

Consumers ready to move past generic ingredient callouts

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Many consumers have read up on diets and know what ingredients they want to seek and avoid. This can make them wary of the bold claims on packages — especially when it comes to “all natural.” Only 15% of Americans trust this claim, 18% never trust it, and 67% sometimes trust it, according to Nielsen’s 2017 sustainability survey.

“This is something we’ve found this last quarter that’s really fascinating,” said Melissa Abbott, vice-president, retainer services, The Hartman Group. “The consumer base is becoming more suspicious of callouts. They see a callout and think, ‘They’re trying to sell me something.’”

With highlighted claims, consumers are looking for more detailed information about the natural ingredient itself, Ms. Abbott noted. Instead of plant-based protein, they want to see whole plant-based protein. Instead of good fats, they want to see good fats from grass-fed butter or fats from avocado oil.

“(There’s) a growing desire among consumers to move past general claims of “all natural” to more specifically understand the kind of food they’re buying,” LEK Consulting management stated in its report “Consumer Health Claims 3.0: The Next Generation of Mindful Food Consumption.” The study also said callouts like antibiotic-free, no added chemicals and cage-free should do well on product packaging.

However, consumer skepticism doesn’t mean all callouts should be changed. For example, highlighting a specific diet using keto- or paleo-friendly is beneficial to purchasers, especially those who are on the prowl for products that fall into a specific diet.

Consumers that aren’t as familiar with health and wellness need a little more coaching.

“There are consumers who don’t have the time for health research but are on a journey to be better,” Ms. Abbott explained. “They want to see they’re made with whole food ingredients but are really clean, too.”

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