

NEWS RELEASE

Food Trends 2020: Meal Kits, Convenience Store Nutrition and Drinkable Collagen

Nov. 18, 2019

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Most people think of collagen as a protein used for cosmetic purposes that you get in a jar, but prepare for drinkable collagen. If you think that's interesting, try going online to order meal kits – full of just-the-right ingredients for the dishes you want to prepare. Those are a couple of the fearless forecasts from UF/IFAS faculty experts as they predict food trends for 2020 – a popular list now in its sixth straight year:

1. **Meal Kits:** Blue Apron, Home Chef, Hello Fresh and the like have grown exponentially in popularity over the past several years, said Laura Acosta, a registered dietitian and a lecturer with the UF/IFAS food science and human nutrition department. The trend is now headed to mainstream grocery stores and less toward the traditional subscription delivery service. But this market likely will continue to evolve and grow in 2020. A local version of the meal kit model is Chef Ami (<https://chefami.com/>), which has expanded in the past year or so from serving just Gainesville, Florida, to serving Ocala and Tampa, Florida. Contact Acosta, ljacosta@ufl.edu; 352-273-3472.
2. **Drinkable Collagen:** Drinks and supplements containing collagen came along a couple of years ago, and they are catching consumers' attention, said Soo Ahn, a UF/IFAS assistant professor of food science and human nutrition. Collagen, a protein, can help skin cells renew and repair themselves. It is commonly used in many anti-aging cosmetic products. "Now collagen is used in many different food products, which claim to help slow the aging signs of skin by reducing wrinkles," Ahn said. It was first introduced as a supplement, but now the food industry is expanding its application to various drink products that contain collagen. Scientific studies on the effectiveness of collagen consumption on human skin improvement are limited. With consumers' growing interest in health and anti-aging, this trend seems to grow with more creative products to come. Contact Ahn, sahn82@ufl.edu, or 352-294-3909.
3. **Alcohol in the Tea:** You'll see more tea containing alcohol or tasting like alcoholic drinks, said Matt Krug, a UF/IFAS state specialized Extension agent in food science. Craft beer,

kombucha and hard seltzer have all rapidly increased in popularity in recent years, Krug said. Tea may be brewed with malt to create an alcoholic seltzer-type drink or with hops to incorporate a craft beer-type taste. “I see these drinks being a popular choice moving forward for consumers looking for a light summery drink,” Krug said. mkrug@ufl.edu; 239-324-4792.

4. **Organic Food ... Still Going Strong:** Organic products will occupy more shelf space in grocery stores, and new products will be added. Total sales of USDA-certified food -- including grains, fruits, vegetables and nuts -- have more than doubled during the five-year period from 2012-2017, said Danielle Treadwell, a UF/IFAS associate professor and statewide Extension specialist in horticultural sciences. Organic food sales accounted for 5.5 percent of total retail food sales. Contact Treadwell, ddtreadw@ufl.edu, 352-273-4775.
5. **Extreme Weather Impacts:** Because of climate disruptions and extreme weather events, look for higher prices at the grocery store, Treadwell said. That’s because coffee, bananas and avocado production are at risk due to insects and diseases. These food crops, staples in many homes, are grown in unique environments that are limited to a few places on the planet. Contact Treadwell, ddtreadw@ufl.edu, 352-273-4775
6. **Nutrition – at the Convenience Store:** Our busy lifestyles continue to create demand for nutrient-dense convenience foods, so expect new products on the market and increased sales of these products that are already on the shelf. Contact Treadwell, ddtreadw@ufl.edu, 352-273-4775.
7. **Drive-Thru Grocery Shopping:** Not to be confused with Meal Kits – which are targeted for single meals -- we’re talking about online grocery shopping. This trend, which started several years ago, is gaining momentum, Acosta said. Major grocery retailers are now virtually all offering some sort of online ordering system. Personal shoppers fill orders, and customers conveniently pick up their groceries in a “drive-through” style – often without even leaving their cars. Some supermarkets are now also offering delivery services, where groceries are delivered directly to the customer’s home. Contact Acosta, ljacosta@ufl.edu; 352-273-3472.
8. **A Millennial Impact:** At 27 percent, millennials comprise the largest sector of the population. They are well-connected, and their buying habits reflect that. Many millennials buy local, and by “local,” Treadwell means buying via local farm-finder apps and Internet orders directly from farms. Thus, expect an increasingly dynamic market that attempts to respond to consumer demands via e-trade, Treadwell said. ddtreadw@ufl.edu, 352-273-4775.
9. **Oysters:** Florida oysters from Apalachicola Bay were celebrated throughout the region until the fishery collapsed in 2012. Recent work to promote off-bottom farming of the popular bivalve is helping oysters from Florida make a comeback. More than 100 growers have invested in the new grow-out techniques, which use bags suspended in the water column instead of harvesting from naturally occurring reefs. Initial results are promising and could mean that Florida oysters will once again assume their role as a favorite Florida seafood. For

more information on Florida oysters and other shellfish, contact Leslie Sturmer, UF/IFAS Sea Grant shellfish aquaculture specialist, at Lnst@ufl.edu, 352-543-5057.

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