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EXPANDING AND ENGAGING

New trends, such as spiralizing,
redefine fresh-cut produce

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TRENDS AT THE TABLE

THESE EIGHT FOOD AND BEVERAGE TRENDS WILL MAKE THEIR MARK ON 2017–2018

By Melanie Epp

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THE WORLD OF FOOD AND DRINK is constantly evolving, and ever more quickly. For food processors, staying relevant and remaining at the forefront of these trends is more important than ever. In a special presentation hosted at the Fruit Logistica trade fair in Germany, UK-based ideas agency thefoodpeople defined the 12 most relevant megatrends for the food and beverage sector. Of those, eight were most fitting for produce processors. Morgan Griffiths, business development manager for thefoodpeople, hosted the talk.

GETTING INVOLVED

When you were younger, your mother probably told you not to play with your food. Well, things are changing. This rising trend has consumers getting more involved with their food. Whether it's in the comfort of their own kitchen, using fancy cooking tools and gourmet meal kits or in local diners, consumers are becoming part of the creative process.

Meal kits, in particular, are a rising trend. Embraced for its simplicity and convenience, this business model is especially attractive to the always-on-the-go millennial demographic.



▲ Turatti's Streamer was nominated for an innovation award at this year's Fruit Logistica.

This demographic is also increasingly concerned about food waste. One of the bonuses of meal kits is waste reduction, making it an attractive product to ethical eaters. Generally speaking, though, consumers concerned with personal health are also concerned with the health of the environment. For this reason, companies that create meal kits will also want to consider environmentally sustainable packaging.

Bilder & De Clercq in The Netherlands and Purple Carrot in Boston provide good examples of companies that address this trend from an ethical and environmental standpoint.

POST-MODERNIST

According to Griffiths, this is a new area of food. It's a movement "that blurs the lines between what's possible and what's fantasy." Under this trend, new types of cuisine have emerged. Particularly popular are traditional meat and potato and pasta meals recreated with vegetables. Think cauliflower steaks, "veatballs" and beetroot carpaccio.

Some processing equipment manufacturers have taken note of this trend, designing machinery that transforms vegetables into new forms. Turatti, for instance, has designed a new model Streamer that turns vegetables – carrots, zucchini, butternut squash, cucumbers, broccoli, sweet potatoes and daikon – into pasta-like products. Streamer can make different shapes, including spaghetti, tagliatelle and ribbons. Turatti's Streamer was nominated for an innovation award at this year's Fruit Logistica.

German company Kronen has also designed a vegetable spiral-cutting machine, Spirello 150. The new cutting machine can be used to cut large quantities of vegetables into decorative spirals quickly and cleanly.

PEOPLE'S REVOLUTION

More and more, consumers are deciding exactly when and how they eat and drink, and food processors are responding to their demand for more on-the-go eating.

Millennials, according to Griffiths, are a real driving force for this trend, with 35 percent using healthy snacks



▲ Schur Star Systems' Fresh 'n' Go bags are designed with customer convenience in mind. Photos: Melanie Epp



▲ Jean-Marc Hammann, export area manager at Kronen, shows Fruit Logistica attendees what Spirello 150 can do.



▲ Parmentine's Cup, a microwaveable snack, contains bite-sized new potatoes, a small fork and a dipping sauce.

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