



TOP TEN TRENDS FROM

Expo West 2025



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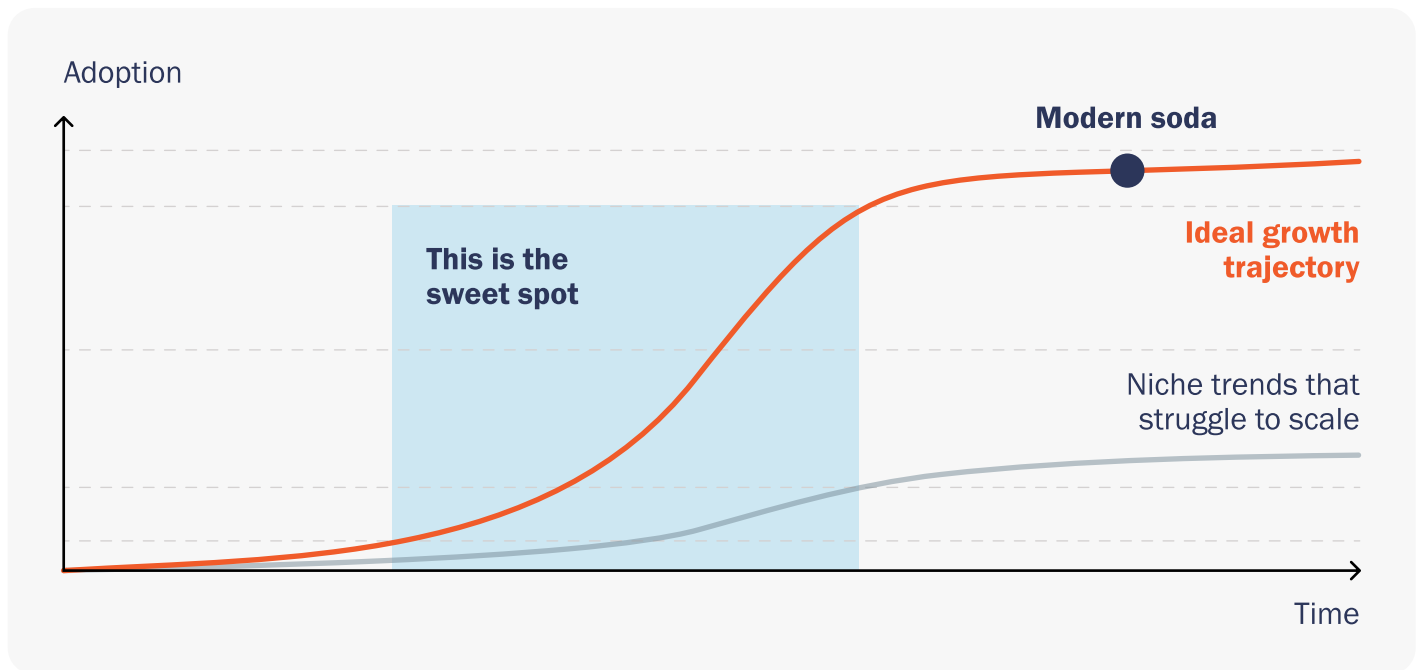
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Last week, team Seurat headed to Anaheim for a jam-packed two days of meeting founders, discovering challenger brands, sampling hundreds of products, and most importantly, scoping out the biggest trends set to define 2025. That’s right – we’re talking about Expo West 2025. The annual “brand land” grand slam of CPG did not disappoint, as starry-eyed first timers & Expo vets alike stormed the halls to try the latest innovation, meet buyers and distributors, and size up the competition. It was a year to remember with the protein arms race – emboldened by the rise of GLP-1s – continuing full force and CPG fanatics literally throwing punches over highly sought-after pink puffy giveaway bags.

Last year, we recapped the top 10 trends at Expo, organized by those most emerging to those most poised to scale. One year later, many of those trends we identified as ready to scale, have done just that (we’re looking at you, modern soda) and are now approaching their crest.



This year, we’ve organized trends based on adoption maturity –highlighting trends that are just beginning to gain traction and those that are more on their way to mainstream dominance. Let’s face it, not every brand at Expo is destined for widespread adoption, so our goal is to shine a light on the few and mighty that are poised for real growth.





#10 Mushroom Mayhem



Melting Forest



Four Sigmatic



Pan's



Host Defense Mushrooms



Nature's Fynd



Fungitarian



Enoki Café



Everyday Dose

Exhibitors of the fungal variety largely fell into two camps: mushrooms as food and mushrooms as medicine. On the food side, mushrooms—especially in jerky form—are carving out a niche as a nutrient-dense, umami-packed salty snack, though scalability remains limited. The real momentum is happening on the functional side, where mushrooms are being positioned as natural powerhouses for cognition, mood, gut support, endurance, and beyond. Within this space, two distinct branding strategies are emerging: some are tapping into the “magic mushroom” mystique with psychedelic-inspired names and graphics, while others are leaning into a more clinical, pharmacological approach. However, some companies are moving away from centering “mushrooms” in their branding altogether, recognizing the barriers to entry and consumer hesitation.

For example, Odyssey Elixir (a brand we featured last year), now emphasizes benefits like cognition & energy and lists ingredients like lion’s mane and cordyceps in place of the word “mushroom” on pack. Similarly, Everyday Dose embraces functional mushrooms in their product, but with a more mainstream name and approachable aesthetic. Despite the hype, trial, education, and perceived efficacy remain barriers to mass adoption—keeping this trend in its earlier stages of growth for now.





#9 Color Drenching & Dopamine Vibe Tribe



Local Weather

Tepache

Cravings baking mixes

Drumroll Donuts

Maeve

LAV

Unwell Hydration

Brands that embrace ultra-bright, dopamine-inducing packaging—featuring bold fonts, saturated colors, and a distinct badge-value aesthetic—are resonating deeply with Gen Z. This trend, fueled by TikTok-dominant interior design aesthetics, taps into Gen Z’s craving for both simplicity and novelty. Having grown up in a world of constant digital stimulation (hello, iPhones from birth), Gen Z is accustomed to sensory overload. Color drenching—the use of bold, monochromatic color blocking—provides a visual break, offering an eye-catching yet cohesive look that stands out without feeling chaotic. It delivers boldness without clutter, making products feel both contemporary and easy to process. On the flip side, dopamine packaging leans into playful, high-energy visuals—think clashing brights, dynamic patterns, and nostalgic, Y2K-inspired motifs designed to spark joy. Beyond aesthetics, these approaches also deliver shelf standout.

Monochromatic packaging helps brands create strong, recognizable blocks, while dopamine-inspired designs foster an emotional connection, making products feel fun, expressive, and shareable. Regardless of the approach, both styles force brands to tighten their messaging, ensuring a clear and compelling value prop without unnecessary noise. In a world where Gen Z seeks products that are both visually satisfying and instantly recognizable, dopamine-drenched branding strikes the perfect balance between energy and clarity. Based on the graphics on display in everything from functional beverages and snacks to supplements and even salad dressing, we expect to see color drenching and dopamine-drenched branding creeping into more categories in the near future.





#8 Sweet / Savory Flavor Flip



Brazi Bites



Like Air Pop Corn



Drizzilicious



Siete



Gelato Boy



Be Happy Snacks



Dripdash



Califa Farms

Consumers are craving unexpected twists on familiar flavors, fueling the rise of savory notes in sweet categories (black sesame lattes) and sweet infusions in savory ones (pancake-flavored popcorn). This shift is driven by flavor fatigue, global influence, and the appeal of contrast. Many cultures have long blurred these lines, from Japan’s miso desserts to Hawaii’s sweet-savory pairings. As Gen Z and Millennials seek bold, shareable flavors, brands are increasingly embracing this balance to create fresh, exciting, and craveable experiences that keep consumers coming back for more.

The sweet-savory mashup also taps into cravings, nostalgia, and a perception of balance—making indulgence feel both exciting and justifiable. The result is more emerging brands pushing the boundaries of flavor norms.



Drizzilicious



CALIFIA FARMS



#7 Asian Frozen Feast



Truly Indian	Khazana	Mila	Konscious	Laoban
Sunlit Foods	Wow Bao	Dumpling Daughter	Lotte	

Boy, has this category leveled up. Frozen still carries some lingering sodium-and-preservative baggage, but the stigma is fading fast—thanks to a wave of high-quality brands proving that frozen can mean fresh, flavorful, and clean-label. Trader Joe’s set the stage over the last 5–7 years with its affordable frozen hits like soup dumplings and bulgogi beef, and now a new class of premium, restaurant-quality brands is taking things even further. From Korean to Chinese to Indian cuisine, these frozen flavor bombs are redefining what easy, at-home global eats can be.

Many have built out large & growing DTC businesses with digitally native shoppers. The rise of foodie culture plays a key role—younger consumers crave bold, global flavors but don’t always have the disposable income to regularly dine out. At the same time, the perception of frozen food is shifting, fueled by brands using higher-quality ingredients, fewer additives, and chef-driven recipes (last year we featured Kevin’s a ready-to-heat brand that has gained widespread distribution since its acquisition by Mars). The result? A new generation of frozen meals that deliver an authentic experience for a fraction of the cost. While price point remains a factor, growing demand and economies of scale will help bring costs down—paving the way for these flavor-packed, better-for-you options to become a freezer staple.





#6 Little Trend Setters



Freshbell



Willa's
Oat Milk



Mush



Shine Water



Cocojune



Bloom



Koia



Cure



Tonnino

More premium adult brands are expanding into the ripe-for-disruption kids market, launching everything from DHA-fortified oat milk to collagen jelly. Traditional kid brands have long packed their products with sugar and additives, leaving parents searching for healthier, high-quality alternatives.

Now, a new wave of brands is rethinking kids' food—not just by cleaning up ingredients, but also by blurring the line between what kids and adults eat. Some brands take a simple approach, scaling down pack sizes and adding playful designs, while others tweak flavors (hello, chocolate drizzle!) or develop entirely new sublines tailored for child development. Beyond just better nutrition, these products bring generations closer together, making mealtime a shared experience rather than a compromise. The result is a major glow-up for the kids' aisle—where products cater to both parental concerns and kid-friendly appeal, while seamlessly fitting into the broader family table.

Freshbell

Willa's
ORGANIC OAT MILK

MUSH

SHINE
water

cocojune

Bloom

koia

cure

TONNINO



#5 Fruit – Front & Center



Sunny Fruit



The Froot Thief



Solely Fruit Jerky



That's It Fruit Crunchables



Fruit for Thought



Chiwis



Sweet Haven



Rind



White Leaf



Chum's Fruit Bites

Whole fruit snacks were everywhere at Expo West this year, from freeze-dried fruit crunches to fruit jerky and even fruit spaghetti. Brands are tapping into the demand for all-natural, fruit-based innovations, formulating with just pure fruit and fruit juice to deliver cleaner, real-food options. The rocket success of TruFru has likely served as a catalyst, aiding investment into fruit-based forms and snacks.

This surge in whole fruit snacks is also a reaction to the rampant fortification in shelf-stable snacks, where traditional categories are being stretched and redefined with added protein, fiber, adaptogens, and beyond. As more products lean heavily into plussed up benefits, fruit snacks stand out by embracing simplicity and purity—offering real, recognizable ingredients without the extra “boosts”. Whether driven by a desire for back-to-basics simplicity or shifting dietary habits, whole fruit snacks are having a moment.





#4 Even Energy



Good Idea



Quantum Energy Squares



Perfy



Proper Wild

Last year, we highlighted how the energy landscape was shifting as consumers looked for cleaner ingredients to power their day. This year, the focus has evolved further—not just on clean energy, but on sustained, balanced energy that fuels moments without the dreaded crash. Glucose regulation has taken center stage in the health world, with figures like @glucosegoddess (5M followers on Instagram) driving awareness around glucose spikes and their impact on overall health. A growing number of non-diabetics are even wearing glucose monitors to better understand how their bodies process sugar, fueling demand for products that support stable energy levels.

Consumers are thinking beyond just caffeine or carbs—they're seeking B12 for natural energy, L-theanine to smooth caffeine release, and formulations designed to avoid the spike-and-crash cycle of traditional sugar-bomb energy drinks (or even their morning coffee). Energy is no longer just about the jolt—it's about stability, endurance, and smarter fuel for the day ahead.





#3 Mocktail Mojo



Tost



De Soi



Hiyo



Jas



Lapos



Luna Bay



Huzzy Smart Sips



Naked Life Spirits

Last year was all about non-alc spirits for DIY mocktails. This year, brands are making it even easier with canned, craft RTD mocktails that take out the guesswork and actually taste amazing. While this category has been around for a while, it’s now exploding with bold, eye-catching packaging (think sleek multi-serve glass bottles and vibrant single-serve cans) and diverse value props.











Some brands are packing in functional ingredients, while others lean into premium flavors and craft techniques to stand out. With nearly half of Americans aiming to drink less alcohol in 2025 and 1 in 4 adults reporting they were alcohol-free in 2024, the demand for elevated, alcohol-free options is skyrocketing. The reality is, holding a plain bubbly water at a party doesn’t hit the same as sipping from a thoughtfully designed slim can. RTD mocktails aren’t just an alternative anymore—they’re becoming the main event. TLDR: The sober-curious movement isn’t slowing down, and RTD mocktails are officially the life of the party. Keep an eye on this space—it’s only getting buzzier (minus the buzz).





#2 Honey, It's Date Night!



				
Beekeeper Coffee	1770 Naturally Australia	Ice Cream For Bears	Sidekick Soda	Honey Mama's
				
Date Lady	Date Better	True Dates	Joolies	Datefix

Honey is having a moment as the new, better-for-you sweetener. Natural, pure, and with a more moderate glycemic index, it's stepping in as a go-to alternative to sugar alcohols and overly processed options. But here's the twist: bees—which are more abundant than ever—are crucial to our food supply, pollinating up to 90% of what we eat. So, honey is not just sweet—it's regenerative and sustainable, driving halo perception as a better for the planet alternative. Additionally, as concerns over honey adulteration rise, consumers are increasingly seeking out pure, authentic honey, with a growing interest in its storytelling and provenance—much like wine. The rise of hot honey as a condiment and honey's expanding role in food and beverages reflects a larger trend of moving toward recognizable ingredients in healthier, more transparent products.

In a similar vein, dates are shining right now thanks to this shift back to wholesome, recognizable sweeteners. Long used as a staple ingredient in BFY snacks, dates are now emerging as a standalone treat—whether packaged as a midday puree, a salty chocolate-covered snack, or a drizzle of rich date syrup. Packed with fiber, potassium, and magnesium, dates bring maximum flavor with minimal processing while offering a naturally sweet, nutrient-dense alternative to refined sugar. Expect to see even more honey & date-based products popping up as demand for natural, nutrient-dense ingredients continues to rise.





#1 Great Animal Revival



Primal



Churn



Elleno's



Clio



Buttercraft



Laurel's



Painterland Sisters



Bezi Labneh

Guess who's back, back, back—back again (!!!)? That's right, dairy—and now, real meat, too! For the first time in years, animal products made a major comeback at Expo West, reclaiming space after a decade dominated by plant-based alternatives. So, what's fueling the shift? Ongoing research and consumer sentiment suggest that for those who can tolerate it, real dairy and high-quality meat are often healthier than their ultra-processed plant-based counterparts, which can be packed with additives and artificial ingredients.

This year, full-fat dairy took center stage, from indulgent, premium options like jalapeño butter to RTD craft lattes made with A2 milk. Meanwhile, real meat brands doubled down on quality and sourcing, with grass-fed, regeneratively raised, and minimal-ingredient options making a strong showing. As consumer preferences shift toward authentic, whole-ingredient foods, both dairy and meat are poised for a long-term resurgence across the industry. Buckle up—real animal products are back in the spotlight.



So what can brands do to scale with these trends?

There are a few key markers of mainstream-ability:



Consumer Comprehension

The trends most likely to scale are those that are easy to understand and immediately accessible. The less work required by consumers to “get it,” the better



Virality

The trends that break through unexpectedly often have a viral moment that propels them into the mainstream (remember #TinnedFishTok?). These are the surprise hits that capture consumer attention and turn more niche categories into cultural phenomena



Value Proposition

The price value equation must be optimized to drive wider adoption & repeat purchase. Some shoppers may be willing to try \$20 granola once, but they’re unlikely to routinize



Perception of Efficacy

For a product to truly break through, its functional benefits must be felt or at least believed by consumers. If it doesn’t live up to its promise, it won’t build the trust needed to scale



Retailer Realities

The in-store space crunch is a crucial factor for scalability. With crowded categories (like functional beverages) and limited facings, brands that can creatively find their retail space—whether in unexpected aisles or by thinking outside the box—are more likely to make it big. After all, who’s going to fill all those empty egg shelves?

Curious how your business can get in on these trends? As always, we welcome conversation at info@seuratgroup.com!

