Flavor Favorites for the Plant-Based Boom

As the plant-based nutrition market continues to grow and become mature, competition between brands with similar offerings increases. Often times, brands that win are the ones that are able to make a connection with consumers through great-tasting experiences. In fact, according to a report from FMCG Gurus, 78% of US consumers say taste is an important factor when buying plant-based dairy alternative products, making it the most important attribute[1].

To set themselves apart, brands can take advantage of flavor trends to offer great tastes without increased ingredient lists. Over the past 12 months, vanilla and chocolate have been the most popular flavors launched[2], but the recent indulgent flavors trend has helped other flavors spark as well including:

- Cinnamon
- Molten Chocolate
- Cheesecake
- Dark Chocolate Sea Salt Caramel
- Peach Cobbler
- Mint Chocolate Cookie

Indulgence on Trend

43%

of consumers are willing to pay a premium for **dessert flavors** in plant-based dairy products[3]

Great taste is not always easy to come by though. The issue is many products with plant-based ingredients may taste bitter or present other off-notes due to the way the ingredients taste. This presents an opportunity to use flavor modification solutions to create a product that tastes superior to others on the market. Alex Amann, Junior Flavorist at Prinova, explains:

"Trending health ingredients, such as plant proteins or natural sweeteners, often times present bitter off notes that are not pleasant tasting to the end consumer. Understanding the taste implications of these ingredients is imperative to developing effective taste solutions and improvements."

Common flavor modification solutions used to make these tough to work with ingredients taste better include:

- **Blockers** - Blockers change taste attributes through a chemical process.
- **Maskers** - The intention of a masker is to mitigate off-notes while providing a neutral flavor profile.
- **Sweetness Enhancers** - Sweetness enhancers can help potentiate the sweet perception of sweetener ingredients.

With taste remaining king when it comes to product choice, look for flavor to play an increasingly important role when it comes to which products stand out and are most successful in the plant-based market. Collaboration between brands and suppliers utilizing flavor modification techniques will help deliver products that meet both R&D specifications and great taste.

Sources:
1 - FMCG Gurus – Identifying Key Trends in the USA
2 - Innova New Product Launch Database
3 - FMCG Gurus - Flavor, Color & Texture - November 2022 - USA

