

CREATING GUT-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS WITH THE POWER OF ALMONDS



Innova Market Insights reports that digestive and gut health-related claims are the number one health aspect driving purchases of functional food and beverage,¹ and growing consumer awareness of feeding the microbiome is creating space for new product innovation with almonds.

Gut health refers to how well your stomach and intestines digest food, absorb nutrients, and eliminate waste. Additionally, it refers to the health of the microbiome, a spectrum of both good and bad microorganisms that live in the stomach and intestines.

The microbiome of a healthy gut contains more beneficial microorganisms than harmful ones, and eating a balanced, fiber-rich diet helps increase microbiome diversity to support better health. Emerging research has explored how eating almonds affects the diversity and composition of the gut microbiome, and the relative abundance of specific beneficial bacteria in the gut.

Almonds are a versatile and nutrient-dense ingredient for many popular product categories, from bars to beverages and beyond. One serving (28g) of almonds has 4g fiber, along with 6g of protein, 13g of unsaturated fat and only 1g of saturated fat, along with essential nutrients including 77mg magnesium, 210mg potassium, and 7.27 mg of vitamin E.

MEETING DEMAND FOR GUT HEALTH SOLUTIONS

Innova Market Insights reports that two in three consumers now recognize gut health as key to their overall wellbeing.² Smart ingredient selection, such as incorporating almonds, may support health claims and add value to a product's nutritional benefits.

To address a variety of consumer behaviors related to gut health, manufacturers can:

Focus on Added Nutrition:

Consumers are actively seeking products with gut health and/or fiber claims. Several nutrients naturally found in almonds – fiber, polyunsaturated fatty acids and polyphenols – are associated with supporting gut microbiota. Consider using skin-on almonds, as the skin contributes to fiber and antioxidants, or pair almonds with fermented foods. Fermented foods provide a spectrum of probiotics to help foster a healthy gut microbiome.

Added Nutrition Example:



Lola 3 Day Challenge Pack, a pack of three granola bars that promotes a gut “reset” by calling out the probiotics and prebiotics in their formulation.

Eliminate or Reduce Irritants:

Some consumers seek products that are free from ingredients associated with triggering gut episodes (gas, bloating, constipation, etc.). Consumers are increasingly buying foods without gluten, alcohol, sugar, non-caloric sweeteners, meat, and preservatives. Almonds are inherently gluten-free with no added sugars.

Free From Irritants Example:



SunBiotics Activated Almonds, fermented almonds in sweet or savory flavors. Pack claims products are made without soy, dairy, gluten, wheat, corn, and animal products.

Formulate Natural Products:

Prioritizing whole food ingredients that are commonly associated with good gut health. Almonds support healthy perceptions associated with natural and clean labels. Pairing prebiotic foods, such as apples and whole grains, with almonds can complement almonds nutritional contents to help support good gut bacteria.

Natural Product Example:



Jonesbar Berries and Almonds, a snack that touts "only real ingredients," and lists organic dates, organic almonds, organic berries, organic chia seeds, and Himalayan pink sea salt.

USING ALMONDS TO IMPROVE TASTE, TEXTURE AND APPEARANCE OF GUT-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

Here's how to leverage almonds to create gut-friendly products consumers will crave:

1 Flavor enhancement.



- Roasted almonds enhance nutty/toasted flavors.
 - **Inspiration | Toasted Onion Gluten-Free Crackers:** Roasted almond flour baked into crisp crackers dusted with chopped toasted onion and seeds.
- Blanched almonds temper bitter and sour flavors like greens, coffee and citrus.
 - **Inspiration | Lemon-Arugula Salad Kit:** Blanched almonds and dried currants garnish arugula, while almond oil balances lemon in the kit's dressing.

2 Visual appeal. With a wide variety of processed forms in different sizes, almonds can create various eye-catching effects.



- Whole almonds capture attention with a dramatic flair.
 - **Inspiration | Premium Snack Mix:** Whole fermented almonds, 80% cacao chocolate chunks, unsweetened toasted coconut chips and dried cherries.
- Skin-on sliced almonds add color contrast to light colored applications.
 - **Inspiration | Whole Grain Nutty Pilaf:** A fiber-rich side with brown and wild rice, veggies, golden raisins and sliced almonds.



- Sliced or slivered almonds stand out against darker ingredients.
 - **Inspiration | Slivered Almond Protein "Haystacks":** Slivered almonds in a mocha almond butter coating, topped with sliced almonds.
- Chopped almonds complement bite-sized foods.
 - **Inspiration | Almond-Orange Cookies:** Single-bite cookies with almond flour and orange juice, sprinkled with chopped almonds instead of powdered sugar.
- **Almond flour** creates great coatings and breading.
 - **Inspiration | Crunchy Cauliflower Wings:** Cauliflower coated in ground almond breading, cooked crispy and tossed in fermented hot pepper sauce.

3 Richer mouthfeel. **Almond butter** and almond oil add indulgence.



- Almond oil adds creaminess with a more subtle flavor.
 - **Inspiration | White Bean Dip:** White beans blended with almond oil for a satisfying snacking experience.
- Raw almond butter adds creaminess and light almond flavor.
 - **Inspiration | Coconut-Berry Smoothie:** Blueberries and strawberries blended with ginger, coconut water and almond butter.
- Roasted almond butter adds creaminess and "nutty" flavor.
 - **Inspiration | Salted Caramel Overnight Oats:** Rolled oats and chia seeds in almond milk with toasted almond butter and a drizzle of salted caramel.

4 Intriguing textures. From soft and tender to crunchy, almonds are a textural powerhouse.



- Roasted almonds add a distinctive crunch. Oil roasted almonds are crunchier, while dry roasted almonds add less crunch, and less fat.
 - **Inspiration | Popcorn Cluster:** Golden popcorn with crunchy roasted almonds in a light maple coating.
 - Defatted almond flour, which is almond flour with a percentage of the oil pressed out, builds structure in baked goods, making for denser products.
 - **Inspiration | Redone Sticky Toffee Pudding:** Defatted almond flour and baking spices mingle in a dense cake that gets its sweetness from dates.
- Pro tip:** Substituting traditional flour for almond flour cannot always be done cup to cup. You may have to reduce moisture or adjust cook times in formulations.

Footnotes:

¹Innova Trends Survey 2025 (average of Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Spain, UK, US)

²FoodNavigator.com. [Top 5 health trends dominating F&B](#). November 2024.