in authentic preparations and premium heritage ingredients is creating new possibilities for it.

With its earthy sweetness and rich, nutty depth, masa provides the unmistakable flavor and texture behind traditional tortillas and tamales. At the same time, chefs and product developers are finding innovative applications in baked goods, soups and snacks while filling an important segment for gluten-free formulations.





# Koji

**Consumers may not know koji by name, but they almost certainly know what it can do.**

The Japanese fermentation agent plays a foundational role in foods such as miso, soy sauce and sake. Chefs and product developers are increasingly using koji directly to intensify umami, tenderize proteins and create new textures. Shio koji provides an approachable marinade format, while koji powders can move into rubs, spice blends and snack seasonings.

Koji represents one of the earliest-stage flavors on our list, which is exactly what makes it worth watching.

# Dragon Fruit

**Few flavors on our list combine visual impact, familiarity and trial potential quite like dragon fruit.**

This brightly colored tropical fruit already appears in smoothies, bowls, beverages and salads. Its U.S. menu presence has grown sharply over the past several years.

In other words, we think its cult following is about to go mainstream.

**In our survey, dragon fruit had the highest awareness of the 10 flavors tested.** Two-thirds found it appealing, and it generated the strongest willingness to try.



# Bubbling Under, Ready to Grow

While our research found the prior pages' 10 flavors the most likely to break through in 2027, a few others followed closely behind. Will these be on the table in 2028, or make a surprise run in the year ahead?

| | |
|---|---|
| SWEET | **Brown Butter** · **Maple** · **Baklava** · **Piloncillo** |
| SPICY | **Osmanthus** · **Calabrian Chile** · **Harissa** · **Salsa Macha** · **Suya Spice** |
| SOUR/CITRUS | **Yuzu** · **Calamansi** · **Sudachi** |
| UMAMI | **Red Miso** · **Manchego** |
| BITTER | **Cascara** |
| DAIRY FATS | **Camel Milk** |



# Your Playbook for Converting Trends to Permanent Purchase

**The Journey from Consumer Interest to Everyday Staple**

THE SPARK → THE PANTRY TEST → THE REPEAT BUY → THE STAPLE STATUS

STAGE ONE »

# The Spark



# Consumers Still Want New Flavors, But They Are Becoming *More Selective.*

Before a flavor can become a staple, someone has to notice it and decide it is worth exploring.

Our research paints a picture of an American eater that remains highly open to new experiences, but certain variables may be impacting whether they fully commit to trying new flavors compared to last year's report.

## Interest in Trying New Flavors is Slipping

**63% » 51%**

2026 2027

### WHY THE CHANGE?

Consumers still want innovation. But their budgets are tighter, they face an endless stream of new products and trends, and some are eating less due to the rise in GLP-1 use. They still want new flavors but may be more selective about which ones deserve their attention.

## Fewer Consumers See Themselves as Bold + Curious

**85% » 78%**

2026 2027

We segmented respondents into categories based on their openness to try new flavors. Year over year, those who love taking flavor risks – Bold Adventurers – and those open but selective – Curious Explorers – also saw a downward trend.

**For marketers, "The Spark" moment becomes even more important. A flavor needs a clear sensory proposition, credible exposure and an obvious reason for consumers to care.**

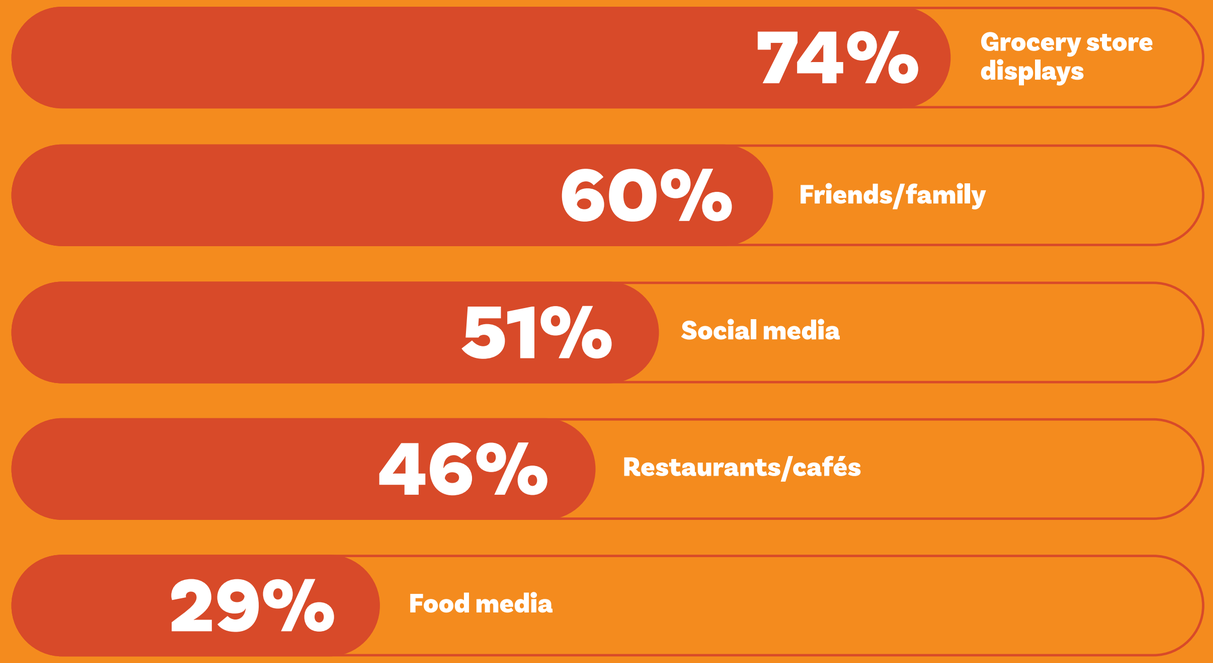
# The Real World Beats the Algorithm

**Social media absolutely matters to flavor discovery, but it's only part of the story.** And compared to last year, consumers are increasingly responding to flavor ideas they encounter in trusted or tangible places rather than relying on digital buzz alone.

### *A NOTE ON GEN Z*

Social is important for Gen Z discovery, with **92% being inspired by social** to try new flavors. But of the Gen Zers surveyed, **68% also said friends and family** influenced them to try a new food or beverage, and 48% named friends and family as their most trusted source, whereas less than 3% said they trusted social the most.

## Where Flavor Discovery Happens




**85%** » of consumers say they are likely to tell others about a new flavor they enjoy.

YOUR PLAYBOOK

# How Marketers Can Win the Discovery Phase

**In the Spark stage**, marketers should make the flavor interesting enough to investigate and understandable enough to approach. The data points toward several practical ways marketers can do that.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Create discovery in multiple places. | Lead with the sensory payoff. | Give unfamiliar flavors familiar vehicles. | Seed people likely to amplify the experience. | Know whether you are building buzz or demand. | Is there something about the experience worth recommending? |

## Marketer Checklist

**Before launching a new flavor, ask:**

- Can consumers understand the flavor in one sentence?
- Can they immediately picture where it belongs?
- Are we creating several opportunities to encounter it?
- Are we introducing it through a familiar enough format?
- Is there something about the experience worth recommending?

STAGE TWO »

# The Pantry Test



# Interest Meets the Realities of the Grocery Cart

Once consumers encounter a flavor they want to try, the real test begins. Now price, taste and other variables come into play to ultimately determine if it's worthy of purchase.

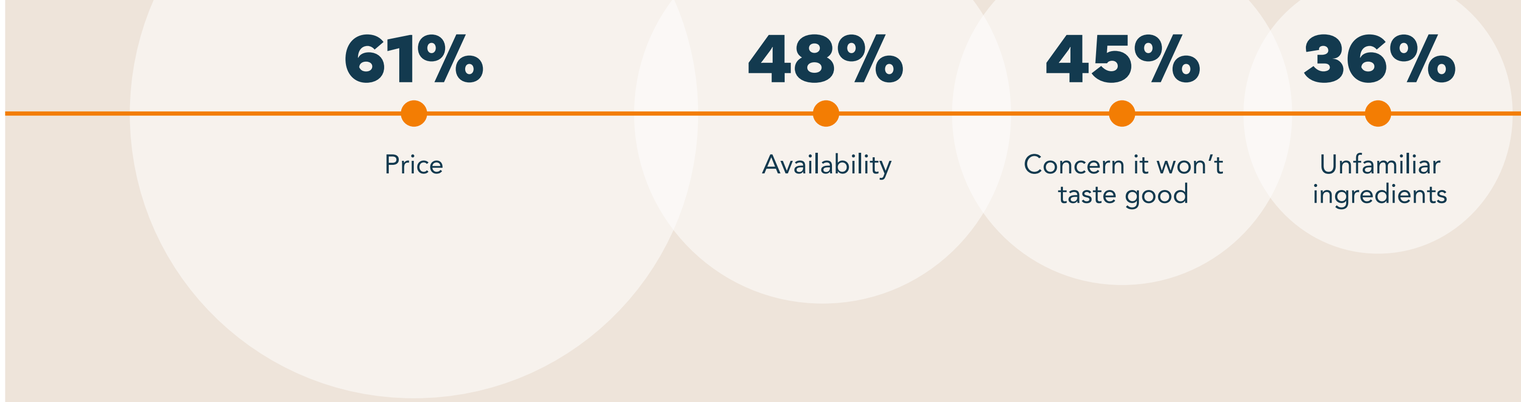
***MARKETER'S INSIGHT***

Consumers don't need a lot of convincing to try a flavor, but they do need enough reassurance to take the financial and sensory risk of buying it. **That's the message you need to share to move them down the funnel**.

It's also where sampling, pricing, packaging, trust and familiar product formats become central to adoption.

## What Can Stop a New Flavor at the Cart?

*Among grocery decision-makers*

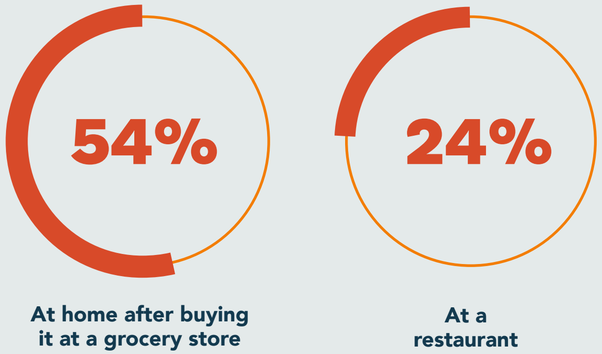


# Retail is Where Flavors Take Hold

It wasn't too long ago that most food trends took hold in foodservice. Over the years, restaurant favorites like Egg McMuffins, tableside guacamole and chef's mushroom-blended burgers all inspired flavor adoption at home. Restaurants still play an important role in making flavors adaptable and adoptable, but research suggests retail is increasingly where trends prove whether they have staying power.

## Flavor Firsts

Where household grocery decision-makers are likely to try a new flavor for the first time.



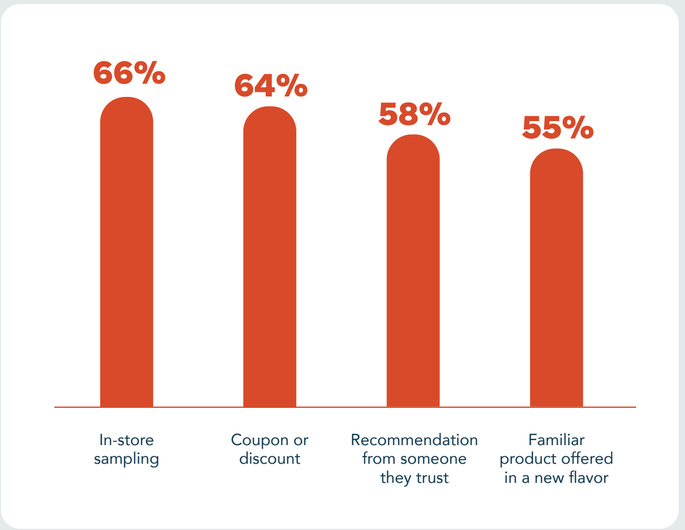

**At home after buying it at a grocery store**

**At a restaurant**

## In-Store Influences

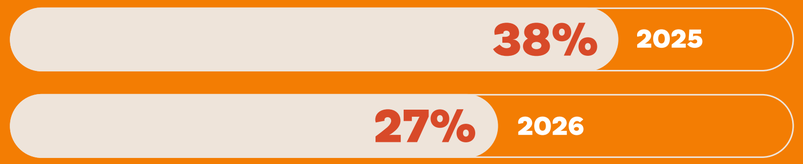
**(Where interest turns into trial)**

When we asked what could convince shoppers to put a new flavor into their cart, the leading answers were highly practical.




Sampling solves the taste question. A discount lowers the financial risk. Trusted recommendations provide reassurance. A familiar product removes one more unknown. All four make experimentation easier.

**Seasonal/Holiday Promotion Declines in Influence**




***Takeaway: Use seasonal excitement when it fits, but don't substitute it for value or relevance.***

YOUR PLAYBOOK

# How Marketers Can Turn Awareness into Trial and Trial Into Purchase

**The Pantry Test** is where marketers have some of their most tangible opportunities to move the consumer to permanent staple. Many of the barriers consumers describe can be reduced through how a flavor is priced, packaged, sampled, merchandised and demonstrated.

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sample where purchase can happen immediately. | Prioritize retail and consumer over foodservice spend. | Use introductory value strategically. | Put new flavor on something consumers already trust. | Build multiple usage ideas before launch. | Connect retail media to the shelf. | Make the whole household want it. |

## Marketer Checklist

**Before asking consumers to buy a new flavor, ask:**

- Can they try it before committing to a full purchase?
- Is the price low enough to make experimentation feel worthwhile?
- Are we introducing the flavor through something they already know and trust?
- Have we shown them more than one way to use it?
- Can they easily find it where they already shop?
- Will the product appeal to more than one person in the household?

STAGE THREE »

# The Repeat Buy

# Because Purchase is Not the Finish Line

**Here is perhaps the biggest cautionary finding in our research.** General consumers are highly willing to come back to a flavor they enjoy, but household adoption – with the actual product purchasers – tells a different story.

## Closing this 81-point gap

This is the point of flavor inflection, where consumer curiosity no longer cuts it and the trendiness starts to fade – **unless it can make the leap**.

Marketers often invest heavily in generating awareness and first purchase. But the period after that purchase deserves just as much attention.

Consumers need additional use occasions. **They need to know they can find the product again**. The price has to remain reasonable. Other people in the household need to like it. And the flavor needs to work within meals they already know how to prepare.

## The Great Flavor Drop-Off




**General Consumers**

Likely to buy a new flavor again or seek it out in other products after a positive experience




**Grocery Decision-Makers**

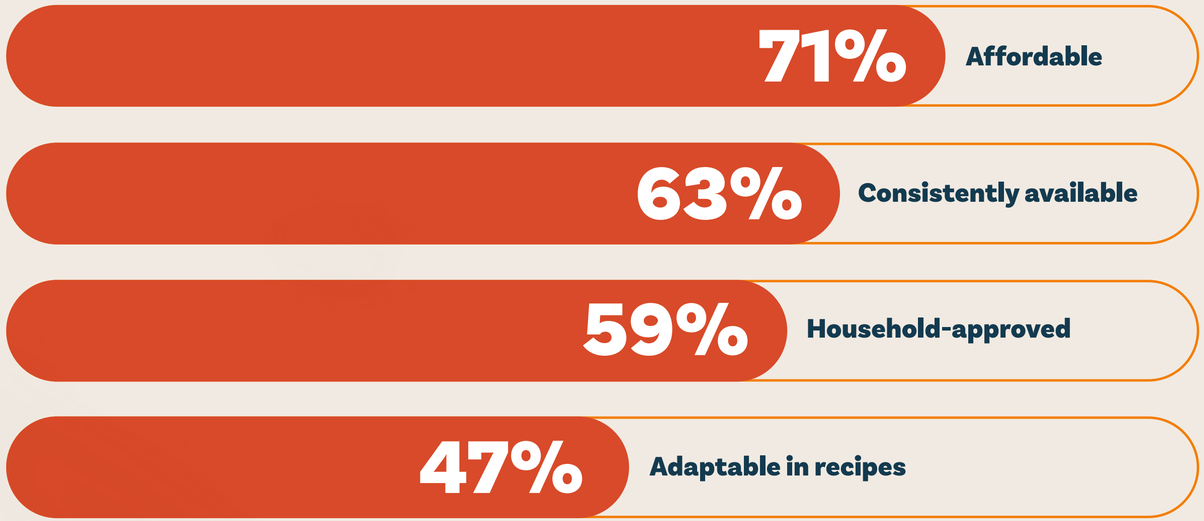
Newer flavors have become everyday staples in their homes

# What Makes a Flavor Stick?

Once consumers have tried a new flavor, our survey found four factors are most likely to inspire repeat purchase. Warning: **These aren't glamorous**, which may be why they're often given less attention.



## The Four Rules of Staying Power




A successful emerging flavor eventually has to fit the budget, the shopping routine, the household and the dinner routine. A lucky viral strike may create initial interest, but it dies without habit.

Compared to last year's survey, regular availability has become more important to shoppers, suggesting consumers increasingly expect promising flavors to move out of specialty territory and into places they regularly shop.

YOUR PLAYBOOK

# How Marketers Can Create Staying Power

A flavor reaches **Repeat Buy** status when consumers no longer need a special reason or occasion to buy it. That said, our research finds the responsibility to reach this threshold falls on the marketer, not the shopper.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Create new occasions. | Market after purchase. | Track second and third purchase. | Use recipe content to fit existing behavior. | Win over the household. |

# Marketer Checklist

**Before trying to turn a successful trial into a staple, ask:**

- Are we using paid digital and retail media to reach people after first purchase?
- Do we have CRM or loyalty programs in place to encourage second and third purchase?
- Are we retargeting buyers with new recipes, occasions and product uses?
- Can consumers easily find the flavor again where they already shop?
- Are we measuring repeat purchase, not just trial, clicks or impressions?
- Are we giving the whole household more reasons to want it again?

STAGE FOUR »

# The Staple Status

YOUR PLAYBOOK

# Creating Habit is When the Real Work Begins

Reaching Staple Status, and keeping it, is a little like hitting your fitness goals. Congrats, you made it! Now the real work begins: **maintaining what you worked so hard to achieve**.

Because habits can slip. Preferences can shift. Competitors can crowd in. Economic shocks can arise. And what once felt essential suddenly slips back to optional.

That makes the leap to Staple Status one of the most important, and most difficult, moves a flavor can make. **Remember, only 11% of grocery decision-makers say newer flavors have become everyday staples in their households.**

As a marketer, you have a different job now: protecting the habit and keeping the flavor relevant.

> ***With Staple Status comes great responsibility. Stay present after the trend story fades.***

# Marketer Checklist

- Keep the flavor visible through social, digital earned media, creators and other channels.
- Give people reasons to share how the flavor fits into their lives. Our Summer 2026 Food Pulse found real customer content was the leading factor making food and beverage brands feel authentic among Gen Z.
- Collaborate with retailers on merchandising, retail media, loyalty programs, cross-promotions, and new occasions that keep the flavor visible and easy to buy.
- Explore new products, formats, pairings and occasions.
- Protect the fundamentals. Our Summer Food Pulse also found that taste, value and quality drive repeat purchase far more than social buzz.
- Watch for signs the habit is weakening. Track purchase frequency, penetration, loyalty and sustained demand. Read competitors, retailers and restaurants' earnings reports.

# The Flavor Journey

Our research makes it clear: You need different goals and triggers to spark a trend and move the shopper down the funnel to loyalty.

**Four consumer decisions. One ultimate outcome.**

## The Spark

**74%**

**say grocery displays drive discovery**

**Consumer question**
*What is that, and why should I try it?*

**Marketing objective**
Build interest and understanding

**Best levers**
Social, earned media, chefs, restaurants, retail displays, creators, cultural storytelling, compelling visual content

## The Pantry Test

**66%**

**say sampling can drive trial**

**Consumer question**
*Is this worth buying?*

**Marketing objective**
Reduce financial and sensory risk

**Best levers**
Sampling, coupons, introductory value, small formats, familiar product carriers, retailer partnerships, trusted recommendations

## The Repeat Buy

**63%**

**say regular availability supports routine**

**Consumer question**
*Does this belong in our routine?*

**Marketing objective**
Build repeat purchase opportunity and ongoing usefulness

**Best levers**
Distribution, value, recipe versatility, CRM, loyalty offers, household acceptance, cross-category applications

## The Staple Status

**11%**

**currently say newer flavors have become household staples**

**Consumer question**
*Am I buying this on the regular without thinking about it?*

**Marketing objective**
Build long-term repeat loyalty

**Best levers**
Social connection, product variety, brand extensions

# The Flavor Graveyard

## What the Faded Trends Can Teach Us

It may be novel and a little nostalgic to explore why some food trends faded away, but there are also lessons to be mined and applied. Here are a few food trend casualties – and survivors – to help identify what matters once the launch buzz fades.

### Ruby Chocolate

DIED FROM

Novelty without enough repeat appeal

### Activated Charcoal Foods

DIED FROM

The visual was stronger than the eating experience

### Butter Boards

DIED FROM

Aesthetic alone doesn't foster repetition

### Bone Broth

DIED FROM

Lacked full household buy-in

## Why Do Other Flavor Trends Stick?

### Hot Honey

SURVIVED BECAUSE

It found more product applications

### Pumpkin Spice

SURVIVED BECAUSE

It became a ritual

LAST YEAR'S FORECAST

# Where Our 2026 Trends Stand Today

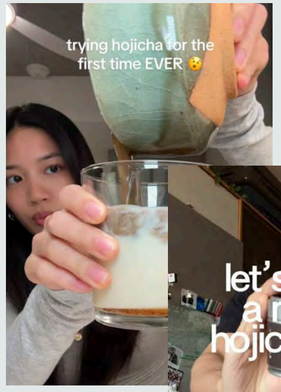
Last year, we put 10 flavors on our watch list. Where are they today and where are they going?



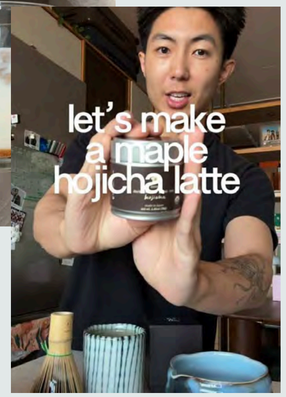

## STATUS Advancing

HOJICHA: THE 2026 FLAVOR OF THE YEAR

Hojicha has moved far beyond niche status, validating its place as our 2026 Flavor of the Year. In February 2026, Bon Appétit dubbed it the flavor "taking over cafe menus," citing growing demand for both latte-ready powders and traditional loose-leaf formats. Food & Wine in June noted its appearances at boba tea shop, restaurants and other locales. Its momentum continues to build, with major chains like The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf adding hojicha offerings to their menus. The signal is clear: Consumers aren't just discovering hojicha, they're making room for it in their daily routines.




@erinreads




@jeffreyte

## STATUS Breaking Out

BLACK SESAME | MACADAMIAS | FLORAL INFUSIONS

Each of these flavors reflect a broader consumer demand for globally inspired, visually distinctive and experience-driven flavors, supported by rising search activity, menu adoption, social conversation and strong consumer interest. Brands also are merging them with other flavors, like Mauna Loa introducing dill pickle macadamia nuts. Brightfresh took the floral infusion trend from foodservcie to retail with its new Brightfresh Micro Chef's Blend Edible Flowers.




Bubblegoods.com




@annabellegiselle

## STATUS Building

COCONUT PANDAN | PIRI PIRI | MISO CARAMEL | BLACK COCOA | FANCY BUTTER

These flavors align with major consumer drivers: global flavor exploration, premium indulgence and sensory complexity. Today, they occupy an important middle ground: established enough to generate curiosity, but still with plenty of whitespace for further innovation.

## STATUS Part of a Bigger Movement

CHILI MANGO

Chili mango is benefitting from more than one trend, sitting at the intersection of the "swicy" movement, growing interest in tropical flavors, global culinary exploration and consumers' desire for more dynamic sensory experiences. Coupled with its ability to span snacks, beverages, desserts, sauces and cocktails, chili mango is a prime example of how multiple flavor trends can converge into a single, high-growth opportunity.



LOOKING AHEAD

# The Forces That Will Shape Food and Flavor in 2027

Trends come and go, but the forces that fuel them have a longer-lasting impact. Many of those forces are converging in ways that could materially change how food is developed, marketed and consumed in 2027.

## 1 GLP-1s are Rewriting the Entire Playbook

GLP-1 medications are quickly becoming one of the largest structural forces facing the food industry.

- The Wall Street Journal reported in August 2026 that as many as **55 million Americans, or 15% of the population, are projected to use GLP-1 drugs by 2035**.
- KPMG estimates users consume roughly **20% fewer calories** while taking the medications.
- JPMorgan estimates GLP-1 treatments could drain **$30 billion to $55 billion in annual food and beverage revenue as soon as 2030**.

## 2 Value is Part of Flavor Strategy

Persistent inflation is influencing what consumers are willing to try and what they are willing to buy again. Ingredient producers like Tate & Lyle are actively working with food manufacturers to formulate foods that – as they put it – "Master the Science of Value."

Price is the leading barrier to experimentation among general consumers, and value is the strongest factor driving repeat purchase among grocery decision-makers.

## 3 AI Is Becoming a Gatekeeper to the Pantry

Our Spring 2026 Food Pulse found that AI is already moving beyond inspiration into meal planning and grocery behavior.

- 36% of consumers had used ChatGPT or other AI tools for recipe inspiration.
- 41% used AI for meal planning, 34% to modify recipes and 25% to create grocery lists.
- Consumers also reported using AI to adapt meals around ingredient availability, health goals, dietary preferences, including GLP-1 and budget.

## 4 Global Flavors Keep Moving Toward the Mainstream

More than half of grocery decision-makers say they want to see more global and international flavors in the future. This year's Top 10 reflects that movement. Koji, Sumac, Labneh, Masa and Chili Crisp all come from established global culinary traditions rather than newly developing flavors.



**Survey 1:**
A nationally representative sample of 389 U.S. adult consumers.

**Survey 2:**
A nationally representative sample of 351 U.S. household grocery purchase decision-makers.

Both surveys were conducted online in August 2026 and carry a margin of error of +/- 5%.

# Research Methodology & Report Attribution and Use

**The 2027 MorganMyers Food & Flavor Trends Report combines original consumer research with analysis of culinary, retail, menu and search trends.**

All findings and photography are proprietary to MorganMyers, a G&S Agency.

This report may be cited or shared with proper attribution to “MorganMyers” or “The 2027 MorganMyers Food & Flavor Trends Report.”

MorganMyers
a G&S. Agency

# About MorganMyers

For nearly half a decade, MorganMyers has helped food, agriculture and organizations across the food supply chain understand consumers, navigate culture and market shifts, and turn insights into action.

Our team spends its days watching how people discover food, what influences what they buy and how those behaviors are changing. We work across research and strategy, earned media, digital and social marketing, influencer partnerships, retail and foodservice programs, nutrition communications, stakeholder engagement and brand building.

The Food & Flavor Trends Report grew from that same interest in what is changing in the food and beverage space, and what marketers can do about it.

We hope this year's findings give you useful ideas as you plan and move forward through 2027 and beyond. And if you would like to dig deeper into the data, discuss what these findings mean for your brand or explore how an emerging flavor could fit your marketing plans, we would love to talk.

**MorganMyers, a G&S Agency**


CONTACTS

**Eric Davis**
Vice President, Food & Beverage
edavis@morganmyers.com • 612.202.9407

**Steve Halsey**
Chief Growth Officer
shalsey@gsimcg.com • 212.697.2600