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## **20/20 VISION: THE FRESH MARKET'S FOOD TREND PREDICTIONS FOR 2020** *Focus on Center Store*

**GREENSBORO, NC** – December 3, 2019 – Specialty food curators at The Fresh Market have to make their buys months in advance of when consumers will see the products on the shelves, so it is imperative they stay ahead of the curve and know what guests will be shopping for well in advance.

Factoring into their buying decisions are what is trending at restaurants, innovative cuisine, health and wellness movements, as well as growing practices, ingredient quality and traceability. Once the products or categories of interest are determined, the merchandisers then hold ‘cuttings’ of various brands or suppliers within that product area to find those that are the best tasting, highest quality in that category.

“Our mission is to inspire our guests to make everyday eating extraordinary, and to uphold this, we have extremely high standards for the products or brands that ultimately make it into our store,” said Dwight Richmond, Director of Center Store Merchandising. “Some examples of new products that were big hits in 2019 based on trends were [Beyond Burgers](#) and [Caulipower Pizza](#) (plant based), Haku Shoyu and Fillos Sofritos Beans (authentically ethnic), and a host of functional beverages, like kombucha and keto protein drinks.”

What new products will have guests flocking to The Fresh Market in the new year? Here are some early predictions based on top trends in the food industry.

### **Sugar Smarts**

Consumers are becoming more aware of how much sugar is added to foods, thanks to new food labeling requirements becoming mandatory in 2020 which include a callout for “added sugars” under the carbohydrates section. Even “natural sweeteners” like maple syrup and agave are included, despite the perception that they are ‘healthier’.

The keto/Whole30/Paleo diet trends, which also limit sugar intake, has further pushed consumers’ desire for products that taste great but that also contain low or no added sugar, without the use of artificial sweeteners.

A recent example is [SmartSweets](#), an innovative candy line that is low sugar (3 grams per bag), with no artificial sweeteners.

### **Seeds: As Mighty as Nuts**

Nuts have rightly earned a place in a healthy diet as being a good source of protein and healthy fat. Hot on the heels of this trend is a rise in seed-based products (think quinoa, hemp, sesame, pumpkin, flax, sunflower and chia). Not only are seeds allergen-free, but they are loaded with fiber, protein, antioxidants, essential minerals and fatty-acids, like omega-3.

Some unique products The Fresh Market curators are crushing on are [Three Trees](#) Black Sesame Nut & Seed Milk, [Base Culture](#) Nut & Seed bread and [La Tourangelle](#) tahini dressing.

## **Plant Based 2.0**

Guests have embraced plant-based meat alternatives and cauliflower pizza crusts, but now food manufacturers are taking it to the next level with plant-based alternatives that pump up the protein using legumes and vegetables.

One example of this ‘grainovation’ is [RightRice](#), which blends lentils, peas, chickpeas and rice to more than double the protein, quadruple the fiber, and reduce nearly 60% of the net carbs found in a bowl of white rice.

## **Sober Celebrating**

The rise in functional beverages has also extended to happy hour, with sober curious consumers choosing to celebrate sans alcohol. Brands like [H2OPS](#), a sparkling hop water brewed like a craft beer, and [Napa Hills Vineyard Enriched Waters](#) that delivers the antioxidant benefits of a glass of red wine without the calories, sugar or alcohol, are gaining steam on the shelves of The Fresh Market. Look for this trend to continue to grow with new offerings like [Bar None](#) beverages, as well as exciting new offerings from Europe in early 2020.

## **Transparency and Traceability**

“We are entering a phase where consumers want to understand the full lifecycle of a food product, from where and how it was grown, why it is better nutritionally and better for the environment,” said Dwight.

A good example of this is bringing in products like [EPIC Provisions](#), a company founded on regenerative agriculture, with a line of sustainably sourced 100% grass-fed meat bars, animal cooking fats and snacks. The Fresh Market went to all cage-free eggs in 2019, and also increased its 100% grass-fed dairy offerings.

Along with this trend is a focus on food waste reduction, such as the continued success of The Fresh Market’s fresh-prepared in-store [Market Meal Kits](#) which contain two perfectly-portioned servings of easy to cook dinners, resulting in no food or ingredient waste.

## **Incubating the Next Generation of Product Innovators**

The Fresh Market is already starting to look for trends in 2021, and to help identify and showcase innovative food & beverage products, has tapped New York City-based venture studio, [25madison](#). 25madison is a business builder, incubating companies from the ground up and investing in early-stage businesses. 25madison will keep The Fresh Market on the pulse of early-stage consumer companies that are poised to disrupt or create market trends.

Steven Price, CEO of 25madison, stated: “We are excited to partner with The Fresh Market to help identify, build, and invest in disruptive businesses. By teaming up with The Fresh Market, we can create a competitive edge for our companies – leveraging unique consumer insights and distribution in 159 stores. This strategic partnership will help The Fresh Market’s customers discover and shop for new and innovative brands.”

**About The Fresh Market, Inc.**

Since 1982, The Fresh Market, Inc. has helped guests make every day eating extraordinary with time-saving meal solutions, unique ingredients and delicious food for any occasion. From fresh produce and exceptional meat and seafood, to signature baked goods and thousands of organic options, this specialty grocery retailer has something to please every palate. The Fresh Market currently operates 159 stores in 22 states across the U.S., inspiring guests to discover new flavors and cook with confidence. For more information, please visit [www.thefreshmarket.com](http://www.thefreshmarket.com) or follow the company on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest.

**About 25madison**

25madison is a business builder, incubating companies from the ground up and investing in early-stage companies. To learn more or if you're an interested startup, please apply at [25madison.com](http://25madison.com).

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