

NATURAL PRODUCTS EXPO EAST



WHAT'S NEW AT NATURAL PRODUCTS EXPO EAST 2016

BARBARA BRUECKNER SHPIZNER



CONVENTIONAL WISDOM WATCH

When I started at Mattson twenty years ago, company founder Pete Mattson told me “The food industry is a great place to work—everyone has to eat.” True enough on both counts. I’ve always felt the food industry is a great place to work, but now in the era of BIG change, it’s never been more fun and exciting. Everyone still has to eat, but eat what? While we all belong to our own food tribe, powerful movements underfoot are changing the way we all think about food.



MO' BETTA

First there was better-for-you, then better for the Earth, then better for society, now finally, **BETTER QUALITY!**

CW: Think about food in a different way.



ALT-EATING



And the winner is **FLEXITARIANISM**. 55% of Americans want to eat more plant-based foods and even if it amounts to only 1-2 meals per week for now, that's a huge shift in lifestyle.

CW: Never say the V-word again.



FOOD WASTE

While 40% of food waste in America comes from the household refrigerator, manufacturers and restaurants are doing their part to address this problem by aggressively developing items that were previously considered “waste” and turning them into viable food products and creative menu items.

CW: Leave no scrap behind.



AVOCADO



Beliefs about fat that were accepted for decades are being debunked right and left, leaving consumers feeling good again about eating full-fat products.

CW: It's sugar, not fat, that makes you fat.



HIPSTER FOOD

Like the members of any sub-culture, hipsters are drawn to a certain set of food ideals and, it appears, to very specific foods. Like bacon, hipsters have turned a slew of ordinary foods like pickles and coffee into an unstoppable craze.

CW: Liking bacon does not make you special :)





MO' BETTA

Conscious evolution is the evolution of evolution, from unconscious to conscious choice. While consciousness has been evolving for billions of years, conscious evolution is new. It refers to the claim that humanity has acquired the ability to choose what the species *Homo sapiens* will become in the future, based on recent advancements in science, medicine, technology, psychology, sociology, and spirituality. The advent of radical evolutionary technologies such as biotechnology, nanotechnology, artificial intelligence, quantum computing, space exploration, etc., offer us the possibility of profound change in the physical world.

For the past fifteen years, our food choices have been changing. Better-for-you foods dominated supermarket shelves for a while, then, better-for-you foods with a connection to the earth usurped the space. Now we're in full evolutionary mode and evolving our food choices to include better taste. To be successful these days, you've got to have the whole enchilada. The quality of food has been steadily increasing as companies take more time to produce their products—cold brew, aged meats and fermented products to name a few. And we're seeing many agricultural products sourced and grown with more thought and care. This is the future of food.

Here are a few of my favorites:



SOHHA SAVORY YOGURT

www.sohhayogurt.net

With approximately one third of the attendees of Expo West, Expo East has always been a great place for regional companies to showcase their products. I personally enjoy discovering smaller companies with innovative and disruptive products.

The Sohha Savory Yogurt Company is one of these companies. Angela and John Fout started their company in 2013, making a traditional Lebanese recipe to create the thick, labneh-style yogurt they sell at farmers markets, cafes, and select shops in and around New York City, as well as at the Sohha storefront in Chelsea Market.

The Fouts source their milk from a Hudson Valley coop they describe as “better than organic.” Their small batch yogurt is rooted in an old family recipe from Angela’s childhood in Lebanon. Angela sounds a lot like my own grandmother as she says, “I learned not to measure. Instead, my mom always said, ‘Feel the food.’” Their handmade savory yogurt comes in two varieties: *Original* and *Tangy*. What’s their specialty? Tangy topped with za’atar (a mix of thyme, sumac and olive oil.) This is as good as it gets.



LIVE SPARKLING DRINKING VINEGARS

www.drinklive.com

I’ve confessed to drinking a shot of apple cider vinegar every day for years. I do love sour, but it’s still a stretch in the morning. Bragg Organic Apple Cider Vinegar with SCOBY (symbiotic colony of bacteria and yeast), also known as “the mother,” is my go-to brand. Bragg launched a line of lightly sweetened drinking vinegars a few years ago. Not to my taste, I prefer their vinegar straight up.

Now LIVE has introduced a line of sparkling drinking vinegars. The drinks are a combination of raw apple cider and coconut vinegars and just enough fruit juice to make them truly enjoyable. In four flavors: *Tart Cherry*, *Concord Grape*, *Pomegranate & Elderberry* and *Blueberry & Ginger*. The company landed a \$2 million investment from Boulder Investment Group Reprise earlier this year, so someone else likes them too!



FIRE CIDER APPLE CIDER VINEGAR & HONEY TONIC

www.firecider.com

I'm compelled to give a shout-out to this company. Their tattoo-style label caught my eye and peaked my curiosity to see how their drinking vinegar stood up to other products. Bottom line, Fire Cider is fierce! What is it? Fire Cider is a raw, organic, spicy, sweet, tangy apple cider vinegar and honey tonic infused with roots, fruits and spices. What's in it? Organic apple cider vinegar, wildflower honey, lemons, onions, horseradish, ginger, garlic, turmeric and habanero pepper. What do you do with it? Drink it straight, add it to juice, soda water or tea or use it in a salad dressing. Try it; you'll like it!



DAVE'S GOURMET FIERY FOODS CREAMY HOT SAUCES

www.davesgourmetfieryfoods.com

Let's give it up for Chef Dave. Dave Hirschkop is the founder and creative force behind Dave's Gourmet. Dave has been making products that reflect his love of delicious food, wholesome ingredients, and innovative ideas for over twenty years.

Dave's Gourmet Heirloom Pasta Sauces have earned him more than seventeen prestigious Specialty Outstanding Food Innovation awards, including "Best in Category" four times. So with all that culinary admiration, we expect nothing less from Dave's new line of creamy hot sauces. The *New York Times* called his sauces, "The hottest culinary experience known to man." I agree. Available in three flavors: *Creamy Roasted Jalapeño*, *Creamy Ginger Citrus* and *Creamy Garlic Red Pepper*.



DUKE'S SMOKED SHORTY SAUSAGES

www.facebook.com/dukesmeats

The hottest snack in America right now is gourmet dehydrated meat. Why? PROTEIN! Meat snacks have reached nearly \$2.5 billion in retail sales and rank fourth behind potato chips, corn chips and trail mix.

Polish actress Izabella Scorupco said "The most simple things can bring the most happiness." Duke's Shorty Sausages are one of those simple pleasures. Duke's has been making small batch smoked meats for years. These snack-size sausages are mild in flavor but deliver an addictive salty, smoky, meaty taste without a lot of sugar. Available in four varieties: *Original*, *Hatch Green Chile*, *Tomato & Basil* and *Chorizo & Lime*.



ALT-EATING

It starts with extremes and then moves to the center. Paleo, vegan and vegetarianism have been on the rise for years, but it's the concept of plant-based eating that has clinched the psyche of 55% of Americans. With millions of people electing to eat at least one meatless meal per week, plant-based eating has become our alternative eating lifestyle. It's clearly a movement, not a trend.

As a born-and-raised-in-the-Midwest American who has grown up on meat, it's interesting to watch even the most die-hard meat eaters embracing plants. Why the change in attitude? Keeping the planet healthy may be the impetus to alt-eating, but I maintain it's the result of better tasting plant-based foods that has made it stick. Long gone are the days of lack-luster brown rice casseroles and soy milk. With artisan products such as Miyoko's Kitchen and Kite Hill creamery products, there's very little sacrifice involved.

The Plant Based Association launched in March 2016 with a strong mission to educate and lobby on behalf of the plant-based food industry. The organization was founded in part to help Americans shift away from animal to plant-based diets, but has loftier ambitions to shift policies towards better, more sustainable practices with animal agricultural, clearer labeling guidelines (consistency of terms) and a positive impact on the next round of school meals and USDA dietary guidelines in 2020.

This is America. We don't like to sacrifice when it comes to eating. The Plant-Based Association has the best chance of succeeding if plant-based products can deliver a great experience.

Here are some of my favorites:



RIPPLE PLANT-BASED MILK

www.ripplefoods.com

Ripple is a relative new entry in the non-dairy beverage space and is going head-to-head with nut milk. Main criticisms of nut-based milk are the lack of protein and thin chalky texture when compared to dairy milk. Ripple employs pea protein and a special technology that delivers the same level of protein with a rich mouthfeel similar to dairy milk and is a standout in the category. SPINS estimates that refrigerated non-dairy beverages account for \$3.3 billion of the total \$5 billion in plant-based sales. Companies such as Ripple and Califia Farms continue to bring innovation and excitement to a hot category.



VEGGIE NOODLE CO. VEGGIE SPIRALS

www.veggienoodleco.com

Zucchini noodles, or “zoodles”, were the first trendy spiral veggie touted by celebrity docs and chefs alike as a low-carb, healthy alternative to pasta. Depending on the quality of the spiralizer, making spiral veggies can be challenging.

Mason Arnold, founder of Greenling, an Austin-based online grocery store offering local delivery services for organic and locally-grown foods, has started Veggie Noodle Co. which sells organic spiral cut veggies. They sell four vegetable varieties—*Zucchini Spirals*, *Sweet Potato Spirals*, *Butternut Squash Spirals* and *Beet Spirals*—and on their website they have recipes that tell you what to do with these long strands of veggies. Here’s another fun and convenient way to get more veggies into your diet.



FOOD WASTE

When talking about food waste, the expression “farm to table” takes on a totally different meaning. Waste happens at all stages along the food chain that stretches from production, processing, retailing and finally to our kitchens. It is estimated that 30% of food grown is never eaten, but consumers need to look in the mirror too. We overbuy because food is cheap and available at every turn, we store food improperly, we take “use by” dates literally, we squander leftovers, and we order too much food in restaurants and leave piles of food behind.

No matter where waste occurs, it represents a lost opportunity to feed people. There’s nothing wrong with abundance, but it fights with our conscience to think that one out of eight people in the world go hungry every day. And, that’s exactly how the Millennial generation see it too. Young solutionaries are popping up all over the globe affectively working to solve food waste in their part of the world.

Tristram Stuart is a UK-based Food Waste campaigner who wants to reduce the environmental impact of food waste around the world. Over a million people have watched his TED Talk *The Global Food Waste Scandal* and projects such as Imperfect Produce in Oakland, CA, are following his lead. National Geographic made “ugly” produce their cover story last March. And last July, Wal-Mart, America’s largest retailer, started selling ugly fruit and vegetables. Countless businesses, such as grocery stores, restaurants, and cafeterias have stepped forward to combat waste by optimizing their purchasing, shrinking portion sizes, and beefing up efforts to move excess to charities.

Food companies are stepping it up too and creating new products out of waste stream. Sir Kensington’s created Fabanaise with the cooking water from chickpeas, Farmhouse Culture created Gut Shots from the juice of their raw sauerkrauts and The Forager Project used the pulp from their juice drinks to create vegetable chips. A growing number of brands aspire to do what is right and are evolving conscious ethical consumption.



MOTHER IN LAW'S LIQUID KIMCHI

www.milkimchi.com

What should I do with leftover kimchi juice? Hmm. You've probably asked yourself a similar question if you've had brine leftover at the bottom of your ferments. That brine is full of beneficial bacteria, not to mention great flavor.

To make great ferments like Mother-in-Law's Kimchi is a labor of love. What a shame to toss out the leftover brine. And that's what they thought too. So they bottled it and a spicy elixir of liquid kimchi was born. Drink as a probiotic shot or add to favorite recipes as a base for a Bloody Mary, salad dressing, soup, ramen, noodles, grains and sautéed vegetables.



AVOCADO

Whether we're throwing it in a smoothie, making guacamole or layering it on toast, America just can't get enough of the creamy versatile fruit. Consumption of avocados in the U.S. has more than doubled in the past decade and quadrupled since 2000.

Why the obsession over avocados? Beyond the influx of foreign fruit and a growing Hispanic population, it's called GUACAMOLE. Americans don't just like guacamole; they love it! And what's not to love? It's vegan. It's not endangered. It's nutritious. It's versatile. It's delicious!

And our love of the avocado doesn't stop with guacamole. Now everything from snacks to dressings are being "AVO-ized."

Here are some of my favorites:



CALAVO ORGANIC GUACAMOLE

www.calavo.com

A group of grower-hobbyists banded together in 1924 and formed the first California Avocado Growers Exchange, which would later become Calavo. Calavo is credited with launching the avocado industry and amending the state agricultural codes for avocados and handling.

The North American avocado industry was the first to utilize HPP (High Pressure Pasteurization), a non-thermal pasteurization method, for food processing. The end result is the benefit of using “cold pasteurization” when processing avocados. The fruit remains undamaged with its taste, texture and nutrition intact.

Calavo offers a variety of fresh signature guacamoles in a variety of sizes that are all natural with no preservatives. Now, their popular guacamole is available in an organic version. Whether sold at retail or used in foodservice, Calavo’s Ultra-High Pressure RTE guacamoles are convenient and delicious.



PRIMAL KITCHEN SALAD DRESSING & MAYO

www.primalkitchen.com

Mark Sisson is a former elite endurance athlete who has made health and fitness his life’s work. He’s written a series of best-selling health and fitness books and publishes a popular website, *Mark’s Daily Apple*. Mark founded Primal Kitchen with the intent to develop primal-inspired salad dressings and condiments full of healthful, natural fats with no industrial vegetable, or seed oils prevalent in the majority of these types of products. And he’s done just that.

His line of salad dressing and mayonnaise are made with avocado oil, one of the healthiest oils on the planet. Studies have found avocado oil benefits to include the prevention of the development of diabetes, high cholesterol, high triglyceride levels, and obesity. Avocado oil has even received prescription drug status in France because of its proven ability to counter the negative effects of arthritis! Why is it superior to most other oil? Mainly because avocado oil is derived from the fleshy pulp and not the seed. The pulp produces an oil full of healthy fats, including oleic and essential fatty acids. And its high smoke point makes it preferable for cooking because the structure of the oil doesn’t break down at high temperatures. Primal and Paleo approved.



HIPSTER FOOD

Hipsters are known for many things, but especially for taking their food very seriously. Like any sub-culture, Hipsters are drawn to a set of ideals and when it comes to food it's artisan, hand-crafted, local, and healthy-eating to name a few. We can all value good food made by smaller farmers, but Hipsters are taking some foods to a new level of obsession. Hipsters and cold brew coffee go together like peanut butter and jelly. Pickles and Brussels sprouts have finally made it to the big stage in large part due to hipster love. If you really like kombucha, you're a true Hipster. Hipsters love bacon, but then so does everyone.

Now that kale has gotten too popular to be cool, Hipsters are commandeering cauliflower. Social media is bursting at the seams with recipes for cauliflower rice, an increasingly viable alternative to rice and other gluten-based foods. And Hipsters will buy artisanal anything. Words matter.

All Millennials may not be Hipsters, but this generation has one thing in common—they think differently about almost everything. Their approach to food is changing the food landscape as we know it. This shift by millions will change the food industry forever as the power is changed from Big Food to “the little guy” selling online or at the farmer's market.

Expo East 2016 was teeming with Hipster food. Here are a few of my favorites:



CALIFIA FARMS COLD BREW COFFEE

www.califiafarms.com

Looking back at the milk category, milk's decline in retail sales could have been a lot worse if it hadn't been for coffee. Why not use the same winning strategy in plant-based beverages? Califia did and created a line of delicious plant-based coffee drinks in Hipster flavors: *XX Espresso*, *Triple Shot*, *Dirty Chai*, *Full Shot*, *Black & White*, *Salted Caramel*, *Cocoa Noir* and *Mocha Mexico*. They are now the top selling RTD coffee brand in the natural channel.



N.O. BREW ICED COFFEE

www.nobrew.com

N.O. BREW joins a slew of coffee companies selling hand-crafted, small-batch coffee. N.O. BREW slow brews their coffee over a long period of time to develop the full, rich flavor of their slow-roasted Arabica bean. The result is a smooth, never bitter, taste. The same care goes into producing their New Orleans-Style Iced Coffee. I'm partial to Blue Bottle's New Orleans Style-Iced Coffee, but this company comes close. Products are available retail and online.



4505 CHICHARRONES

www.4505meats.com/chicharrones

If you were asked to list the top five foods you crave, could you? One of mine would be the brisket at 4505 Burgers & BBQ in San Francisco. Originally a butcher shop, 4505 Meats threw open their doors on their fast casual restaurant on Divisadero Street in 2014. Ryan Farr, the talented butcher behind 4505 Meats and known for his chicharrones, churns out amazing brisket, chicken, sausage, and ribs from a wood-fired barbecue pit and smoker. For those that don't know, chicharrones are simply deep fried pork skins. But there's nothing simple about the incredible taste one gets from 4505's chicharrones. Dubbed "crackly crack-in-the-bag" by the critics, these crispy snacks are impossible to put down. Pure "porkaliciousness" in three varieties: *Smokehouse BBQ*, *Classic Chili & Salt*, and *Jalapeño Cheddar*. Paleo friendly!



Barbara Brueckner Shpizner is a professional food developer at Mattson—the country's most experienced independent developer of new food and beverage products for the retail foods industry, as well as food service and restaurant chains. Barbara's career in the food industry spans 38 years, with the last 15 years focused in the natural, healthy and functional food channels. Barbara's expertise at Mattson includes innovating and developing products for some of the nation's largest, mid-size, startup, and international food companies. After more than three decades, her vast knowledge of the food industry has given her a better understanding for how the food we eat contributes to our basic quality of life—from our health to our happiness.

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Mattson is North America's premier food and beverage design and development firm. We help companies fully realize their innovation potential with new concept development and optimization, prototype development, branding and package design, consumer research, and commercialization. We take clients from strategy to market readiness. We work for startups, mid-size companies, and billion+ multi-nationals, across all channels, technologies, and need states.



See you next year at Natural Products Expo West 2017!
Be sure to visit our booth!

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