

NewNutrition Business

PRESS RELEASE: Simple, naturally healthy ingredients the biggest winners on social media

Social media activity around avocado, almonds and quinoa far outstrips that of activated charcoal, collagen or pea protein – suggesting that consumers are more interested in foods that are easy to understand and naturally healthy, a social media analysis by New Nutrition Business reveals.

New Nutrition Business analysed social media mentions of 20 selected health food ingredients on Instagram – the most popular social media platform for food-related subjects – between 2017 and 2018. The ingredients were ranked according to popularity, from those well-established and well-known to consumers to growing and emerging ingredients:

- Topping the list, with more than 100,000 mentions per month each, were avocado, almonds, blueberries, quinoa, kale, matcha and chia.
- Instagram mentions for these six were up between 14% and 75% over the previous year.
- One of the fastest-growing health ingredients on social media is collagen (a skincare ingredient used in beverages), which had 110% more mentions on Instagram in 2018 than 2017.
- At the bottom, among those least-mentioned on Instagram, were birch water, pea protein and charcoal.
- The 20 ingredients selected gained a total of over 850,000 mentions on Instagram in one month alone (July 2018).

The internet has become the primary and most-trusted source of nutrition advice for most consumers – with 34% relying more on blogs and online platforms than dietitians or nutritionists. Analysis of social media provides important insights into consumer awareness of health ingredients.

“Knowing how health ingredients are discussed on the internet and in social media is important for everyone, from product developers trying to select new ingredients to ingredient suppliers trying to figure out commercialisation strategy,” said Julian Mellentin, director of New Nutrition Business.

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For example, despite all the hype around activated charcoal, and hordes of Instagram images of “black foods” made with charcoal, it has only 1% of the mentions of avocado or blueberry or almond, according to the report, *20 Key Health Ingredients: What Consumers Say on Social Media*. Good looks matter, but a health ingredient needs many other supporting factors to become a success on social media – and activated charcoal still has a long way to go.

“When it comes to increasing consumer awareness about health foods, it helps if your ingredient is uncomplicated and is perceived to be naturally healthy,” said Mellentin. “Even health ingredients that were once unfamiliar to most people – such as chia and quinoa – can be embraced quickly if they follow this formula.”

The analysis also looked at how the ingredients were discussed in global online media platforms, blogs, forums, as well as social media channels, including most-favoured images posted by consumers, most-used hashtags and most popular searches.

NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. Editors can arrange an interview with Julian Mellentin, by contacting Marta Matvijev at marta@new-nutrition.com.
2. Julian Mellentin is one of the world’s few international specialists in the business of food, nutrition and health. He is director of New Nutrition Business, a research and consultancy company which provides case studies and analysis of success and failure in the global nutrition business and is used by more than 1,700 corporate subscribers in 42 countries. It has offices in the United States, Europe, and New Zealand and affiliates in Japan and South Korea.
3. *20 Key Health Ingredients: What Consumers Say on Social Media* is available to buy at www.new-nutrition.com