

THE FUTURE OF FUNCTIONAL BEVERAGES:

KEY TRENDS FROM SIAL PARIS AND SUPPLYSIDE WEST 2024



This trend forecast brought to you by: De'Airius Salibi, Director of Innovation

In this article, you will find:

- The trends shaping the future of functional drinks
- Protein-packed beverages and adaptogenic elixirs
- How health and sustainability are driving innovation

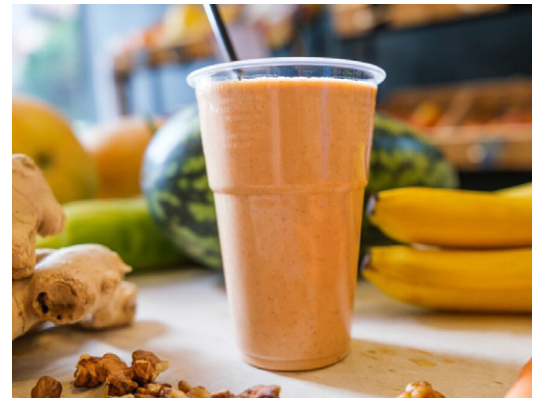
The global beverage landscape is always changing, and those changes were on full display at SIAL Paris and SupplySide West.

The Leahy team saw the trends shaping the future of functional drinks. Driven by demand for health and sustainability, beverage brands are innovating as fast as consumers can drink it up. From protein-packed beverages targeting GLP-1 users to adaptogenic elixirs catering to stressed consumers, here's what caught our attention.

Protein-Packed Innovation

High-protein beverages are leading the charge, but they no longer cater to elite athletes alone. Wellness enthusiasts, casual gym-goers and even weight-loss medication users all have one craving in common—protein. Ready-to-drink (RTD) shakes are evolving with bioavailable peptides and gut-friendly ingredients like probiotics and fiber.

- **Trending:** Low-sugar indulgent flavors like tiramisu and mocha (for a “little treat”), plus meal-replacement drinks that enhance satiety and metabolic health.
- **Consumer Insight:** Expect more meal-replacement drinks with added fiber and gut-friendly ingredients to enhance metabolic health.



Functional Wellness Drinks

Thanks to the on-the-go nature of everyday life, consumers are looking for beverage options that do more than just quench their thirst. Beverages are expected to be a vehicle for targeted health benefits, and brands are answering the call with innovative offerings:

- **GLP-1 Support:** The Journal of the American Medical Association estimates roughly 12% of adults are using one of the many GLP-1 medications available on the market today, a number that simply cannot be ignored.

Brands are catering to this growing population by featuring berberine, probiotics, and fiber to aid digestion and glucose metabolism. This new category also includes nutrient-enriched hydration solutions that cater to the specific needs of individuals managing blood sugar levels.

- **Cognitive and Gut Health:** Nootropic teas, sparkling waters, and adaptogen blends featuring Alpha-GPC, L-theanine, and green tea extract are helping consumers balance focus and relaxation. These drinks cater to busy lifestyles, promising mental clarity and calm in every sip. Likewise, consumers are looking to probiotic and prebiotic beverages to create balance in their gut microbiome.

Mushroom Mania

Mushrooms are quickly becoming the superstar of functional beverages. Adaptogenic mushrooms like lion's mane (focus), cordyceps (energy), and reishi (relaxation) are revolutionizing beverages, from coffee alternatives to hydration drinks.

- **Noteworthy:** Reishi-infused lattes that combine energy and stress relief. Once considered a niche ingredient, mushrooms can now be found in sparkling waters and teas, further expanding the reach of adaptogens into mainstream drink categories, appealing to both early adopters and curious newcomers.
- **What's Next:** Enhanced extraction techniques to maximize bioactive compounds will drive this category, offering better efficacy and flavor profiles.



Natural Energy Alternatives

The energy beverage category is undergoing a natural makeover, with emphasis on the botanical. SupplySide West showcased energy drinks featuring ingredients like:

- **Guayusa:** Delivering balanced, sustained energy with lower jitters compared to synthetic caffeine.
- **Ginseng:** Known for cognitive support and energy stabilization, ginseng is being integrated into RTDs for a more holistic energy boost.

These botanically-driven solutions focus on delivering steady vitality, avoiding the crashes associated with synthetic caffeine. They also often integrate adaptogens and more familiar ingredients like antioxidants to brighten the health halo floating overhead.

Sustainability Takes Center Stage

Consumers are increasingly scrutinizing the environmental impact of their choices, so eco-conscious innovation is a growing priority. At SIAL in particular, brands focused heavily on education, helping consumers understand upcycling's impact for example:

- **Upcycled Ingredients:** Transforming food waste into beverages like apricot milk or fiber-rich drinks. Brands are turning spent grains, "ugly" produce, and coffee grounds into nutrient-packed drinks, highlighting their commitment to reducing food waste.
- **Green Packaging:** RTDs are leveraging minimalist, sustainable designs to attract eco-minded consumers. Plant-based packaging materials and carbon-neutral production methods are emerging as new standards in the industry.



Women-Focused Wellness

Beverages targeting hormonal balance and stress relief are making waves, particularly for women over 40. Once considered a taboo subject, brands are no longer afraid to market to the women in menopause, thanks to their strong buying power and huge numbers.

- Mushroom-infused functional lattes and adaptogen teas combine caffeine and calming ingredients to address both energy, stress and relaxation needs.
- Marine-based magnesium beverages designed to support women's health by reducing stress and aiding in muscle recovery. Magnesium addresses common deficiencies while supporting hormonal balance and overall wellness, a common concern for women over 40.

Beauty in a Bottle

Beauty drinks are turning heads. These innovative drinks feature ingredients usually found in high-end skincare, such as collagen, hyaluronic acid, and antioxidants. The claim is that they offer skin support from within.

- **Sipping on Skincare:** Collagen-infused teas and waters make it easy to boost skin elasticity while staying hydrated.
- **Anti-Aging, Anti-Stress:** With added ingredients like green tea extract and vitamins E and C, these drinks blend beauty with calming benefits.
- **DIY Beauty Kits:** Mix-it-yourself packs allow customization with add-ons like probiotics, antioxidants, and more.



Floral Fusionss

Iced teas took a fragrant turn at SIAL, featuring delicate floral notes and real fruit flavors for a refreshing experience. The eye-catching branding on the outside is as important as the taste of the beverage inside.

- **Jasmine Takes Center Stage:** Jasmine teas paired with real fruit purees offer a delightful balance of floral and fruity.
- **Fresh Juice Teas: A New Brewing Twist:** Soaking tea leaves in fruit juice before drying infuses vibrant, fruity notes into each brew.
- **Blossoms with Benefits:** Herbal blends like chamomile-apple and lavender-lemon soothe the senses while delivering antioxidant boosts.

Hybrid and Customizable

Few consumers are seeking just one functional benefit these days. It's no longer sufficient to just focus hydration or "diet" like it once was. The rise of hybrid beverages combining multiple benefits—like energy and relaxation—signals a new era in beverage innovation. Personalized options, powered by AI and microbiome research, are poised to create tailored solutions for individual health needs.

Functional beverages are at the forefront of innovation, blending health benefits, sustainability, and great taste. As these trends continue to evolve, they promise exciting opportunities for both brands and health-conscious consumers, reshaping the way we drink.



We want to create a more fruitful life for everyone and one of the best ways we can do that is by being an expert resource for you—our customer and partner. That's why we keep our pulse on all beverage trends. Our R&D and Marketing teams are always eager to share their knowledge of the beverage industry so that our customers can thrive right along with us.

*None of the products depicted are affiliated with or the property of Leahy-IFP.

At Leahy-IFP, we are committed to making a more fruitful life for everyone. If you're interested in learning more about the latest beverage trends, just let us know, we'd be happy to discuss with you and your team.

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