

CONSUMER TRENDS REPORT

3 Trends Driving Growth in the “Better for You” Space

*See the consumer data
behind the growth*

The “better for you” space isn’t what it used to be

As our definition of “wellness” has expanded, so has the variety of consumer products that support our goals to live more healthful, mindful, and sustainable lives.

There’s opportunity in the “better for you” space. The problem is knowing exactly who your consumer is, and how their preferences shift—which can happen as quickly as the latest trending sound on TikTok.

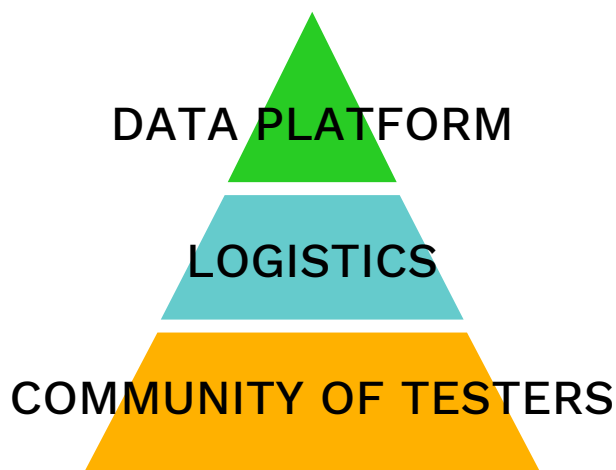
The only way for brands to move at the speed of culture is to unlock access to high-quality data, early and often.

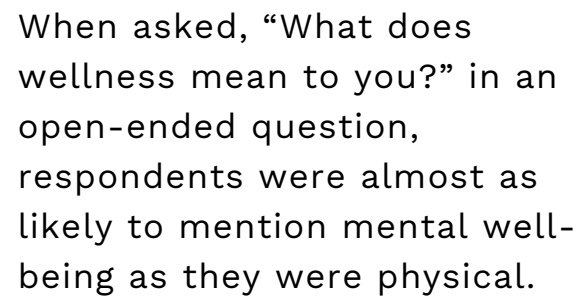
About the study

Highlight is a three-part physical product testing solution: an owned community of nationwide testers, a logistics and shipping solution, and a technology platform that delivers consumer data in real time.

For this trend report, Highlight polled our proprietary audience with a 16-question survey designed to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. In total, 2,000 respondents from across the country weighed in with their feedback on better-for-you trends and products.

Highlight’s product testing solution integrates:





51% of open-ended responses contained the words “mind” or “mental”

“Feeling good mentally and feeling good physically all at once. Without one or the other, I don't think I have achieved wellness.”

“Wellness means taking care of your physical health and your mental health.”

3

Wellness is important, especially to families

77%

of respondents rate their personal well-being as either “extremely high” or “high” priority

80%

of respondents are willing to pay more for “better for you” products

Families make better-for-you groceries a priority

40%

completely agree:

“When I go grocery shopping, I strive to choose products that promote my personal health.”

48%

completely agree:

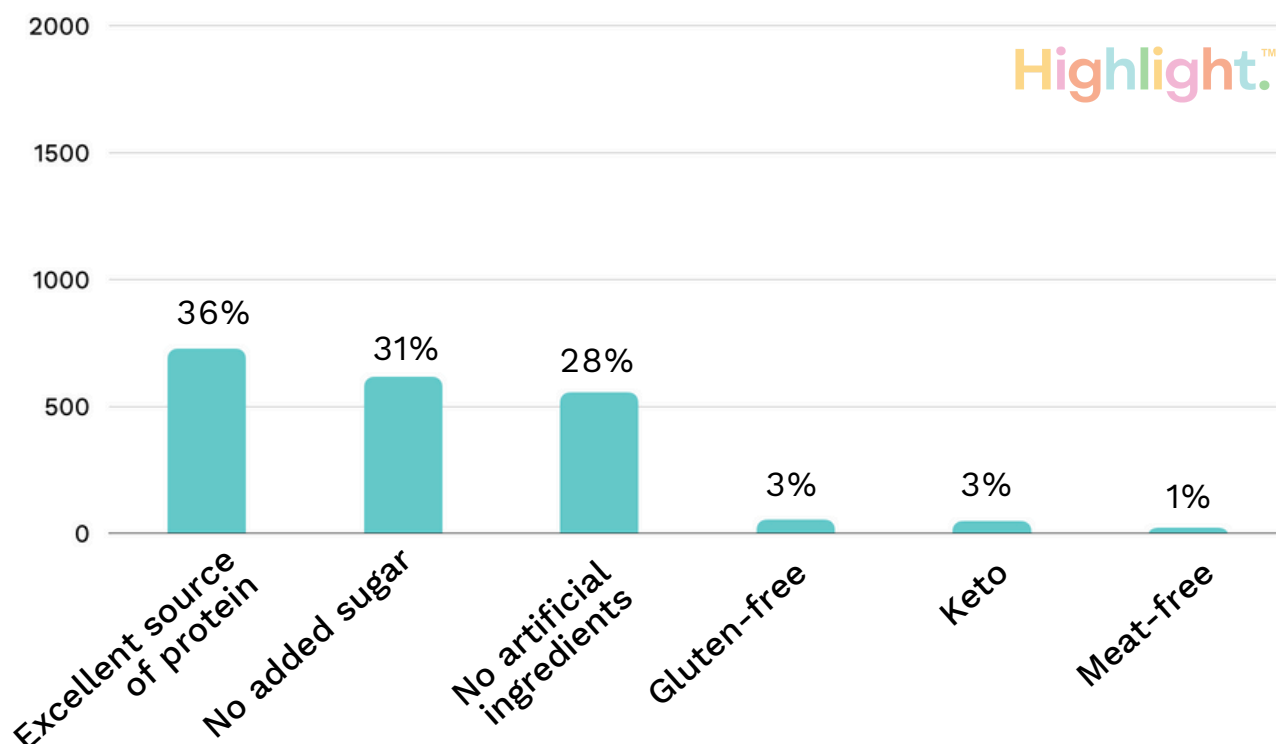
“When I go grocery shopping, I strive to choose products that promote the health of my family.”

Of those respondents who said they “completely agree” that they strive to choose products that promote their personal health, **91%** also “completely agreed” that they strive to choose products that promote the health of their family.

The better-for-you labels consumers want (and don't want)

In food & beverage, certain attributes matter more than others

What attributes do you most highly prioritize when purchasing “better-for-you” food and beverage products?



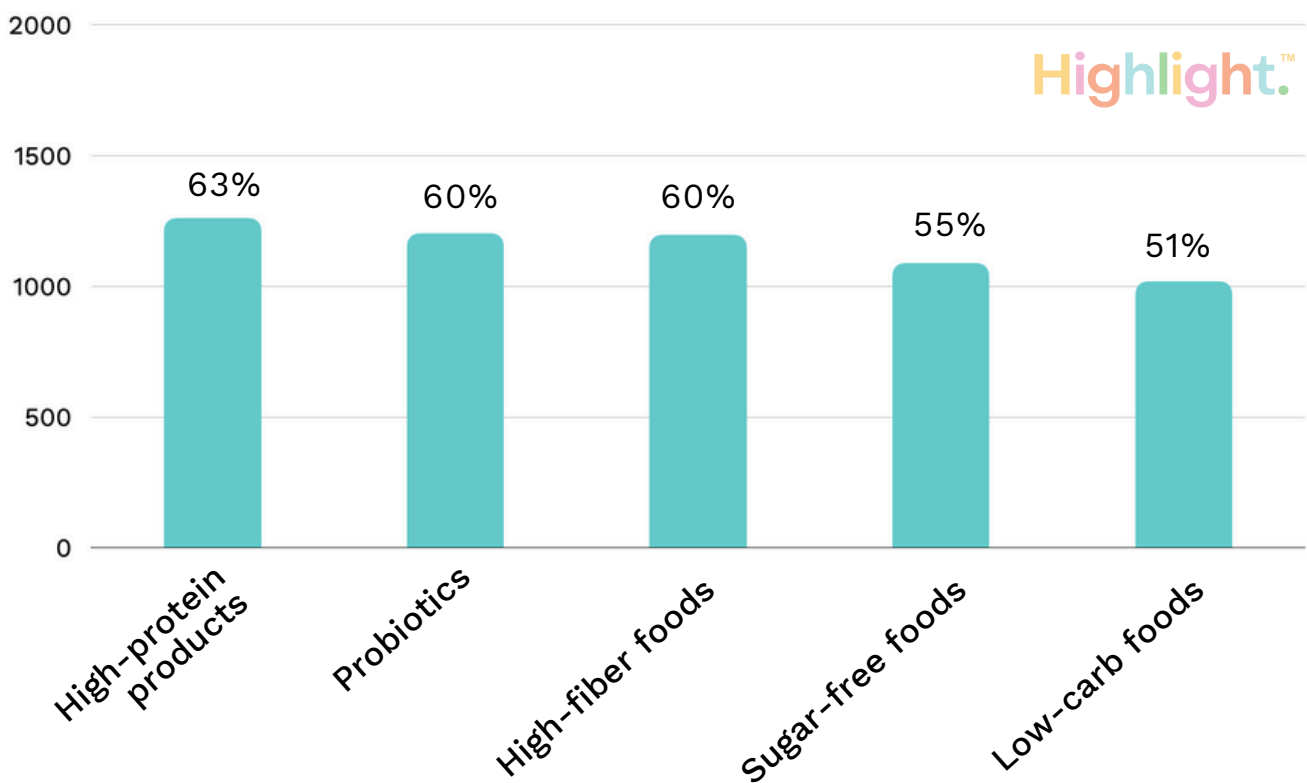
Top 3 + bottom 3 answers out of 21 options

Respondents were asked to select up to three attributes they most highly prioritize (out of 21) in better-for-you food & beverage products. While “no added sugar” grabbed the second spot, “sugar free” only ranked 10th, and while “meat-free” ranked last, “plant-based” fared slightly better in 14th place.

The better-for-you products most trialed in the past 6 months

Measured by actual purchases, the trend for high-protein, low-sugar products continue

Which of the following products have you purchased in the past 6 months to promote your personal well-being?



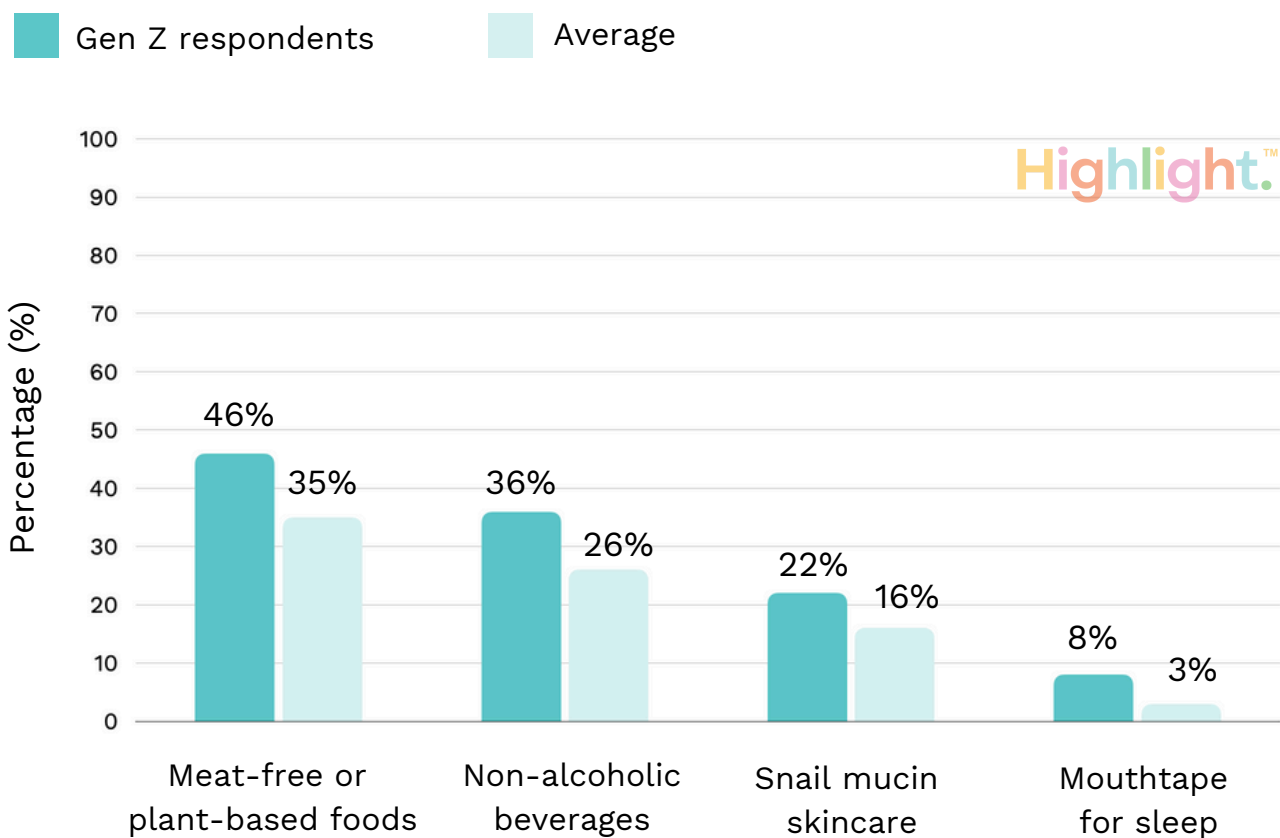
Top 5 answers out of 15 options

While protein-heavy foods, powders, and supplements remain at the top of the podium, probiotics and high-fiber foods reflect a growing demand for products that promote gut health, perhaps even benefitting from the “Ozempic halo effect.” (More on that later!)

Gen Z consumers are early better-for-you trialers

When presented with a list of 15 “better for you” products, Gen Z consumers proved to be more open to trying novel products than their counterparts in other generations.

Which “better for you” products have you purchased in the past six months?



90%

of Gen Z respondents say they are willing to pay more for BFY products (versus 80% on average)

Trend 1:

Protein is having a moment

Compared to other respondents, those who identified “excellent source of protein” as a priority were:

More likely to also prioritize:

Good source of fiber

Low carb

Less likely to also prioritize:

Natural

Organic

Plant-based

Meat-free

Cruelty-free

3 brands meeting the “protein moment”



Eggo brought two new flavors of “fully loaded” waffles to frozen aisles everywhere, featuring 10 grams of protein per serving.



Oobli is innovating chocolate, tea, lemonade, and more with “sweet proteins” that pack a protein punch with lower sugar content—all while being plant-based and more sustainable.



Costco’s private label brand, Kirkland, has officially entered the protein game with an affordable whey protein powder.

Trend 2:

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Lower sugar, higher customer satisfaction

Compared to other respondents, those who identified “no added sugar” as a priority were **less likely to prioritize:**

Good source of fiber

Heart healthy

Organic

Natural

3 brands helping consumers lower their sugar intake



Lexington Bakes is an emerging brand offering brownies, cookies and other treats at 25% less sugar per serving.



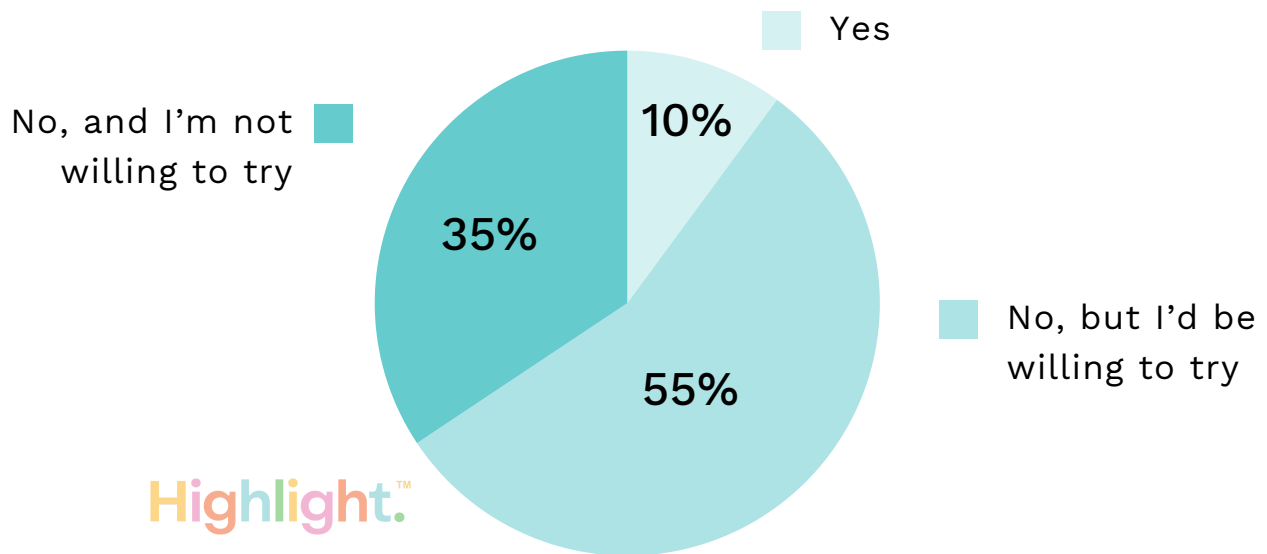
Elavi's line of cashew butters boast plenty of better-for-you attributes, including protein, less sugar, and “nothing artificial.”



YouTuber Ryan Trahan recently launched a line of sour strips, JOYRIDE, made with only 4 grams of sugar, “prebiotic fiber,” and no synthetic dyes.

Ozempic is popular, but a significant minority lacks trust

Have you ever used GLP-1 weight loss medications (such as Ozempic or Wegovy)?



65%

say they they already have or would be willing to try GLP-1 drugs



63%

Regardless of their willingness to try a GLP-1 drug, 63% would be interested in buying grocery products designed for GLP-1 patients

Trend 3:

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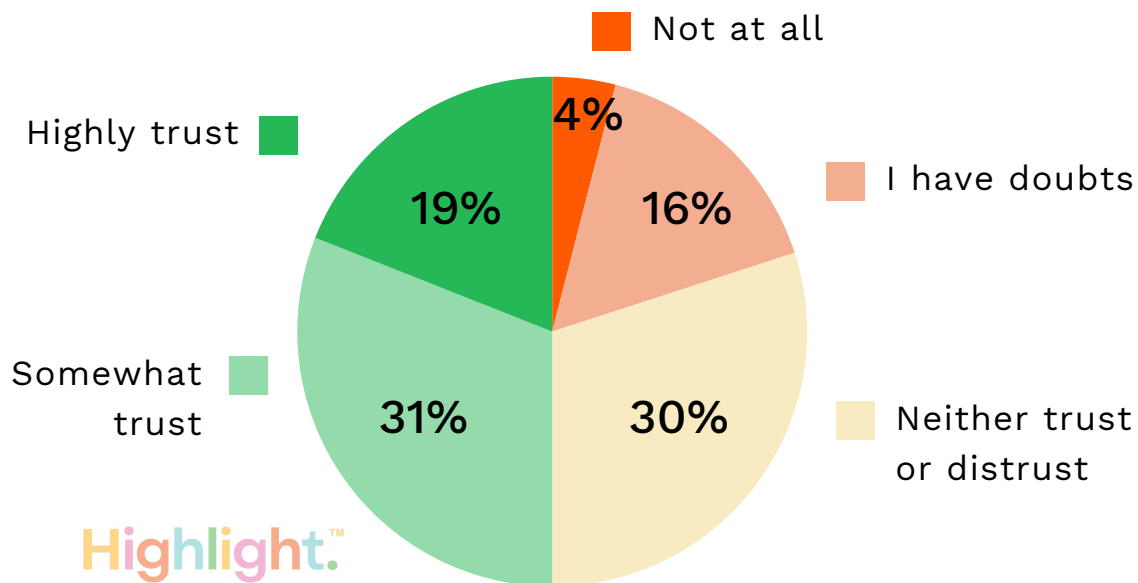
Ozempic is popular, but a significant minority lacks trust



35%

say they would NOT be willing to try GLP-1 weight loss medications

What is your level of trust in the safety of GLP-1 medications?



20%

have doubts or don't trust GLP-1 medications at all

Ozempic is more than a medication—it's a phenomenon

In a recent interview with [AFN](#) (AgriFoodTech), Danone deputy CEO Juergen Esser says he expects the popularity of GLP-1 drugs to benefit their business as more consumers influenced by the “Ozempic halo effect” to seek out high-protein, gut-healthy products. While others such as [Rabobank](#) say “it’s too early to draw conclusions,” many brands are already bringing products to market.

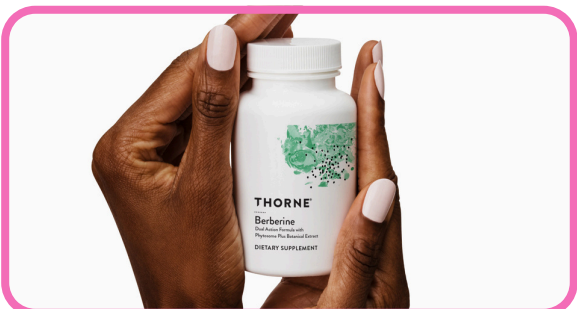
3 brands developing products inspired by GLP-1s



Nestle launched their Vital Pursuit brand to provide high-protein, high-fiber meals to those taking GLP-1 drugs.



Supergut advertises themselves as “nature’s Ozempic” thanks to their use of butyrate, a gut bacteria that helps promote digestive health and aid weight control.



Thorne debuted a botanical supplement for heart health and weight control using berberine, which helps maintain healthy cholesterol and blood sugar levels.

Key takeaways for better-for-you products

Don't just use every trending attribute

What attributes go hand-in-hand? Those seeking protein may also look for fiber, but de-prioritize attributes like “plant-based.”

Dig for the “why” to uncover more insights

In our research, we found “no artificial ingredients” to be the third most popular attribute. With an open-ended question, we saw many respondents write in “food dyes.” Add a qualitative aspect to your survey design to understand what’s driving consumer preferences.

Stay in constant discovery mode

Test with your target audience early and often to stay ahead of cultural and preferential shifts.

About Highlight

Highlight's in-home product testing platform helps CPG brands innovate, test, and successfully launch better products for people and the planet. Ship your product to Highlight, and our logistics team repackages for our owned community of testers. Quickly field IHUTs (in-home usage tests) and see results as they come in. Highlight's customers have tested products in early development, blind-tested products against the competition, and benchmarked in-market products for category insight.

Learn more at letshighlight.com.