

## INDUSTRY ARTICLE

August 2019

### Caught between wishes and reality

How are trends in the food and beverage industry created and how is it that all manufacturers seem to come up with the same new beverages and product innovations at roughly the same time? For example, if you went to Nuremberg at the beginning of this year looking for inspiration and innovation at BIOFACH, the leading trade fair for the organic food products industry, it could hardly have escaped your notice that the research and development departments of the organic producers have been working with a yellow filter. Everything was yellow, everything was turmeric, from tea and bread to biscuits to porridge. But how did this phenomenon start? What new beverages will be offered to consumers after BrauBeviale, the trade fair at which the national and international brewing and beverage industry will gather this coming November in Nuremberg?

The latest consumer trends clearly demand, among other things, that foods and beverages be natural and functional. According to trend researchers, consumers have had foods and beverages that have an added “health benefit” on their wish lists for some time, but they also want them to be made from natural ingredients and supplied in eco-friendly or at least environmentally compatible packaging. How are manufacturers fulfilling these wishes – now and in the near future? And how much does it actually matter to consumers? Is this just some well-meaning lip service for the sake of surveys or are they truly ready to test new beverage versions and continue to purchase them over the long term? Are they prepared to spend more money for eco-friendly packaging at the checkout counter? These questions are the subject of this report.

What exactly is a trend? When is a new beverage merely a passing fancy and when does it result, for example, in the introduction of a whole new category in the beverage industry? Food trend researcher Hanni Rützler

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delivered the keynote address, entitled “Shaping the future”, at BrauBeviale 2018. For her, trends aren’t static but are constantly changing. Some are only temporary phenomena, while many continue to evolve, merge with other trends or ultimately become part of the mainstream. “They’re the drivers of the transformation of our global food culture,” says Rützler. In the new Foodreport 2020, however, she also emphasises that “... not every new ingredient or every new type of packaging is a new food trend.”

[Zukunftsinstitut GmbH (ed.) in cooperation with Lebensmittel Zeitung, foodservice, gv-praxis; Hanni Rützler/Wolfgang Reiter: Foodreport 2020, Frankfurt, page 4.]

## **Naturally cloudy in the bottle**

This year, industry insiders are saying that we can expect no innovations in the area of non-alcoholic beverages, not even special versions. If there is any trend at all, it’s in the direction of “regionality” and “naturalness”, which have both persisted over the past five years. This is reflected in beverage versions that are naturally cloudy and is also why naturally cloudy, non-alcoholic shandies and other cloudy mixed drinks that suggest naturalness to the consumer are still booming. These are the beverages that breweries and beverage manufacturers of various sizes are hoping will bring them increased revenue. For example, a well-known soft drink pioneer and brand manufacturer is responding to the consumer’s wish for naturalness with two new soft drink versions: naturally cloudy orange and naturally cloudy lemon, both of which have a low sugar content. And the medium-sized companies are following suit.

## **Close to the source, close to pure flavour**

Essences are entering the market. These are beverages based on natural mineral water with added fruit extracts – all the better if they’re of organic quality – that provide the beverage with a burst of flavour without calories, sugar or additives. Once again, they’re mainly offered by one of the major brands that have created a special product line that fulfils the desire for tasty variety combined with guilt-free indulgence. This trend is nothing new. Several few years ago the near-water movement originating in the U.S. took a similar tack. In terms of flavour, the essences are usually marketed in fruit-vegetable-herb combinations, such as citrus fruit-rosemary or mint-

cucumber. There is certainly still room for growth in this segment and it can be assumed that other mineral water companies will add to the trend.

## **(Almost) completely without**

It has been decided on the European level that products should contain less and that consumers should be clearly informed of what they do contain. For many foods as well as beverages, it isn't immediately apparent what they contain. Food shoppers have to rely on the information on the packaging. Since 2016, manufacturers throughout the EU have been required to provide nutrition tables specifying the amount of fat, saturated fat, carbohydrates, sugar, protein and salt per 100 g/ml for all pre-packaged foods, but the information usually appears only in fine print on the back of the package. To make it easier for consumers to recognize whether processed and pre-packaged products contain large amounts of sugar, fat or salt, Germany's grand coalition also wants to introduce an easily understandable, transparent nutrition label as a central component in its policy on healthy eating, in accordance with the coalition agreement. Other countries are already one step ahead of Germany and have introduced various voluntary systems, such as Nutri-Score in France and Great Britain's nutritional traffic light.

## **Between wishes and reality**

So although there is movement in the manufacturers' bottling plants and consumers are willing to try new things, industry insiders are saying that it's difficult to keep offering new beverage versions over the long term. After an enthusiastic initial purchase, consumers generally don't follow up. That's why in many companies, the motto is "You always need an old standby". Consumers are happy to try something new and, of course, new beverages are excellent for drawing media attention. But after taking their first taste for the sake of variety, most consumers quickly return to the old familiar – at least according to industry giants who are looking to increase revenues. When a new product is launched on the market there are waves of demand, but they generally don't last.

By way of summary, it's safe to say that non-alcoholic beverage manufacturers are aware of consumers' wishes, are also trying to satisfy

them in part but ultimately, are deferring to reality in the form of sales figures. Variations in the existing beverage categories can be expected and there's also certain to be a jolt in the packaging industry, but there will be no innovations and no establishing of brand-new categories.

## **Marketing Forum at BrauBeviale**

Brand loyalty, the latest food and beverage trends and the resulting challenges for the beverage industry will be the topics discussed on the central platform of the international beverage industry. On the first morning of the fair, K&A BrandResearch invites you to attend the Marketing Forum at the Forum BrauBeviale. For more information, visit [www.braubeviale.de/en/events](http://www.braubeviale.de/en/events)

## **About BrauBeviale**

BrauBeviale is one of the most important capital goods trade fairs for the beverage industry worldwide. During this three-day event at Exhibition Centre Nuremberg, international exhibitors showcase a comprehensive range of solutions for the entire beverage production process chain, including raw materials, technologies, logistics and marketing ideas. Visitors come from the technical and commercial management segments of the European beverage industry as well as from the retail and catering sectors. The product display is rounded out by an attractive supporting programme that explores and discusses the trending issues in the industry. The main topic is the future viability of the beverage sector. Other highlights include the BrauBeviale Forum, Craft Drinks Area and numerous themed pavilions. The usual relaxed atmosphere will make BrauBeviale the No. 1 meeting place for the industry. Private Brauereien Bayern (Bavarian Association of Private Breweries) is the honorary sponsor of BrauBeviale. BrauBeviale is a member of the Beviale Family, the global network of events focusing on the manufacture and marketing of beverages. [www.braubeviale.de/en](http://www.braubeviale.de/en)

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# BrauBeviale2019

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