Trend Cycles in Natural Food:
How Niche Needs Grow to Change How America Eats

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peeled
SNACKS
Trends
The easiest expression of change in the food industry

**TRENDS mean progress**
Consumers, manufacturers and retailers regularly make advances in food via new science, technology, and in response to newly expressed needs in the marketplace.

**Trends mean opportunity**
Manufacturers, retailers, and investment interests create revenue through leveraging trends and consumer responses to them.

Let’s look at a model of how trends impact the marketplace, and forces that can expand or limit a trend’s impact.
Marketing/ Product Development Trend Scale

Fad: a bubble of buzz around an ingredient, health benefit, or celebrity endorsement, usually expressed in one or two brands

Trend: a number of brands participating in innovation in a product, mixing fads and movements for new offerings

Movement: a product set with heavy influence from passionate consumers, with multiple brands trying to benefit from consumer push

Sub-Category: a product set with limited retailer focus as a subset of competing or coordinating offerings

Category: a product set with dedicated space in multiple retailers
**Examples of FACTORS in pushing trends:**

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<td>• Bumper Crop/ Failures</td>
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<td>• Shock science</td>
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<td>• The Bloomberg effect</td>
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Trend Cycle breakdown:

**Fad:** Example: Ethos Water, POM, 100s of companies over the years  
*Value to Consumer/Marketplace:* usually an inexpensive playground for new ideas or products  
*Who makes the money:* whichever manufacturer was first to market

**Trend:** Example: Chia product companies, Kambucha, date-based bars  
*Value to Consumer/Marketplace:* Fads are mixed to combine new product offerings; business models tested for viability; consumers get “pocketbook vote”  
*Who makes the money:* most innovative, best executors; retailers; distributors*

**Movement:** Paleo, Non-GMO (in transition), Monk Fruit, Kale  
*Value to Consumer/Marketplace:* Where public debate intersects CPGs; Manufacturers can explore varied marketing strategies; natural retailers pioneer and experiment with marketing; venture capitol can start to scrutinize growing evidence; press gets “5th Estate” vote  
*Who makes the money:* large CPG companies using smaller ones for R&D; innovative retailers

**Sub-Category:** Example: Coconut Water, Gluten Free, Stevia  
*Value to Consumer/Marketplace:* retailers experiment with merchandizing; much more data for everyone to scrutinize; consumer awareness grows; consumers get final say  
*Who makes the money:* retailers, break-out manufacturers

**Category:** Example: Organic/Natural, everything you regularly buy at the store  
*Value to Consumer/Marketplace:* ideas are proven and sold…. Until they’re disproven (Napoleon III)  
*Value to marketplace:* this is how most consumers eat  
*Who makes the money:* Retailers, large CPG companies
Trends can have many origins, with many motivations in play.

But that’s how figure out what’s worth buying (and eating).

And what isn’t.

Before extoling the virtues of something trending, FOLLOW THE MONEY.