

NATURAL PRODUCTS EXPO WEST 2023 HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS FROM THE GARAGE GROUP

MARCH 2023

AN EVOLUTION INTO STEWARDSHIP



In the spirit of constant evolution, EXPO WEST 2023 highlights amplify the overarching theme of "Stewardship"

Over the years, Natural Products EXPO WEST has evolved from being a showcase for niche, natural & organic challenger brands to a much broader gathering of brands ranging from bootstrapped startups to the largest global makers of CPG products.

In 2023, the overarching theme emerging from EXPO WEST is about being **good stewards of resources** – people, plants, animals, and the planet – with an eye on the long term health of each, and how each resource relates to one another.

We see Stewardship brought to life across five trends and representative executions included in this report.

5 TRENDS WE'RE WATCHING



MUSHROOMS MATTER



USE & USE AGAIN



CIRCULAR
AGRICULTURE MODELS



A2 PROTEIN ON THE RISE



ANIMAL-FREE LABELING

A DOUBLE-CLICK INTO EACH TREND & WHAT'S BEHIND THEM



MUSHROOMS MATTER - Mushrooms are taking a leading role in products, being recognized for the powerhouses that they are. Part of the fungi kingdom, they help recycle nutrients in the soil. Mushrooms themselves are rich in nutrients which support gut, immune system, and brain health.



USE & USE AGAIN - The expectations for consumables and their lifecycles have changed.

Multi-use and mega-use product introductions are replacing single-use items as consumers push back against plastics and wasting resources (including their dollars).



CIRCULAR AGRICULTURE MODELS - Regenerative Agriculture practices, Upcycling by-products, and discarded produce are ways brands are combating waste today to sustain resources for tomorrow. The acquisition of Moonshot by Patagonia Provisions exemplifies this emphasis on Regenerative Ag.



A2 PROTEIN ON THE RISE - A2 milk comes from cows that genetically produce only the A2 protein rather than the combination of A1 and A2 proteins contained in most dairy products. Milk with A2 protein is easier for many consumers to digest while still being nutritious.



ANIMAL-FREE LABELING - Brands are labeling their products as being animal-free. While some plant-based products come by this claim naturally, others are calling attention to the characteristics they are able to mimic of real dairy and meat – e.g., texture and taste – without animals.





HIGHLIGHTS

THE 5 TRENDS & HOW THEY CAME TO LIFE



TREND #1 MUSHROOMS MATTER





MINDRIGHT

SNACKS WITH A MENTAL BOOST

Mindright offers first of its kind products which infuse nootropics and superfoods into tasty snacks. Their line of chips are popped rather than fried and filled with a blend of Lion's Mane and Ginseng extracts plus B vitamins and L-Theanine. In four flavors, these chips fuel the brain and body with ingredients which benefit mood, focus, and energy.







BALANCED TIGER

MAKING MUSHROOMS MORE ACCESSIBLE

"Functional mushrooms" are varieties that deliver nutrition and also have benefits related to energy, cognitive function, stress, inflammation, immune support, and more. The founder of this lineup of protein bars wanted to move the benefits of functional mushrooms out of the supplements aisle and bring accessible formats to more consumers. Each of its four SKUs blends a specific mushroom type with plant protein and tasty ingredients to address focus, immunity, balance, and energy.







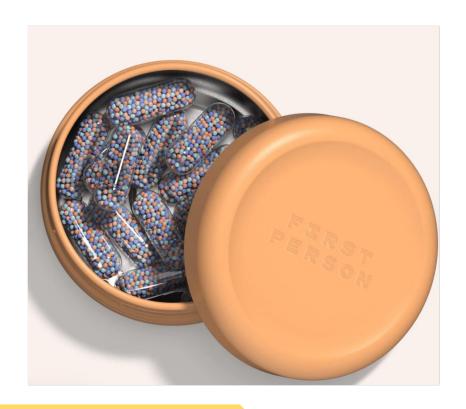
GOODLES

FUNGI-LICIOUS AND NUTRITIOUS

The makers of better for you boxed mac & cheese recently added Here Comes The Truffle. The SKU features a proprietary blend of white cheddar and Parmesan cheeses. Maitake and shiitake mushrooms deliver adaptogens and nutrients, while ground black truffles and porcini mushrooms complement the cheeses and boost the flavor.







FIRST PERSON

TARGETED SUPPLEMENTS

This startup is producing the "world's first precision-targeted supplements." Driven by a family history of Alzheimer's disease, the brand's founders, who are brothers, have discovered the power of lion's mane mushrooms to improve brain health and cognition. Their Golden Hour supplement contains both reishi and Lion's Mane mushrooms to alleviate stress and boost the mind-body connection and is the winner of a NEXTY Award at Expo West.





TREND #2 USE & USE AGAIN





LASTOBJECT

1 REPLACES 1,000

This brand makes high-quality, reusable products that outlast and outperform single-use personal care items. Their LastSwab Beauty trio of personal care swabs are made with medical-grade silicon, a natural chemical element, and each may be used up to one thousand times.







BLUELAND

COMPREHENSIVELY DESIGNED TO TACKLE WASTE

This Dishwasher Starter Set uses innovative dryform tablets formulated without volatile organic compounds (VOCs), parabens, ammonia, phthalates, or chlorine bleach. The pucks eliminate plastic waste and are as effective as traditional cleaners. A reusable tin may be replenished repeatedly with tablets packaged in compostable packaging,







BETTER FOR ALL

DESIGNED TO BE RECOGNIZED AS THE HERO IT MAY BE

The PHBH Event Cup from this brand is biobased, reusable, and fully compostable. Designed to meet the market need for large commercial events such as stadium games, concerts, festivals, and large gatherings, the cups are dishwasher safe and compatible with standard lids. Two patent pending shapes distinguish these groundbreaking cups.







ELIYA

MULTISENSORY APPEAL TO INSPIRE REUSE

The King Coconut Water from this brand is packaged in a custom frosted glass bottle that was designed for consumers to handle with ease and want to use repeatedly. The glass bottle is visually appealing, ergonomic, and beneficial for sealing and preserving the flavor of the beverage. Additionally, the glass bottle may be reused indefinitely, and is also 100% recyclable.









BFREE

ASSURING SANITATION TO PROMOTE LESS WASTE

Made with 100% medical-grade silicone - a manmade product - and inspired by the lotus effect in nature, the Bfree menstrual cup is antibacterial and chemical-free; and it wipes clean without the need for boiling. The use of these cups has the potential to displace thousands of wastegenerating pads and tampons over a few years.





THEME #3 CIRCULAR AGRICULTURE MODELS

CIRCULAR AGRICULTURE MODELS





SIMPLI

SUPPORTING REGENERATIVE FARMERS

This company is committed to sourcing pantry items such as quinoa, amaranth and beans from farmers who are already using regenerative practices. Simpli also helps them become Regenerative Organic Certified to arm them with an internationally recognized verification. These big, buttery gigante beans are sourced from ancient Greek farms with abundant water sources vital to creating a regenerative ag ecosystem.



CIRCULAR AGRICULTURE MODELS





ASARASI

TAPPING THE GOODNESS OF A BY-PRODUCT

This probiotic seltzer contains water tapped from maple trees, a by-product of the maple syrup production process. Asarasi has pioneered a proprietary process to collect, carbonate, flavor and deliver this abundant offshoot in nine flavors of organic sparkling tree water. By sourcing the water from living trees, the brand has created the world's only sustainable and renewable, USDA organic, sparkling water - packaged in reusable glass bottles.









EAT THE CHANGE

MINIMIZING WASTE AND WATER CONSUMPTION

This brand produces snacks and beverages using real, simple, organic ingredients. They upcycle imperfect produce and utilize vegetables such as carrots and mushrooms which require fewer water resources.









REHARVEST PROVISIONALS

BLEMISHED IS BEAUTIFULLY BENEFICIAL

With a mission to "tackle food waste," this brand rescues and repurposes discarded produce and partners with farmers to source surplussed fruits and vegetables which go into their real food, frozen smoothie pops.







YOLÉLÉ

BRINGING ANCIENT GRAINS TO MODERN CONSUMERS

"Yolélé" is a term of exuberance used throughout West and Central Africa. It roughly translates to "Let the Good Times Roll," and this startup with the same name celebrates the ingredients and food traditions of Africa. The brand is creating a market for traditional crops grown under resilient, regenerative farming systems in order to foster a more biodiverse, drought-tolerant landscape across West Africa. They are using fonio, a gluten-free, ancient grain to produce flavorful chips that deliver the tastes of West Africa to U.S. consumers.





TREND #4 A2 PROTEIN ON THE RISE

A2 PROTEIN ON THE RISE





THE A2 MILK CO.

HAPPY COWS FOR QUALITY MILK

This brand produces 100% real milk that naturally contains A2 protein. The brand's products are rooted in their partnerships with farmers and the treatment of the milk-producing cows, each of which is considered a V.I.C. (Very Important Cow). All of their a2 farms in the United States are Validus certified for animal welfare. The a2 Milk Co. partnered with Hershey's to bring a co-branded chocolate milk to market.







ALEXANDRE FAMILY FARM

HOLISTIC FAMILY FARMING

This multigenerational family farm is America's first Certified Regenerative Dairy. Run by the 4th and 5th generation Alexandre dairy farmers, the family produces and markets 100% A2 organic dairy products from their organic grass-fed cows which intentionally graze alongside the farms' chickens in a style of farming known as "holistic management."





ST. BENOIT CREAMERY

PROVENANCE & TRANSPARENCY

This California brand started making yogurt because they were disappointed with the artificial ADDITIVES and quality they saw in the grocery aisles. Their yogurts feature full-fat, pasture-raised, A2 protein dairy from Jersey cows raised 26 miles away. Their yogurt comes in reusable glass jars so consumers can see the goodness before they experience it.

A2 PROTEIN ON THE RISE





ALEC'S

INDULGENCE ON A MISSION

The founder of this eponymous brand was inspired to pair his love for sweet frozen desserts with his passion for sustainability. Alec's ice cream is Certified Regenerative Organic. Using A2 dairy and imaginative flavor pairings, this brand delivers tummy-friendly, sweet goodness.







TREND #5 ANIMAL-FREE LABELING





MEATI

MUSHROOMS MIMIC MEAT

The animal-free meats from this food tech startup are made almost entirely from mushroom root which provides significant amounts of fiber and important micronutrients. Mycelium is the mass of tiny white fibers growing underground. Meati grows its own and marinates this mushroom root with a handful of natural spices and herbs to create protein and fiber-rich meat alternatives with strikingly similar texture and tastes to the animal proteins they mimic.









N!CK'S X PERFECT DAY

PARTNERING TO PROVIDE DAIRY PROTEIN TO VEGANS

The lineup of vegan frozen desserts from this brand is made using Perfect Day's animal-free dairy proteins, produced using a process that involves the fermentation of microflora. Perfect Day claims that these proteins are identical to those found in cow's milk and provide the the nutrition, texture, and taste of conventional dairy.







CALIFORNIA PERFORMANCE CO

BIOIDENTICAL TO PROTEIN FROM COWS

This brand delivers high quality real dairy nutrition using animal-free whey protein. Its V-whey is made by microflora and is bioidentical to whey protein from cows. While delivering nutrition for performance, the brand claims to be kinder to the planet as there are no greenhouse gas emissions from cows.



ANIMAL-FREE LABELING









BORED COW

BEHAVES LIKE DAIRY MILK

This is the first brand from Tomorrow Farms and is a new kind of milk alternative. It is made with real milk protein from fermentation rather than bovine animals; and it behaves like dairy milk - in cooking, baking, drinking, and frothing. Their animal-free whey protein is made by Perfect Day; and the brand adds upcycled citrus fiber to yield the texture and creaminess of cow's milk, without the cows.





