

# U.S. FOODLINK

The bi-monthly newsletter for importers of U.S. foods

Vol. 21 No. 2



## 2025 Non-Alcoholic Beverage TRENDS AND INNOVATIONS

America's alcohol intake has declined recently in response to factors ranging from the growth of the sober curiosity movement and challenges like Dry January to increased awareness of the health risks associated with alcohol among consumers.

According to NIQ, the non-alcoholic category has doubled its total share in the alcoholic beverage market in the last three years. Non-alcoholic products have secured 18 percent more space on store shelves (enough for three additional items on average) in the last four years, whereas the assortment of alcoholic products dwindled by approximately 31 items during the period. Zero-proof alternatives have become particularly popular with younger demographics like Gen Z and Millennials – even those who continue to purchase standard alcohol.

With this in mind, here are some notable NA beverage trends to watch.

### Tropical Flavors

In both the standard alcoholic and non-alcoholic categories, mixed drinks infused with tropical flavors, such as palomas, piña colodas, and rum punches, are expected to trend in 2025 and beyond, reflecting increased demand for globally inspired or region-specific flavor profiles among U.S. consumers.

Instead of developing generic blends, beverage brands should leverage authentic flavor combinations and unique ingredients

*(Continued on page 2)*



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# 2025 Non-Alcoholic Beverage Trends and Innovations *Continued*

like dragon fruit, passion fruit, calamansi, and ube. For instance, the lulo is a tropical perennial plant typically grown in South America that's been gaining momentum as a beverage ingredient lately. Also known as the naranjilla, the fruit has a citrusy, herbaceous flavor that's often described as a cross between lime and rhubarb. Brands that can develop tropically inspired NA beverages that both pique curiosity and honor rich cultural traditions will reign supreme.

## Functional Beverages

Non-alcoholic beverages that offer functional benefits are also expected to continue trending among U.S. consumers – especially the health-conscious types. Recently, F&B manufacturers have infused their zero-proof drinks with vitamins, botanicals, and adaptogens that promise various wellness perks ranging from supplying extra energy to supporting gut health via prebiotics or probiotics.

Other opportunities for growth in this segment include “beauty from within” offerings that are packed with collagen and antioxidants, alcohol-free alternatives with fewer calories and grams of sugar, and better-for-you or eco-friendly beverages that are clearly identified with clean labels and transparent ingredient lists. Mood-enhancing products incorporating nootropics and adaptogenic ingredients such as ginseng, licorice root, and reishi mushrooms are also winning over these consumers. For example, RYZE makes mushroom coffee incorporating six adaptogenic mushrooms aiming to address brain fog, relieve stress, and enhance focus.

## NA Wines & Canned Mocktails

Although non-alcoholic beer accounts for roughly 85.1 percent of the total NA market share, according to NIQ, NA wines represent 11.2 percent and NA spirits make up the remainder, providing F&B companies with ample opportunities for innovation in NA wines, particularly premium reds and sparkling wines where there are market gaps, according to the CEO and co-founder of The Zero Proof, Sean Goldsmith.

Canned “mocktails” that come in convenient, ready-to-drink formats and align with consumers’ busy lifestyles and hectic schedules are also expected to continue gaining momentum in the coming years.



## Featured U.S. Midwest & Northeast State Profiles

### Nebraska

2 mil POPULATION	44,479 FARMS	44 mil ACRES	Ranked #5 AMONG 50 U.S. STATES IN AG EXPORTS
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### New Jersey

9.5 mil POPULATION	9,998 FARMS	711,502 ACRES	Ranked #37 AMONG 50 U.S. STATES IN AG EXPORTS
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### New Hampshire

1.4 mil POPULATION	3,949 FARMS	417,187 ACRES	Ranked #48 AMONG 50 U.S. STATES IN AG EXPORTS
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### Minnesota

5.8 mil POPULATION	65,531 FARMS	25.4 mil ACRES	Ranked #4 AMONG 50 U.S. STATES IN AG EXPORTS
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# U.S. Global Cuisine Trends and Opportunities For International Food Exporters

As the global food and beverage landscape grows increasingly diverse, American consumers are embracing a wide range of international cuisines with gusto. From Korean kimchi bowls to Filipino lumpia, this appetite for cultural exploration reflects not only a desire for bold flavors but also a preference for authenticity and connection via dining and drinking experiences. The growing demand for global cuisine within the U.S. offers significant opportunities to both F&B manufacturers and exporters.

Let's delve into a few of the emerging trends that have reshaped the preferences of U.S. consumers recently.

## TREND #1: Chaos Cooking

"Chaos cooking" is a culinary trend inspired by TikTok that involves combining unconventional flavors, ingredients, and/or cuisines to create entirely new dishes. This approach has become particularly popular with Gen Z and Gen Alpha demographics, according to the senior VP of culinary at Chartwells Higher Education, Chef Joe Labombarda, who oversees 280 higher education foodservice programs across the U.S. and tracks the dining habits of today's college students through large-scale surveys.

While chaos cooking parallels fusion cuisine in many ways, it's far more experimental in nature, which has paved the way for bold and innovative new dishes ranging from birria ramen bowls and kimchi omelets to bao buns filled with Nashville-style hot fried chicken.

## TREND #2: Bold Sensory Experiences

Intense flavors that can provide bold sensory experiences are also on the rise. The Szechuan peppercorn, which is known for its numbing heat, lavender-like aroma, and citrusy, spicy kick, is a prime example of this trend. The ingredient is commonly featured in savory dishes such as fusion-style dumplings and spicy stir-fried noodles, as well as chili oils, sauces, and even packaged foods like potato chips and instant ramen.

Tamarind, a leguminous tree known for its tangy and slightly sweet fruit, is another example. A key ingredient in Southeast Asian curries and soups like Thai Tom Yum Soup, tamarind has also been trending in the cocktail and confectionery realms as of late. The calamansi, an exceptionally tart citrus hybrid cultivated primarily in the Philippines, is increasingly being incorporated into broths, dishes, drinks, preserves, marinades, salad dressings, and other condiments as well. The fruit is often frozen whole and then used in place of ice cubes in beverages ranging from tea and water to cocktails and soft drinks.

Filipino cuisine in general has been captivating American palates lately, fueled by the growing popularity of foods like the ube, a purple yam that has become a highly sought-after ingredient featured in everything from mochi ice cream to mixed drinks. And thanks to its visually striking purple color, ube is also being used as a natural alternative to artificial food dyes, along with other ingredients known for their vibrant hues like saffron, matcha, and spirulina – a blue-green algae in powder form.

Additional examples of international ingredients that have the potential to offer bold sensory experiences include harissa, gochujang, black truffle, and fermented black garlic, which aligns with the next global flavor trend.

## TREND #3: Fermented Foods

America's appetite for fermented foods like kimchi and tempeh has also continued to grow. This trend has been driven in part by the explosive popularity of Korean cuisine in the last few years, with traditional dishes like bibimbap, bingsoo, and dak-galbi winning over U.S. consumers. The mass appeal of Korean fare is evident from the recent success of H Mart,

a South Korean chain of Asian markets that now has 96 stores worldwide, with most of these locations being in the U.S.

Though the fermentation process was originally developed to preserve foods and beverages, today it's used to add depth and intensify the flavor of various F&B products as well. Miso, a fermented paste made from soybeans and other ingredients, is increasingly being incorporated into dishes like Miso Bacon Udon Noodles and Miso Spiced Caramel Pork Skewers, as well as indulgent lattes and unexpected desserts, such as Matcha Miso Caramel Cookies.

The rising interest in fermented foods among U.S. consumers mirrors the increasing awareness of their health and wellness benefits, such as supporting a healthy and diverse gut microbiome, which reflects a fourth trend that is less about flavor and more about function.

## TREND #4: Functional Flavors

Health-conscious American consumers are often drawn to global cuisines that can offer functional benefits and nourish their bodies and minds while delighting their taste buds at the same time. Chicory root, for example, is being used as a coffee alternative that has a rich, roasted flavor but zero caffeine – and because it's packed with prebiotic fiber, it also enhances gut health and improves digestion, which are top of mind for today's consumers. In addition to coffee, chicory root is also being incorporated into fiber-rich and lower-sugar products, largely because it contains inulin, a plant-based prebiotic fiber that can reduce half the fat and a quarter of the sugar in better-for-you ice cream alternatives without dramatically impacting the taste or texture.



Lion's mane is another functional and flavorful ingredient that has been trending among U.S. consumers recently. Despite its shaggy appearance, the mushroom with a meat-like texture and umami flavor packs a long list of health perks, such as reducing inflammation and improving cognitive function. While lion's mane has typically been confined to the supplement aisle in the past, the Japan-based flavor company T. Hasegawa identified it as an ingredient to watch in its 2025 trends report and expects to see it showing up in snacks and coffee blends in the near future.

## A Fusion of Flavors and Opportunities

The rise of global cuisines in the U.S. reflects a broader shift toward culinary exploration, cultural connection, and health-conscious dining. For international food exporters, this trend represents a prime opportunity to introduce authentic flavors to a receptive and growing market.

Whether it's the tang of Vietnamese tamarind soup, the comforting warmth of Korean bibimbap, or the vibrant sweetness of Filipino ube desserts, international flavors have clearly found a home in the hearts and kitchens of American consumers, paving the way for both innovation and opportunity.

# news briefs

**As consumers yearn for warmer spring weather, floral flavors are growing in popularity, particularly among Gen Z and younger consumers,** according to recent data. FI spoke with an industry expert about these nascent trends and their deeper implications.

**62% of consumers said hormone-free and antibiotic-free labels influence their dairy purchases** in a recent study by the National Frozen & Refrigerated Foods Association. Health benefits like protein and probiotics were also found to motivate dairy purchases.

**With gut health trends inspiring billions of TikTok views, the demand is growing for functional foods that support digestion.** F&B brands are capitalizing on the increased interest by launching products formulated with probiotics and prebiotics.



**Tyson Foods raised its annual sales forecast as robust demand for its beef and chicken products helped it beat Q1 estimates.** The company expects its FY25 sales to fall in the flat to +1% range, compared to the prior forecast of flat to -1%, reported Reuters.

**The future of alt-meat could be led by adventurous flexitarians – omnivores eager to explore alternatives.** Minimally processed plant-based options will be key, said Indy Kaur, leader of the Plant Futures Collective.

**Aji Amarillo, McCormick's flavor of the year, is a vibrant pepper known for its fruity, tropical notes and moderate heat.** And it's poised to make waves across food and beverage menus worldwide.

**Private label continues to maintain its dominance within the CPG sector, growing \$9 billion YoY in 2024.** As a result, opportunities for innovation abound.

**Although 68% of global consumers desire to eat more plant-based foods, only 20% do so regularly, down from 23% in 2023.** 42% of respondents cited price as a major hurdle, while 35% said they are turned off by the flavor of plant-based options in a survey by EAT and GlobeScan.



**The 49th annual Winter Fancy Food Show offered a look at the trends and conversations poised to guide the specialty food industry in 2025.** One key takeaway: Consumers crave authenticity.

**Global milk-production costs are set to climb over the next decade,** according to Rabobank. The Netherlands-based financial group pointed to regulatory pressure, costs associated with energy transition, and higher interest rates as the causes, reported Just Food.

**The functional ingredients market is projected to grow \$53.14 billion by 2028 at a CAGR of 7.38%,** according to Technavio. Probiotics, along with foods & beverages rich in omega-3 fatty acids, are resonating with health-conscious consumers.

**PepsiCo forecast annual profit below expectations due to weakened U.S. demand for its snacks and sodas.** The company promised to invest heavily in overhauling existing products and introducing new globally inspired items, reported Reuters.

## U.S. FOODLINK

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## A+ Berry, Inc.

Lincoln, Nebraska

A+ Berry is a Midwest-based food innovation company dedicated to unlocking the power of Aronia berries – one of the most antioxidant-rich superfruits grown in the U.S. Our mission is to create delicious, health-focused products that make wellness both easy and enjoyable. Our lineup includes AroJuice, a 100% cold-pressed, clean-label beverage with no added sugar or preservatives, and AroPowder, a versatile superfruit powder for smoothies, yogurts, and baking. AroBoost is crafted for high-performance nutrition and recovery, while AroWine offers a sophisticated non-alcoholic wine alternative, made from Aronia berries for a bold, rich taste without the alcohol. Rooted in scientific research and sustainable farming, A+ Berry partners with local Midwest growers to bring premium, natural products to market. Now available in over 100 Hy-Vee stores and premium retailers, we're making it easier than ever to fuel your day with the power of Aronia berries! Sip the Midwest. Fuel Your Wellness. <https://aplusberry.com>



## The Fremont Company

Fremont, Ohio

Fremont is North America's leading private brand ketchup manufacturer supplying premium American ketchup to leading U.S. and international retailers worldwide.

All Fremont ketchup is natural with no artificial flavors, colors, starches, gums, or preservatives. Ketchup formulations include premium U.S. Heinz Style NBE, sweeter export formulation, Organic, non-GMO, spicy and healthier ketchup options. Fremont offers ketchup in a wide variety of clear PET plastic bottles from 425 g to 1.81 kg. Fremont ketchup and BBQ sauces can be found in over 85 countries globally.

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## Dutch Waffle Company LLC

Plymouth, Indiana

Five years ago, we left the Netherlands with a mission: to bring fresh, authentic stroopwafels to the U.S. Instead of the chewy ones, due to overseas shipping, we bake our stroopwafels daily, ensuring every bite is crisp on the outside with a soft caramel on the inside. At Dutch Waffle Company, we offer classic, gluten-free, and vegan options, all made with the same love and tradition passed down for generations.

We're proud of our unique twist on the stroopwafel: a no-bake pie crust made from the same waffles – minus the caramel – available in both classic and gluten-free options. And for the ultimate experience, we serve the finest stroopwafel-flavored coffee, perfectly complementing our freshly baked treats. No long shipping processes, just authentic Dutch goodness made daily, right here in North America. Our goal is simple: to deliver the best stroopwafels in the world, straight from our family to yours.



## Egglife Foods, Inc

Wolcott, Indiana

Egglife is reimagining the future of food by replacing flour with the eggs. Egglife® egg white wraps are protein-packed, low-carb tortilla style wraps, free of sugar, gluten and grains. Transform your favorite foods with the perfect wrap – from sandwiches to pizzas, to tacos and enchiladas, peanut butter and jelly and more! egglife wraps are available in three delicious flavors – original, roasted garlic & herb, and garden salsa – and can be found chillin' in the fridge throughout retailers in Canada. More information is available at [egglifefoods.com](http://egglifefoods.com).



## Simply Salsa / E. Formella & Sons Inc.

Oak Forest, Illinois

The Heart of Our Family, in Every Jar! At Simply Salsa, we're more than just a salsa brand – we're a family on a mission to share our love for fresh, flavorful food. What started as a homemade recipe has grown into a company that brings the heart of our family kitchen to homes everywhere.

Simply has been a family-owned business since its creation in 2011. It was a dream of the owners at the time to bring a homemade salsa recipe to market. Simply Salsa was introduced to the public and had instant success gaining a local following at grocery stores and farmers market. Since bringing these recipes to market our salsa has earned a reputation for its premium, handcrafted salsa offerings that captivate taste buds with vibrant flavors and the finest, freshest ingredients.

Simply Salsa is making a strong push to go green in recent years by partnering with E. Formella & Sons to be the manufacturer of our salsa. With this partnership our salsa will be manufactured in a SQF certified food facility with over 100 years of knowledge and experience. E. Formella & Sons facility recently installed solar panels onto their facility to help create a healthy environment and wellbeing for future generations. E. Formella & Sons reduction is their carbon footprint aligns with Simply Salsas mission to prioritize continued improvement throughout the company from top to bottom.



## Elmhurst Milked LLC

Elma, New York

Superior Plant-Based Nutrition. THE HYDRORELEASE METHOD™

Our process is simpler and better from start to finish. First, a unique HydroRelease™ method allows us to use more of the source grain, nut, or seed. This means superior nutrition and flavor with fewer ingredients. We then package our products in shelf-stable, recyclable cartons. Many have a variety of uses, ranging from cooking to coffee; soups to sauces.



## Giovanni's Appetizing Food Products Inc.

Richmond, Michigan

Giovanni's has been American-family-owned and devoted to producing quality food for more than 83 years. Located in Southeast Michigan, we are the only U.S. packer of food in tubes. Our USDA Organic Tomato Paste is the perfect way to add rich, savory tomato flavor to your favorite dishes. Made only from ripe, California-grown organic tomatoes that are carefully selected and processed, our tomato paste is a versatile ingredient that can be used in a variety of recipes, from classic Italian dishes to hearty stews and soups. Packaged in convenient tubes, our tomato paste is easy to use and store, with no waste or mess. Plus, it's certified organic by the USDA, ensuring that it's free from harmful chemicals and additives. All Giovanni's products are processed in the U.S. and are shelf stable for 730 days.

USDA Organic | Gluten free | American made | Recyclable tube [gioapp.com](http://gioapp.com)



## Hoard's Dairyman Farm Creamery

Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin

W.D. Hoard, pioneering publisher and former Governor of Wisconsin, established his dairy farm in 1899, and today, descendants of Hoard's original herd of Guernsey cows continue to call the Hoard's Dairyman Farm their home.

Great cheese comes from great milk, and great milk comes from Guernsey cows that are fed well, receive outstanding care, and live in a stress-free environment. Hoard's Dairyman Farm uses leading technology and animal husbandry techniques to produce milk and cheese from the oldest continuously registered Guernsey herd in North America and possibly the world.

Guernsey milk is naturally higher in butter fat, this property is maintained in the cheese, but more importantly, the high butterfat content of the milk creates a rich and creamy flavor and gives the cheeses a luxurious, silky texture.



## Hudson Exports Inc.

Edison, New Jersey

Hudson Exports is a New Jersey-based consolidator and international distributor of American Grocery. We work with retailers in 18+ countries across the globe to help our partners satisfy their U.S.-made FMCG requirements.

PRODUCTS: Kellogg's, Starbucks, Ocean Spray, Lays Stax, Arizona, Karmalize, Munk Pack, Lundberg, Walden Farms, Herr's, Brad's.



## J.R. Kelly Company

Collinsville, Illinois

J.R. Kelly Company is the leading shipper of horseradish root in the United States. Not only do we supply horseradish roots domestically but internationally as well, shipping tons of horseradish roots to all corners of the globe.

J.R. Kelly Company offers different grades of horseradish to suit all needs in the world of horseradish. Whether you're looking for bulk horseradish root for large processing and food manufacturers or fresh horseradish root for produce markets, J.R. Kelly has you covered.

As a leader in the horseradish industry, J.R. Kelly is consistently searching for new markets to expand its global reach. Our larger grower network and PrimuGFS certification combine to make J.R. Kelly Company the most dependable supplier in the horseradish market! Visit [www.jrkelly.com](http://www.jrkelly.com) for more information.



## Maia Yogurt

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## Market Square Popcorn Company

Indianapolis, Indiana

America's favorite snacking tradition – POPCORN! Taken to a whole other level by Market Square Popcorn, specializing in crafting locally made, gourmet popcorn that delights individual customers, corporate clients, and event organizers alike. Founded in the "Crossroads of America," we proudly source Indiana's finest whole grain corn to create a variety of irresistible flavors that elevate America's favorite snack. From Sweet Heat to Butter Crunch Caramel, Aged Sharp Cheddar, Market Square Mix, and the classic Movie Theater Butter, every kernel is a testament to our passion for quality and creativity.

Our services go above and beyond, tailored to customer and business needs. By offering custom orders for special events, corporate gifting, private-label packaging, and fundraising solutions, Market Square Popcorn has you covered.

Grab a taste of Indiana and discover why we're more than just popcorn at

<https://marketsquarepopcorn.com>.

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## Pureluxe Inc.

*Pittsburg, Kansas*

PURELUXE pet foods are crafted for pets living in modern environments, using holistic ingredients, fresh meats, superfoods, and advanced micro-nutrition to support immune health and digestion. With a commitment to transparency, PURELUXE empowers pet parents to confidently understand the high-quality nutrition they provide to their furry companions. [www.pureluxepetfood.com](http://www.pureluxepetfood.com)



## Red Jacket Orchards

*Geneva, New York*

Pure, fresh, and delicious! Red Jacket Orchards has freshly pressed all-natural, 100% fruit juices in New York's Finger Lakes region for over 60 years. Cold-pressed and unfiltered, these non-alcoholic beverages are packed with nutrition as nature intended and always delicious. With 150% of daily vitamin C and micronutrients like potassium, fiber, and anthocyanins they support better brain function. Natural sugars ensure steady energy, prevent crashes, and support brain function when you need it most. They also make amazing cocktails and mocktails. Visit [www.redjacketorchards.com](http://www.redjacketorchards.com) for a full listing of our refrigerated beverage lines.



## Ocean C Star LLC

*New Bedford, Massachusetts*

Ocean C Star, LLC was established in 2010 and is located in New Bedford, Massachusetts. We are a registered enterprise with the FDA and USDC QMP and are the only conch processing plant in Massachusetts. We work closely with local fishermen to provide high quality, same day processed conch meat to our customers. Conch is a well known delicacy in Cantonese cuisine, boasting a rich, sweet flavor in many dishes such as soups and stir fries. Frozen conch meat is the flagship product of our company and we are the number one choice in Hong Kong and Macau.



## Spritzal Cookie Company, LLC

*Rockland, Massachusetts*

**Spritzal Cookie Company: Premium Clean-Label Shortbread Cookies** Spritzal Cookie Company is a WBENC-certified, women-owned brand dedicated to crafting clean-label, all-natural shortbread cookies inspired by a cherished family recipe. Based in the U.S., we bring a modern twist to traditional shortbread, offering innovative flavors like Blueberry Pie, Key Lime, Birthday Cake, and Almond Chocolatey Chip.

Our cookies are made with simple, high-quality ingredients, completely seed oil-free, dye-free, and artificial-anything-free, ensuring a pure, home-baked taste. Each cookie is buttery, light, and melt-in-your-mouth delicious, making them perfect for specialty food retailers, gift shops, and international markets looking for premium U.S. snacks.

With growing demand and placement in major retailers like Kroger, Fresh Thyme, and Walmart Marketplace, Spritzal is expanding its global reach. We welcome international buyers seeking wholesome, shelf-stable, and high-quality cookies that resonate with modern consumers. For inquiries, visit [www.spritzal.com](http://www.spritzal.com) or email [info@spritzal.com](mailto:info@spritzal.com)



## Yes Honey

*Norwood, Missouri*

**Yes Honey: Sweet Drinks, Naturally Better** Yes Honey is transforming the beverage industry with honey-sweetened sodas that are delicious, health-conscious, and globally appealing. Free from corn syrup, sugar, stevia, artificial dyes, flavors, and gluten, our sodas feature vegan-friendly natural ingredients, enhanced with ashwagandha, L-theanine, and B-vitamins. We offer both naturally caffeinated options and caffeine-free flavors, providing choices for every preference.

Crafted in the USA, our drinks cater to health-focused consumers and those with dietary restrictions. By replacing traditional sweeteners with sustainably sourced honey, we deliver a unique alternative that's as kind to the planet as it is to your taste buds.

With rapidly growing U.S. retail partnerships and recognition in diverse markets, Yes Honey is ready to share our naturally sweet innovation with the world. Buyers seeking products that are better for consumers and the environment will find a perfect match in Yes Honey. <https://www.yeshoneybrand.com>

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