

Consumer trends reshaping grocery assortments

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By Louisa Hallett - 08/20/2019



Healthy fats such as whole milk are going “mainstream.”

Consumer health and wellness trends are going to determine what grocers need to stock in their stores, and dairy may not be one of them.

According to a recent study conducted by the Bellevue, Wash.-based Hartman Group, a consumer insights company, healthy fats such as whole milk are going “mainstream,” as the company’s [Health + Wellness 2019 report](#) reveals that 40% of consumers are adding/increasing healthy fats to their diet, and 21% say they’re adding/increasing full-fat dairy to their diet. This suggests that full-fat dairy has trickled down to the Outer Mid-level, who’ve heard that fats can actually be good for you. It’s still a trend, but if the Outer Mid-level is doing it, that means it’s well adopted among those who are inclined. Of course, keto and paleo diets are now mainstream, and fats are essential to those.

However, despite the reported increase of whole milk dairy consumption, there is an even bigger market for meat alternatives, thanks to the spike of the veganism trend. There is a sense among many consumers that no animal products are healthy, according to the report. And because vegetables are, conversely, the healthiest thing, veganism must be the healthiest diet. From a nutritional standpoint, this isn’t true, of course, but that’s another matter. In practice, this makes engaged and younger consumers much more open to meat/dairy alternatives than older consumers. It also means they experiment at higher rates with vegetarianism and veganism.

Looking to the future, this might mean a long-term decline in meat/dairy consumption as more discover

the range of possibilities beyond meat — or maybe not. But the aspiration is there for personal health, and it is shored up by a range of emotional and ethical pillars (animal welfare, sustainability, social justice) that give it lasting power.

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