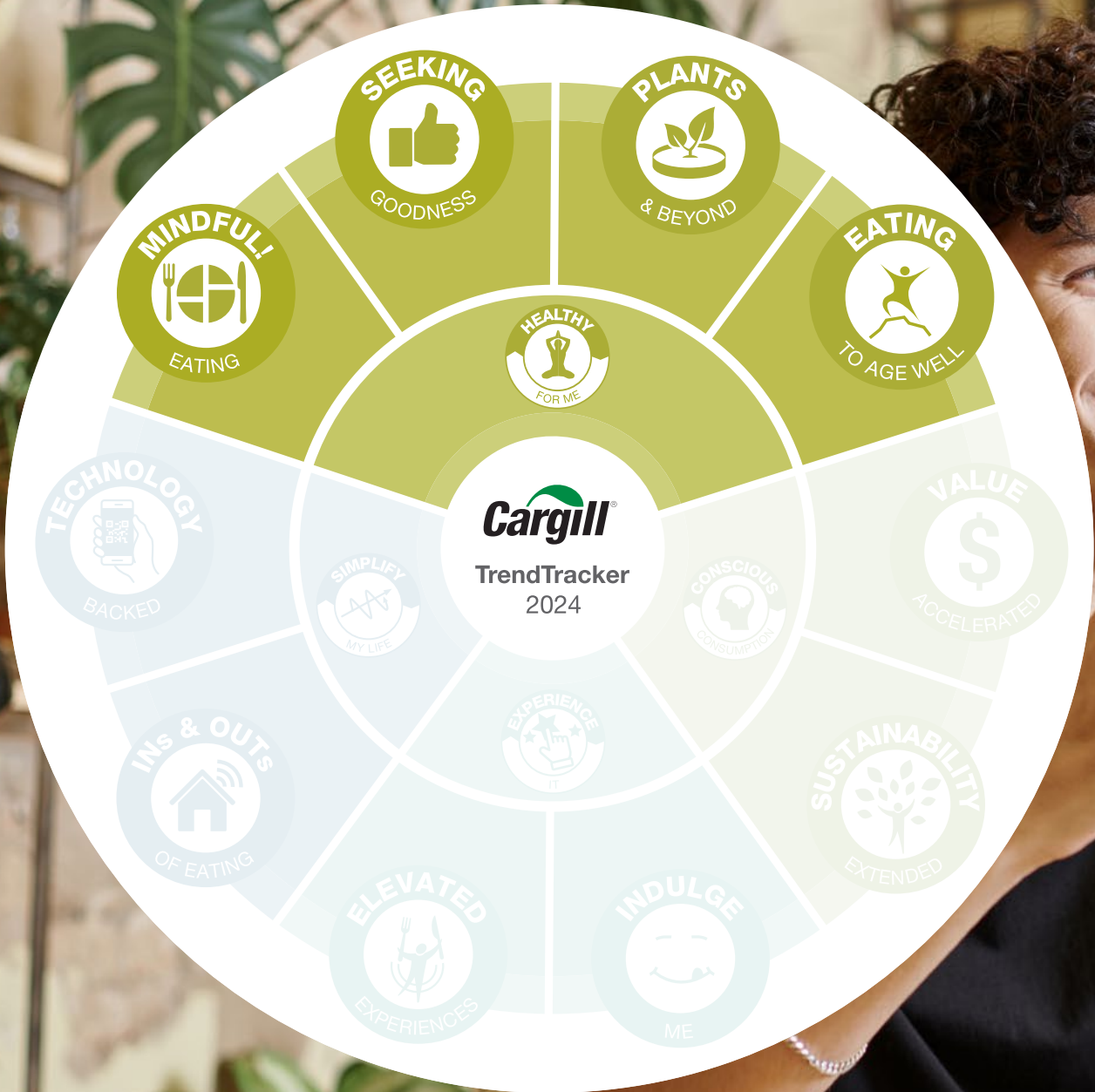


Trend-Tracker 2024

Inside the
“Healthy for me”
macro trend





Trend #1: MINDFUL! eating

This trend is about consumer scrutiny and avoidance. The desire to maintain good health throughout their life is driving consumers to be thoughtful and deliberate in terms of food and beverage choices. They remain aspirational when it comes to the avoidance of processed food and certain ingredients.

While many consumers aspire to avoid processed, an increased tolerance for processed food & beverages is a lingering COVID impact that has been exacerbated by inflationary pressures. Within the processed food space, consumers use claims and ingredients to help them navigate toward minimally processed, with commonly used clues being organic, natural, non-GMO, and not artificial.

Consumers use ingredients as clues to help them navigate toward minimally processed and front of pack claims provide shortcuts to ingredient avoidance.

"The positive force behind the 'MINDFUL! Eating' trend is that a growing number of mainstream consumers are placing more value in healthier products. However, responding to this trend is no simple task, as people's views on what constitutes good-for-you, natural, and processed keep on evolving," says Suzane Leser, Nutrition Innovation Lead, Specialized Nutrition. "Still, with consumers becoming more discerning, their search for new and improved products grows. This is where Cargill's excellence in R&D and communications becomes ever more important. Thriving in this trend relies on unlocking the health appeal of Cargill's vast nutritional portfolio," she adds.

Suzane Leser,
Nutrition Innovation Lead,
Specialized Nutrition





Trend #2: SEEKING goodness

While MINDFUL! eating is largely about avoidance, this trend is about consumers actively seeking certain food, beverages, and ingredients in support of their health goals.

It features a lot of emphasis on ingredients, as today's consumers are more informed and paying greater attention to what a food product consists of. They are seeking out beneficial ingredients in food & beverage, but they may also turn to supplements to ensure they are meeting their Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA) for certain macro and micronutrients. Among this trend, functional beverages are booming, at least partially because consumers consider them to be a convenient way to enhance their diet.

"Consumers are rightfully asking their food to be nutritious, healthy and affordable. Growing scientific insights into what defines healthy and nutritious – even at individual level – as well as continuous innovation in how we produce it in affordable

ways keeps opening up opportunities for the food industry to co-create improved offerings," says Geert Maesmans, VP R&D Health and Nutrition. *"Biodiversity is showing us the way, while novel technologies such as precision fermentation, the '-omics,' and AI, will help us to unlock that potential and offer it to our customers in a sustainable way. Cargill's experience in macro-ingredients (proteins, lipids, carbohydrates) and our growing portfolio of micro-ingredients (pre-, pro-, postbiotics, natural high intensity sweeteners, etc.) provide customers with choices for healthy & tasty diet formulation,"* he adds.

Geert Maesmans,
VP R&D Health
and Nutrition





Trend #3: PLANTS & beyond

Consumer interest in “plant-based” is driven largely by mainstream consumers leaning into plants to help them maintain good health. While “plant-based” in itself may be experiencing a plateau in Europe, the other key pillars of alt protein cultivated, precision and biomass fermentation are breaking new ground. Here, advances in food science and technology have led to plant-based products which look, cook, smell and taste just like the real deal.

The rise of applied offerings is making the notion of “plant-based” more attractive. Adapting well-known dishes and formats offers familiarity and clarity to consumers who are keen to embrace plant-based products. Mimicking taste and texture in meat alternatives is key here, whereby you can create meat-free multisensory mouthfuls. But there’s a broader evolution taking place. Convenient formats are the next step in the evolution of plant-based offerings, as are bringing plant-based into a growing number of categories, with claims. For example, Cargill’s Food Solutions recently launched a campaign to demonstrate how we are enabling you to [score sensory success in plant-based sweets](#) through the use of ingredients such as pectin, carrageenan and

starch, as well as INFUSE by Cargill™ functional systems.

“No longer confined to vegetarians or vegans, plant-based products are gaining appeal among a broader consumer audience,” says Sandy De Houwer, Marketing Director Meat & Dairy Alternatives. *“As consumer demand for plant-based food and beverages remains a driving force in the marketplace, it remains a key focus for Cargill’s innovation efforts too,”* she adds. Sandy notes huge opportunities for development in the alternative protein and dairy space to create delightful and value-conscious alternatives. Both quality and affordability will need to be more favorable than they are today if we want to convince the growing group of flexitarians to fully embrace plant-based products, however.

Vanessa Barey, Senior Food Technologist – EMEA PPD Cocoa & Chocolate notes that “plant-based” is not just about mimicking the attributes of animal products with plants or science but to propose an indulgent sensorial experience which is furthermore plant-based. *“For that reason, Cargill has developed a range of plant-based solutions for sensorially outstanding milk chocolate alternatives: [ExtraVeganZa](#),”* Vanessa notes.

Sandy De Houwer,
Marketing Director Meat &
Dairy Alternatives



“At Indulgence Europe, we observe a strong appeal for clean and ethical solutions that are not only good for health but also more sustainable and transparent. Our acclaimed sunflower solution helps our plant-based customers go the extra mile with natural and healthy attributes combined with a lower environmental impact,” she adds.



Trend #4: EATING to age well

This last trend under the “HEALTHY for me” banner is about empowered consumers increasingly recognizing a mindful approach to consumption can help them maintain good health as they age. It includes younger consumers being proactive, and opting not to wait until they age to address holistic health.

Healthy aging is a priority for consumers across all generations. In fact, 55% of consumers in Europe say healthy aging is extremely important & very important. Today’s focus is on preventing health issues before they arise. At the same time, more than 1 in 4 consumers in Europe claim to be “proactive” in preventing health issues, with weight management, heart health and bone & joint health being the major concerns related to their physical health (Innova Health & Nutrition Survey, 2023 (Europe: average of France, Germany, Spain & UK)).

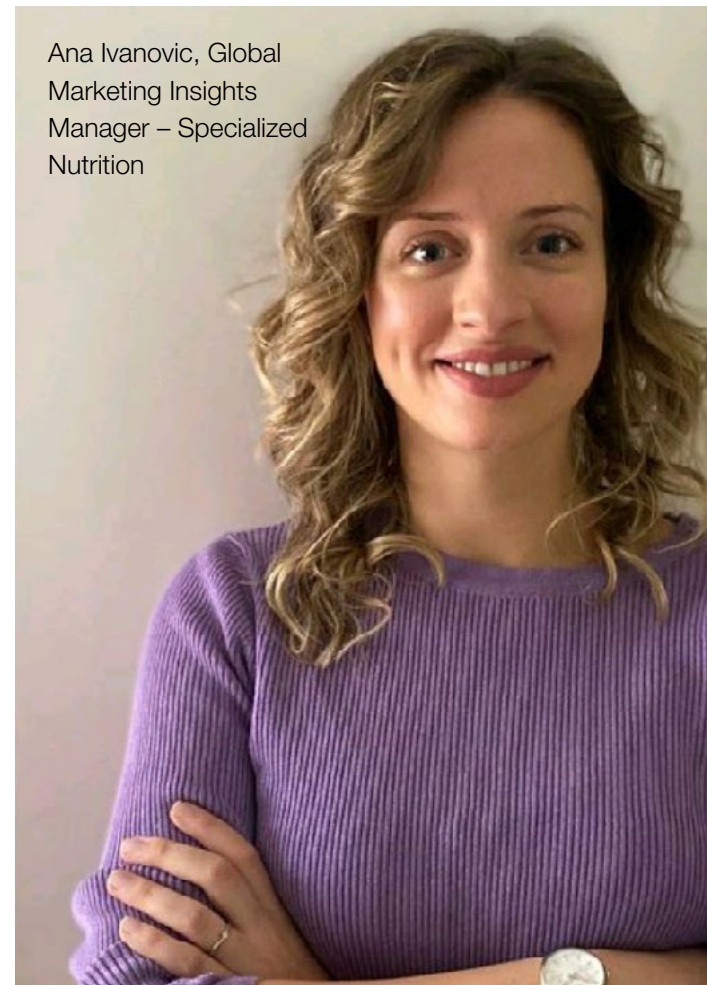
Widely used tools include mobile applications that track food intake, nutrient levels and health data, as well as fitness trackers and smartwatches that monitor physical activity, sleep and lifestyle factors. Additionally, emerging fields such as microbiome analysis, epigenetics and biohacking have

the potential to revolutionize personalized nutrition and our approach to diet and health.

“Post-pandemic, the importance of nutrition in promoting physical, cognitive, and overall well-being has become even more significant,” says Ana Ivanovic, Global Marketing Insights Manager – Specialized Nutrition. *“We are witnessing a rising affluent middle class who can afford food and supplements personalized for their specific health needs. Life expectancy is increasing, and people want to live longer, active lifestyles in better health, with a focus on ‘adding years to life and life to years.’ Finally, health-conscious consumers are increasingly looking for sustainable, plant-based options, allowing them to align their proactive approach to health with environmental value,”* she adds.

Ana notes that one recent example of how Cargill Specialized Nutrition is tapping into these trends is the launch of algae-based DHA. *“This is an alternative and potent source of Omega 3, reducing the impact on marine life by not contributing to the overfishing of the oceans. These fatty acids are pivotal for optimal brain and visual development in infants and support cognition and cardiovascular health in*

Ana Ivanovic, Global
Marketing Insights
Manager – Specialized
Nutrition



adults,” she notes. More details on our Specialized Nutrition expertise in “nourishing across life stages” can be found [here!](#)