

The Grocer

Focus On: Functional Food & Drink by Daniel Selwood (daniel.selwood@thegrocer.co.uk)

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The Story

The coronavirus has made health a higher priority than ever for British consumers. That means extra demand for products with added health benefits: both physical and mental. Whether it's stressed-out consumers looking for something to relieve their anxiety, or shoppers looking for an immune boost, functional food and drink has a large role to play. And the solutions are already there for the taking. There are CBD drinks to aid relaxation, vitamin B products to help with depression, and immune-boosting juices packed full of multivitamins. So who is seeing the highest surge in sales amid the coronavirus crisis? What are consumers looking for? And how are functional food and drink players responding?

KEY THEMES

Demand: What need states are locked-down Brits looking to satisfy through functional goods? Which products and brands are in most demand? How much demand? Are they managing to fulfil orders amid tough circumstances, and how? Which retailers are shifting the most functional units?

DTC: To what extent are consumers buying directly from functional brands during this time? How are online sales performing?

Nutrition: What nutritional benefits are shoppers seeking as they stay stuck at home? Is it the vitamin D they would usually get from sunshine? Vitamin C for immunity? More fibre? Which brands offer such things, and how? To what degree do they benefit people's health?

Stress relief: How are people shopping to stay calm and well rested? Is it through the trendy CBD category? If so, through what types of food and drink? Or are people still taking traditional routes such as camomile tea?

Complete nutrition: As supermarket stock runs empty and consumers struggle to get their full shop, how are 'complete nutrition' brands such doing? Are they proving an easy way to get all the necessary vitamins and nutrients at this time?

Sports nutrition: Sedentary Brits are unlikely to what products aimed at active people. Or are they? How is the sports nutrition sector coping during the pandemic? Is it changing to meet needs, or can its existing offer benefit consumers? Which brands are coping best – and worst?

Kantar data: Using Kantar commentary, we explain how the different areas of the functional food and drink market are faring amid the coronavirus crisis