

# Consumer Trends: Top Diet Fads for 2014

NEW YORK (PRNewswire) — The annual nutrition expert trends forecast is in. What fad diets are hot? What's out? Which foods top the list? What are consumers eating? According to a survey of more than 500 Registered Dietitians conducted by the nutrition trade magazine, *Today's Dietitian*, and a leading food, health and wellness public relations agency, *Pollock Communications*, America's demand for nutrition information is at an all-time high and there's no shortage of outlets talking about diets. The data shows that with all the attention on health and nutrition, Americans need advice from dietitians now, more than ever, to cut through the clutter.

Whether right on or nutritionally wrong, dietitians identified 14 diet, nutrition and food trends that will make headlines, influence food-purchasing decisions and shape Americans' waistlines in 2014. For better or for worse, here's what to watch out for:

1. *Anti-wheat sentiment.* According to our experts, consumers will continue to lean on wheat-deprived diet plans like the Paleo diet, gluten-free or "wheat belly" in 2014. "Despite the lack of evidence to support wheat- or gluten-elimination diets for weight loss or health – not associated with a clinical disorder or disease – consumers are still looking for ways to control their weight," explains Jenna A. Bell, PhD, RD, Senior Vice President and Director of Food & Wellness at Pollock Communications. Just over half of the respondents agreed that the Paleo diet, gluten-free or "wheat belly" would top the list of most popular diet fads for 2014.
2. *Ancient grains are new again.* Despite the popularity of some low grain diets, ancient grains are being served up in 2014.
3. *Add kale, coconut or chia seeds.* While 32% of dietitians forecast a fondness for ancient grains, 27% say that kale is hot (or served cold) in 2014. When it comes to ingredients, 37% dietitians report that coconut oil is all the rage, followed by omega-3, ALA-rich chia seeds (32%).
4. *"Low fat" falls flat.* While low carb remains strong, low fat gets weaker. Dietitians predict that the low fat diet will be the least talked about plan for 2014.
5. *The nutrition pros promote MyPlate.* Looking for a great educational tool for creating a healthy diet? Seventy-five percent of dietitians turn to MyPlate to help people eat right.
6. *"Health" is important in the grocery store.* When it comes to shopping for food, 95% of dietitians say that "health" is important to shoppers. And supermarkets know this more than anyone – the *Supermarket Dietitian* is the fastest growing job classification in grocery stores nationwide.
7. *I'm a doctor... and I play one on TV.* Dietitians agree that consumers are exposed to more health information on their flatscreens than ever before. Sixty-six percent of dietitians predict that television doctors will up the diet discussions in 2014, along with more views about food from celebrity

trainers and chefs.

8. *I'm as healthy as my friends.* When it comes to weight and health, consumers are comparing themselves to recommendations from TV personalities and health-focused shows, say 34% of dietitians. How else do they gauge their health and weight? They look to their friends and family.
9. *Bloggers blog about nutrition and health.* Whether it's a lifestyle, mommy or credentialed dietitian blogger, consumers are booting up their devices for diet advice. Dietitians report that the topic of nutrition and health is booming on blogs and websites.
10. *The (mis)information age.* Dietitians report that most (67%) of nutrition information is based on personal beliefs and half-truths rather than published peer-reviewed research. And, 75% say that there will be a preponderance of misinformation to digest in 2014.
11. *More eco-conscious eats.* According to dietitians, consumers are looking for more eco-labels in 2014. About 38% say that local is where it's at and 31% tell us that their clients look for sustainable foods when shopping.
12. *Americans become a little too comfortable.* The national averages for body weight have not budged and dietitians worry that Americans may be becoming complacent about their unhealthy weight. Forty-four percent feel that as we move into 2014, more consumers are becoming OK with an unhealthy weight.
13. *Fruits and veggies: the biggest bang for the buck.* If consumers made one positive nutrition change, what would that be? It's no surprise: dietitians say that the most important first step to improve overall health is to eat more servings of fruits and vegetables.
14. *Consumers have an insatiable appetite for nutrition and diet information.* According to 66% of the respondents, consumers' interest in nutrition and weight loss will only grow in 2014.

"After 15 years working on behalf of dietitians, we know that they truly have their finger on the pulse of all things related to nutrition, so we were happy to join forces with Pollock Communications to ask RDs about what the consumers they work with are thinking," says *Today's Dietitian* Publisher Mara Honicker. "Dietitians are the real nutrition experts, and with about 70,000 dietetic professionals in the U.S., they have great influence on the everyday eating habits and purchasing decisions of people from all regional and economic environments."

"We are pleased to ring in the New Year with this nutrition news forecast," remarks Louise Pollock, founder and President of Pollock Communications. "When it comes to food and nutrition, Registered Dietitians are the go-to resource for consumers, brands and the media, so it's important to listen to their predictions."

### **About Pollock Communications**

Pollock Communications is a New York City-based, independent, full-service, food, health and wellness public relations agency launched in 1991. Pollock's public relations and credentialed nutrition experts create innovative partnerships that link brands to health and wellness platforms. Pollock has a long history of reaching key influencers and successfully communicating the taste, health and lifestyle benefits of brands and commodity foods to consumers, retailers and healthcare professionals. **About Today's Dietitian**

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