



Trend Predictions, 2009

as forecasted by SPINS' Content Development team

Food & Beverage

Stevia Sweeteners

Stevia based natural sweeteners will offer new varieties of "natural" diet line extensions of iconic Conventional brands. There will be comparable product extension launches from traditional Natural Manufacturers.

Heirloom Varieties

Companies are beginning to use heirloom types of tomatoes in pasta sauces and hyping distinct flavor profiles for heirloom animal breeds.

Examples include Dave's Gourmet heirloom pasta sauces, Earthbound Farms heirloom blend salads, and Wholesome Harvest Berkshire pork.



Ethnic Heat and Eat Meals

As a cheaper alternative to take out or restaurants in rough economic times, natural shoppers will be looking to the frozen section for quality and good tasting ethnic dinners.

Examples include Amy's frozen dinners and Kashi's frozen dinners.

Beyond Organic

With more scrutiny being placed on companies' supply chain management and sustainable practices, beyond organic label claims should continue to influence buying decisions in the natural sector.

Look for commercials from the bigger players in this sector, as well as labels containing words like sustainable, biodynamic, and ethically crafted.

Eco-Labeling

Similar to the trend above, eco-labeling & certification (such as Marine Stewardship Council, Rainforest Alliance, and Green-E) will be a large player in the conventional sector as companies try to join the green trend.

Examples include Sun Chips using the Green-E certification and Caribou Coffees using Rainforest Alliance certification.

Gluten Free Expansion

As gluten intolerance becomes more recognizable and publicized, consumers of gluten free products will be looking for other items, in addition to breads and pastas, carrying the gluten free claim.

Examples include baking mixes, frozen foods, and shelf stable entrees.



Agave Sweetener

The low glycemic sweetener will continue to get attention as a healthier alternative to refined sugar in beverages and prepackaged foods.

Exotics

Look for exotic grains, fruits, and vegetables to make an impact in the natural and gourmet sectors as consumers look for healthy variety in their diet.

Examples include Yuca, a type of yam eaten as a staple in Africa and Peru, and baobab fruit, a fibrous African fruit that could be a shining new ingredient for smoothies and bars.

Bulk Buying

With the recent economic downturn, natural consumers will be looking to curb their spending by purchasing in bulk, which may cause a spike in natural sales at retailers such as Costco that carry large package sizes as well as bulk bin sales.

Clean Ingredients

In the conventional grocery sector, brands are making a push to rid their products of MSG and preservatives, as a way to gain a greater share of the market and appeal to natural and organic consumers.

An example being a recent Progresso soup commercial highlighting the absence of MSG and SoBe Lifewater containing PureVia and Erythritol as sweeteners.

Body Care

Certifications

As a number of natural companies were spotlighted in the news for having carcinogenic compounds in their products, look for certified natural, fair trade and organic seals to help ease consumer uneasiness.

Examples include NPA certification and the USDA organic seal.

Innovative, High End, Natural skin care

As consumers become more cost conscious, expensive trips to the spa will start to be replaced with high quality natural products that bring the spa treatments home. Clinics that offer non-surgical treatments like botox, restalin and juevaderm may see a decline in their business in the next year. Natural body care companies can scoop up this market with new innovative anti-aging products and ingredients backed by science.

Vitamins & Supplements

Relax

In response to the hectic and stressful lifestyles of consumers, look for relaxation claims on a number of products as well as broader interest in sleep and dream enhancers.

Examples include Dream Boost, Holy Basil, and New Chapter's Stress Take Care

Preventatives

As a way of avoiding expensive trips to the doctor, consumers will turn products such as Emergen-C and Airborne to supplement their regular medical care.

Appetite Curbing Supplements

The weight loss supplement category will continue to move away from stimulants, and move towards appetite suppressants, especially in the natural sector.

Examples include cha de bugre and baobab fruit.

General Merchandise

Eco Packaging

Look for companies to reduce packaging by concentrating products and to implement biodegradable, environmentally friendly packaging, such as recycled and corn derived plastics, to complete their brand image.

Recycled

In addition to recycled paper products, look for an increase in kitchen items and everyday household items made of recycled materials as well