

PRESS RELEASE:

A new dawn for meat

Meat is at the start of a period of reinvention that will secure its permanent place on the plate, and as a snack, says Julian Mellentin, a consultant to the food and beverage industry and author of the trends analysis, *10 Key Trends in Food, Nutrition and Health 2020*.

Under vocal attack in recent years, it seemed as if the meat category was set for long-term decline. So it was a surprise to Mellentin that meat emerged as a strong trend among consumers.

“In an era where plant-based is getting all the attention, and meat is under attack, creative meat producers are taking steps to reinvent their category, for example with convenience,” he says. “They’re moving away from selling big lumps of meat that people have to take home and prepare, to providing easy-to-use products such as meat snacks, sales of which are growing steadily in many countries.”

The global meat snacks market was valued at around \$7 billion in 2019 and meat industry sources project annual growth of 7%-8% for the next five years. In the US, sales of meat snacks grew 6.7% in 2019 to \$4.5 billion (IRI). Countries like India, China, Brazil and Turkey are all fast-developing markets for meat snacks.

And Nielsen data shows that meat brands that communicate about provenance, sustainability and animal welfare are growing fast and earning premium prices. US sales of meat with health or environmental claims are growing rapidly, led by “organic” up 13.1% and “grass-fed” up 12.2%.

“It’s worth remembering that although meat substitutes are getting lots of media attention, they’re a tiny niche,” says Mellentin. “Sales of organic meat by itself are bigger than those of meat substitutes.”

The meat category has the opportunity to “reimagine” itself, turning criticism on health and environmental grounds on its head and creating a new generation of convenient, sustainable, quality products.

It's a transformation that will be welcomed by consumers. In the US and in the EU, meat sales have increased in recent years. Americans spent \$850 million more on beef alone in 2018-2019 than they did the previous year, and \$350 million more on meat snacks (IRI). Their additional spending on meat substitutes, by contrast, was just \$100 million.

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That's because, says Mellentin, people like the taste of meat and perceive it as a high-quality protein. The most important consumer growth trends, such as protein, lower-carb and the rebirth of fat are all driving consumers to reconsider meat.

Fueling meat's renaissance is growing push-back against negative messages about the environment and health. "Recently-published scientific studies that question the negatives around meat and health are welcome news to consumers, who love to hear that something they enjoy is also good for them – as happened with red wine and chocolate," Mellentin says.

Creative meat companies are improving their planetary health profile by taking steps to, for example, improve their sequestration of greenhouse gases, something that will become more common and alleviate the common criticism often made against cattle and sheep.

The 10 Key Trends identified in the report are:

- 1. Digestive Wellness**
- 2. Good Carbs, Bad Carbs**
- 3. Plant-based**
- 4. Protein**
- 5. Sugar - Reinventing Sweetness**
- 6. Rebirth of Fat**
- 7. Meat Reimagined**
- 8. Provenance and Authenticity**
- 9. Energy 2.0**
- 10. Mood**

And there are four "Mega Trends" that are a must-do for all companies in all categories:

- 1. Naturally Functional**
- 2. Fragmentation**
- 3. Snackification**
- 4. Sustainability**

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. The report “10 Key Trends in Food, Nutrition and Health 2020” is available at www.new-nutrition.com
2. Editors can request comment or arrange an interview by contacting:
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