

Consumer Trends: What Millennials Want

Institute of Food Technologists

Millennials, the generation after Generation X, born in the 1980s and 1990s, form their own demographic group, with their own unique tastes. According to a June 23rd panel at the 2014 Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) Annual Meeting & Food Expo® in New Orleans, industry must keep up with Millennials high-speed, digital-age expectations, if they're going to gain and keep them as customers.

"Millennials are food savvy and tech savvy," said Heidi Curry, Senior Manager Baker, Global Research and Development with Dunkin' Brands. "In addition, they're socially and environmentally conscience, making purchases that feel good to them and are good for the environment."

According to Christian Hallowell, Executive Chef for Delta Airlines, "Ninety-five percent of Millennials make purchasing decisions based on whether a product comes from a socially responsible company, for example, products that are Certified Rain Forest Alliance approved."

"They also want good taste and they want something to differentiate their experience from their friends," said Dominique Vitry, Director of Supply Quality Assurance, Pizza Hut.

"To do that, they want fun flavors and want to take part in creating their own products," said Curry. And they're opinionated, posting their opinions of a product or a restaurant online with Twitter, Yelp and Facebook. This is how Millennials exercise their power and influence the market.

Hallowell also points out that transparency is huge for Millennials. They want to know where their products come from and how they are processed. Companies like Pizza Hut, Delta Airlines, and Dunkin' Brands are making a point of hiring Millennials to gain valuable insights as to their generation's likes and dislikes and to keep pace with the changing market.

About IFT

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the Institute of Food Technologists. Since its founding in 1939, IFT has been committed to advancing the science of food, both today and tomorrow. Our non-profit scientific society—more than 18,000 members from more than 100 countries—brings together food scientists, technologists and related professionals from academia, government and industry. For more information, please visit ift.org [1].

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