

Delivering taste and texture in food and beverages



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Synopsis

Taste is the number one purchase driver of foods and beverages,¹ but it must fit with consumers' other demands, including health, value for money, product quality, shelf life and attractive appearance. Meanwhile, taste overlaps strongly with texture, as mouthfeel and the way foods are broken down in the mouth can exert an enormous influence over how taste is perceived.²

This report gives an overview of which flavours are on the rise in both foods and beverages, as well as how companies are tackling taste and textural challenges in products with reduced salt, sugar and saturated fat.

1. <https://foodinsight.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/IFIC-Foundation-2019-Food-and-Health-Report-FINAL.pdf>

2. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12078-011-9086-4>

Key takeaways

- Natural flavours have become increasingly important to European consumers
- Taste preferences are moving away from sweetness in both foods and beverages, toward savoury, spicy and more complex flavours
- Restructuring products and ingredients can help address both taste and textural issues in foods with reduced salt
- Texture and mouthfeel are crucial for consumer acceptance in reduced sugar products, but often are side-lined in the quest for comparable sweetness
- Changing pH or ingredient distribution could help improve texture in reduced fat products
- Understanding the exact function of salt, sugar or fat in a food or beverage is likely to give clues to the best possible replacement solutions
- Delivering taste and texture has been a particular hurdle for meat-like products

