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Whole Foods expects ultraurban farming to take off in 2022

Whole Foods Market global buyers and experts unveiled their top 10 anticipated food trends for 2022 in the retailer's seventh-annual Trends predictions. Ultraurban farming, buzz-less spirits, yuzu, Reducetarianism and functional beverages made with prebiotics and botanicals are among the food influences expected to rise in popularity in the next year.

Each year, a Trends Council of more than 50 Whole Foods Market team members, including local foragers, regional and global buyers, and culinary experts compile trend predictions based on decades of experience and expertise in product sourcing and studying consumer preferences, as well as in-depth workshopping with emerging and existing brands.

In 2013, the company opened a Whole Foods Market store in Brooklyn with a Gotham Greens greenhouse on top, providing fresh and sustainably grown herbs and salad greens in greenhouse systems using sunlight and 100 percent renewable electricity. Since then, innovation in indoor farming has ballooned, from hydroponics and aquaponics to mushrooms grown above our grocery aisles — and even fresh produce grown by robots. Producers are finding new, boundary-pushing ways to grow hyper-local crops and maximize efficiency.

“Last year, we saw tremendous pandemic-related shifts in grocery buying habits as the world adjusted to spending more time at home. As the food industry slowly adjusts to a new normal, we expect to see consumers prioritize food and drink products that deliver additional benefits — like functional sodas and tonics — and products that support their sense of well-being, like urban garden greens and products grown with farming processes that help address soil health,” said Sonya Gafsi Oblisk, chief marketing officer at Whole Foods Market. “We look forward to watching these trends take form in grocery aisles and on our plates in 2022.”

While Whole Foods Market's predictions for 2021 — including upcycled foods, boozy kombucha and the up-leveled pantry staples — continue to evolve, the 2022 Trends represent the future of food and beverages.

Whole Foods Market's top 10 food trend predictions for 2022 also include Yuzu, reducetarianism

Yuzu — a lesser-known citrus mainly cultivated in Japan, Korea and China — is taking the culinary world by storm. Tart and sour, this tangerine-sized fruit is popping up in vinaigrettes, hard seltzers, mayos and more. In the restaurant scene, chefs are using its lime-lemon-grapefruit flavor to accent their soups, veggies, noodles and fish. Get ready to see this fruit shine in 2022 — both on and off the grocery aisles.

Are you a plant-curious eater who isn't ready to give up meat entirely? Try **reducetarianism** — reducing consumption of meat, dairy and eggs without cutting them out completely. When animal products are on the menu, reducetarians make them count, opting for premium grass-fed meat and pasture-raised eggs.

Hibiscus has a long and delicious history in the world of teas, and customers have historically kept it in their rotations for its vitamin C content. Now, producers are harnessing its sweet, tart flavor in the form of fruit spreads, yogurts and beyond. Of course, beverage makers are keeping up, leaning on

hibiscus to craft delicious drinks that adopt its signature hot-pink hue.

Buzz-less spirits: The dialed-down spirits category experienced record growth in stores this year. With millennials and Gen Z-ers dabbling in “drysolation” during the pandemic, Whole Foods doesn't see the sober-curious mindset going away anytime soon. Enter a new lineup of drinks that provide the taste and sophistication of cocktails without the buzz.

Grains that give back: Grocery grains are refocusing on the environment in 2022. Whole Foods is talking grains grown via agriculture practices and farming processes that help address soil health. Kernza – a perennial grain developed by The Land Institute with a sweet, nutty flavor and long roots – helps with nutrient cycling and overall soil ecology. Find it in cereals and even beer.

After fueling grand slams and double plays for years, **sunflower seeds** are branching out of the ballpark and sliding into crackers, ice creams and creamy cheeses. Delivering protein and unsaturated fats, these mighty little seeds are transforming the 21st century snack game. Parents, take note — many sunflower seed-based products are made without nuts, which means allergy-friendly school snacks.

Often called the “miracle tree,” **moringa** is traditionally used as an herbal remedy in India, Africa and beyond. Moringa leaves have plenty of nutrients, and these fast-growing, drought-resistant trees have been used as a source of food to fight malnutrition in certain parts of the world. Gaining steam in the U.S. as matcha's latest alternative, it can be found in powder form and added to make magic in smoothies, sauces and baked goods. It's also showing up in unexpected products like frozen desserts, protein bars and packaged grain blends.

Functional Fizz: Today, bubbly beverages are doing double duty. That's right, people are looking for sparkling drinks that not only taste great but also offer ingredients that balance out the sweetness. We're talking soda with probiotics and fizzy tonics with added prebiotics, botanicals and more. Fruity flavors. Unconventional ingredients. Get more from your bubbly drinks.

Turmeric, aka “the golden spice,” has been used for centuries in Ayurveda and traditional Chinese medicine, and has become popular in the U.S. as a dietary supplement. While golden milk lattes and turmeric supplements are nothing new, the spice is taking root as an ingredient in packaged foods like cereals, sauerkrauts and even plant-based ice cream sandwiches. People want to have their turmeric and eat it too.

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