



**ALTRUISTIC FOOD TREND  
UPDATE**



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Brands' extensive adoption of corporate social responsibility initiatives has led to a shift in consumer perception — and treatment — of these companies. Beyond believing in them, consumers see brands as agents of legitimate change. More than three-fourths (76%) of US consumers agree that brands maintain the capability to change society for the better.

This rising trust in brands parallels a growing mistrust in government institutions — thanks to continued government scandal, threats of foreign interference and political unrest. Public trust in the government remains near historic lows. Only 17 percent of Americans today say they can trust the government in Washington to do what is right “just about always” (3%) or “most of the time” (14%), according to Pew Research Center.

This becomes even more true when examining the beliefs of millennial and Generation Z consumers. According to research from Fuse and NRG, both Generation Z and millennials find brands more trustworthy than social media influencers or celebrities — and more influential than the government. Pushes for brands to champion causes, and act in a responsible manner, provide corporations with a collective mandate — on par with nonprofit and non-governmental organizations — to address, and solve, social issues.

**WHAT WE'VE SEEN IN 2020:** Covid-19 has required brands to step up and support their communities. From beauty stalwarts Estee Lauder and L'Oreal, to alcoholic beverage companies Molson Coors and Pernod Ricard, brands are producing sought-after hand sanitizer, while others like Procter & Gamble and Nike focus on donating masks. Others identified fiscal donations as the best support. Unilever alone donated more than \$500 million in supplies and cash-flow relief.

Purpose-led actions build equity post-coronavirus. Two-thirds (66 percent) of consumers said brands' responses will influence their likelihood of purchase in the future. More than half of consumers believe brands are responding more quickly and effectively to the pandemic than governments, and 62 percent believe that their country will not endure the crisis without brands playing an active role in relief efforts.

### MICROTREND I: FEEDING DESERTS

Roughly 66 million people in the US live on food stamps or in a state of food insecurity, and another 15 million experience periodic food insecurity throughout the year. The number of food-insecure households has increased continually since 2001, according to the USDA, due to the lack of real substantive progress in food insecurity during that time period.



- **Feeding Families: Food for Good:** PepsiCo Foundation's signature nutrition operation, Food for Good, has worked with food banks and other hunger-fighting organizations to deliver more than 100 million servings of nutritious food to children in need in the US, and Food for Good has delivered 85 million additional servings internationally.
- **Filling Plates: General Mills:** General Mills is a force in fighting food deserts; in 2018, food banks and other nonprofits supported by General Mills collectively enabled the delivery of 1.8 billion meals to hungry people worldwide. The donations and grants to its food bank network served to strengthen populations in more than 30 countries.

**WHAT WE'VE SEEN IN 2020: Creating Change: General Mills & Feeding America:**

General Mills's partnership with Feeding America represents one of the standout initiatives from 2020. Their rapid and innovative response to the Covid-19 pandemic, made possible by investments from the General Mills Foundation, allowed Feeding America to expand their MealConnect platform nationally, and allowed all food businesses anywhere in the country to donate unsold products to local nonprofits.

According to Maryann Byrdak, chief information officer at Feeding America, "With 17 million new individuals projected to be at risk of hunger by the end of the summer, due to Covid-19, making MealConnect available in every community is critical."

## MICROTREND II: DEALING WITH DISASTER

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has spent more than 40 years mobilizing for America's natural disasters; however, it relies heavily on donations from the private sector to address the yearly onslaught of natural phenomena. FEMA cites the private sector as instrumental in its ability to perform its job.

- **Serving Survivors: Kellogg's:** Kellogg's aims to combat global food insecurity and scarcity as a result of climate vulnerability and the resultant natural disasters. It fights these crises through its Breakfasts for Better Days program, providing over 3 billion servings of food to affected individuals.
- **Offering Aid: Tyson:** Tyson has supplied struggling individuals and families with tens of millions of meals, pounds of food and monetary donations in the wake of recent hurricanes and earthquakes. Additional support includes partnerships across more than 14 states and meals for federal workers in the recent shutdown.

**WHAT WE'VE SEEN IN 2020: Keeping Committed: Kellogg's:** Kellogg's Better Days purpose platform represents a significant force in the fight against the disasters that have plagued 2020. Kellogg's and its charitable funds have now donated more than \$17.5 million in food and funds to global Covid-19 hunger relief efforts. Company efforts have focused on current partners, like Feeding America, as well as new, regional



organizations in particular need, like No Kid Hungry, United Way of Metro Chicago and Northern Illinois Food Bank. The new organizations represent areas with school closures where kids rely on breakfast clubs and school meals.

### **MICROTREND III: SERVING UP SUSTAINABILITY**

Across industries, companies are forming coalitions in the larger interest of the planet. Twenty-one companies in the video game industry have formally signed the Playing For The Planet Alliance, in collaboration with the UN Environment Programme, and 32 fashion companies signed a broad-based sustainability pact at the G7 summit. These companies represent 150 brands and over 30 percent of the fashion industry's production volume.

- **Public Enemy Plastic: New Plastics Economy Global Commitment:** In January 2019, more than 250 of the world's biggest food and drink companies — Nestlé, Unilever, The Coca-Cola Company and Pernod Ricard — signed the New Plastics Economy Global Commitment. The organization's goal is that, by 2025, 100 percent of plastic packaging will be easily and safely reused, recycled or composted.
- **Reduce, Reuse, Reimagine Plastic: Loop:** Loop is a zero-waste platform and coalition of consumer product companies aiming to diminish the use of household single-use plastics. Developed by major recycling company TerraCycle, Loop works with eight of the 10 largest contributors to the plastic waste crisis in the world.

**WHAT WE'VE SEEN IN 2020: Looking Forward: Loop:** The need to tackle the Covid-19 pandemic has meant that the battle to reduce single-use plastics has taken a back seat in recent months; however, Loop continues to accrue partnerships and remains strong.

Loop is operational in the United Kingdom, France, and the US, and in 2021, Loop will expand internationally, with launches in Canada, Japan, Australia and Germany. Thanks to the success of its partnerships with retailers like Tesco, the UK's largest supermarket chain, Loop continues to foster new partnerships for 2021.

### **WANT TO TALK WITH US ABOUT THIS TREND?**

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