

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

Date: September 06, 2022

Report Number: GM2022-0027

Report Name: Top Five Consumer Trends in Germany 2022-2023

Country: Germany

Post: Berlin

Report Category: Market Promotion/Competition, Market Development Reports

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Report Highlights:

The outcomes of COVID-19 pandemic have undeniably changed the gastronomic habits in Europe for the foreseeable future. Behaviors that developed over the lockdown months are continuing to shape purchasing preferences of German consumers. Today, values and individual lifestyles influence eating patterns much more than they did a few years ago. This report gives you an overview of most popular current food trends in Germany.

Executive Summary:

With more than 83 million of the world's wealthiest consumers, Germany is by far the biggest market for food and beverages in the European Union. In 2021, Germany's nominal GDP reached U.S. dollar (USD) 4.21 trillion, positioning the country as the 4th largest economy in the world. Germany is a major producer of food and agricultural products and a leading player in the global marketplace. Germany is also the third largest importer of agricultural products after the United States and China. In 2021, imports of food products reached USD 108.5 billion, an increase of 7.7 percent compared to 2020. While 79 percent of these imports originated from other EU member states, the United States was the largest supplier outside the bloc. Imports of agricultural products from the United States totaled USD 2.1 billion in 2021. The macroeconomic situation and key data about the Germany economy can be found in the 2021 [Exporter Guide](#).

Germany remains a price-focused market, but the share of consumers who are willing to pay for quality is increasing. There is a growing share of consumers who view their purchasing decisions as a political or life-style statement (non-GMO, only free-range eggs, vegetarian or vegan diet), and they demand traceability and information about production methods. Ethnic foods, beauty and superfoods, clean label foods, "free from" products (e.g., gluten or lactose free), and locally grown are further trends that attract more and more German consumers.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic years, new trends are emerging in the food sector, and they are no longer just about exciting new tastes. According to a recent report by [Frankfurt Future Institute](#), **values and individual lifestyles** are influencing eating behavior and purchasing patterns of German consumers today much more than they ever before. Consumers are finding out more about food production and paying more attention to sustainability issues, such as the origin and quality of their food. The grocery purchasing list and menus are therefore becoming more complicated, bringing together wishes, values and the personal tastes of individual consumers. As a result, German post-corona food retail and gastronomy industries are developing towards more sustainability and locality, embracing the advance of e-food and becoming richer in vegetables.

The New Normal – Sustainability and Hybrid Trade

Sustainability is and remains the [most important trend](#): 74 percent of Germans are concerned about environmental pollution; 69 percent are worried about the impact of climate change. More than two-thirds of German consumers are calling on companies to behave as environmentally conscious as possible, for example by using environmentally friendly materials. Social sustainability is also becoming an increasingly important factor, especially for the younger millennials. For this particular target group "eco" means a new coolness: so-called "Glamor Greens" are wearing shirts with eco statements, post about sustainability on social media and buy products that combine a conscious lifestyle with joie de vivre and luxury status.

At the same time, the proportion of German consumers who would like to act in an environmentally friendly manner, but do not know exactly how, is increasing. This is where companies can positively position themselves by offering information, support and the right products to this group.

The trend towards sustainability is also reflected in the field of fast-moving consumer goods. Since the beginning of COVID-19 pandemic, e-commerce in Germany saw a 56 percent overall growth. Omnichannel retailers even surpassed this with growth of almost 80 percent and a higher conversion rate than online-only retailers. According to [GfK research platform](#), 83 percent of all consumers in Germany changed their shopping behavior during the pandemic. Most of the population, including senior citizens, have dealt with online shopping. The “phygital” shopping is clearly becoming the future of retail.

Top 5 consumer trends in Germany

In addition to key sustainability and e-commerce food trends in Germany mentioned above, the following Top 5 consumer trends are likely to dominate the German market in 2022-2023:

DIY food

With the do-it-yourself food trend, consumers are able to prepare delicious food themselves. For example, families can enjoy eating together more often or teach their children how to cook. Modern DIY foods include more than just classic cooking experience: preparation takes place in the kitchen at home, but there is still room for your own creativity. There are now various providers in Germany, such as [HelloFresh](#) and [Amazon Fresh](#), who are taking advantage of this food trend and providing their customers with recipes and the appropriate food packages.

A major driver behind the DIY food trend is the increasing consciousness about health and well-being among German consumers. Whether omnivore or vegan, Germans want to have more control over their diet and set their own standards for sustainability and environmentally friendly consumption.

Delivery and Zero Waste

While awareness of environmental protection is increasing in broad sections of the German population, the COVID-19 pandemic has [increased demand in the delivery and take-away sector](#). New business models are scaling quickly in Germany. Some existing players in delivery have pivoted to groceries, including for example [Flaschenpost](#), a popular bottled drinks delivery service. A new wave of impulse grocery delivery services is appearing and scaling quickly as well. Companies such as [Gorillas](#) and [Flink](#) now offer the delivery of groceries within 10 minutes of ordering for a small delivery fee. For supermarkets, there is now a lot of potential to incorporate these kinds of services into their broader brand universe of services. Supermarkets may act as suppliers, selling private label products through an independent delivery service. Other supermarkets are finding room with exclusive partnerships or are likely to acquire a delivery start-up outright (source: Euromonitor).

This combination results in a new set of requirements for the gastronomy and food industry: the zero-waste concept. Ordered food and packaging for transport should become more sustainable, to reduce waste as much as possible.

To-Go Snacks and Novel Foods

German consumers are not only looking for groceries that conveniently fit into their busy everyday lives, but those that also meet the high demands of sustainability and taste. The share of convenience and ready-to-eat products as well as smaller packaging sizes is increasing, while the share of milk and dairy products, alcoholic beverages, and sugar is declining.

To-go products and snacks have been steadily on the rise in the past few years. Every third German consumer no longer has breakfast at home, and every second person is not eating lunch at home. To-Go snacks and ready-to-eat products are thus becoming everyday companions. In Germany, sales of on-the-go products are significantly higher as compared to other EU countries. Since 2018, market share of snacks and on-the-go products rose by 11 percent in Germany.

Innovative manufacturing and processing technologies also bring new products to the market and give good old products a new taste - for example, bottled cold brew coffee. Berlin is spearheading the trend of novel food consumption, and other German cities are following its lead. In 2021, German food industry welcomed the first edible insect to be approved for food use in the European Union (EU), a big step towards a more transparent legal environment and marketing opportunities for the relatively new industry sector. For more information on this topic, please see the GAIN report: [Edible Insects Invade the German Food Sector Berlin Germany 05-10-2021](#)

Organic Products

Germany has experienced a continuous increase in the demand for organic food. Organic edible oils and organic sauces have been among the fastest growing product lines in supermarkets and benefited from increasing focus among Germans on health issues and sustainability. For more information, please see the GAIN report: [COVID Fuels Historic Growth in Organic Sales Berlin Germany 01-17-2022](#)

Fair trade and organic products have become more important to the German grocery market. Germany is the second largest organic market in the world (behind the United States) and presents good prospects for exporters of organic products. COVID boosted organic sales in Germany the previous years but now times have changed. Russia's invasion of Ukraine and rising inflation with food prices spiking are leading to uncertainty and buying restraint. Expensive products such as organic products are particularly affected by this. In the first quarter of 2022, sales of organic food decreased by up to 10 percent, according to early estimates. The trend is likely to continue in the coming months. However, not all organic products are affected equally. For now, customers are more likely to buy lower-priced private organic labels of retail chains and less likely to buy the more expensive organic products of manufacturers.

Veganization

A trip to a German supermarket is enough to understand the growing demand for meat substitute products. The selection of vegan foods has visibly increased in recent years - from

soy steak to pea-based burger patties. Vegan and meat alternatives are becoming increasingly popular, especially among younger Germans. In order to meet the demands of the "Vegourmets," you need not only the right ingredients, but also creative know-how and culinary imagination.

The plant-based alternatives in Germany no longer aim at a single target group. The meatless food trend is also becoming increasingly popular with omnivores who want to reduce their meat consumption, but don't want to give it up completely. The fact that plant-based meat substitutes have now also established themselves in German discounters also speaks for a rethinking in large parts of society.

Vegan alternatives to certain traditional German dishes are becoming the standard in our culinary repertoire. From Bratwurst to Cabbage Roulade, some promising vegan variants are already emerging on the recipe forums and blogs of the world. Not all vegan variants of well-known dishes or ingredients are convincing. But the competition for the taste experience, which most closely resembles – or even surpasses – the original is already in full swing with an array of substitute products, cookbooks, tools and creative recipe ideas. Apparently, the peak of veganization in Germany is far from being reached (Source: Frankfurt Future Institute).

FAS Berlin Supports U.S. Companies

Trade shows can help U.S. companies — especially those new to the export market — expand their reach to potential customers around the globe. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) endorses three shows in Germany in 2023, namely [FRUIT LOGISTICA](#), [BIOFACH](#) and [ANUGA](#). The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) in Berlin works with the Office of Trade Programs in FAS Washington and show organizers to create a USA Pavilion to highlight the variety and quality of U.S. products to potential foreign buyers. Furthermore, FAS provides participating U.S. companies with marketing and promotion services, market intelligence, logistical support, and on-site assistance. FAS Berlin is always looking for new shows that are interesting for U.S. exporters. Apart from the USDA-endorsed trade shows, the United States also has a strong presence at other non-endorsed shows, like [ProWein](#) or [Health Ingredients Europe](#).

To facilitate the contacts between U.S. companies and German importers at the shows, FAS Berlin also provides trade lists for different types of food. These lists are updated on a regular basis. FAS Berlin also assists U.S. exporters setting up meetings with potential buyers prior to shows. If you are interested in specific trade lists, please contact the FAS Berlin office:

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No Attachments.