

# 4 foodtech trends to watch in 2020

If we compare today's food habits to those of a decade ago, we see a seismic shift in behaviour. In the U.K. traditional three-course meals are a rarity with new eating habits being adopting all the time. Health, technology and work are factors that are influencing these changes. But what will end up on our plates in 2020, and how are startups anticipating this?

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At the dinner table food preferences are being questioned more than ever. Could the traditional Sunday roast be replaced by a soya steak topped with seaweed mayo? Jeremie Prouteau, DigitalFoodLab co-founder and food trend expert predicts the trends of 2020 in foodtech. According to him, plant-based food is the next big thing. It is not surprising that [Innovate UK](#) and the [Knowledge Transfer Network](#) are hosting two Food Industry Innovation 2020 events in February 2020.

## **Plant-based, the farm industry's Green Rush**

Consumers want to eat better and be healthier. [According to a recent report conducted by Deloitte](#), a new type of behaviour is born: the 'flexitarian'. Not quite the same as vegans or vegetarians, flexitarians are people who still consume meat and dairy but seek to reduce the levels they consume in an ethical way.

*“A ‘flexitarian’ still consumes meat and dairy but seeks to reduce the levels they consume”*

Ultimately, more and more businesses see opportunities for reaching new markets and revolutionise the different ways that people eat and want to eat. For instance, Burger King partnered with [The Vegetarian Butcher](#) to create a veggie plant-based burger, The Rebel Whopper made from sustainable soya. Although, at present it's not suitable for vegetarians or vegans as it cooked on the same grills as your normal Whopper.

Likewise, [startups](#) are investing massively in foodtech creating new alternatives to meat that feel even more natural on the palate. Innovation with essential plant-based protein sources such as soy, pea, pulses, seitan, and tempeh is leading to entirely new aisles in supermarkets. One such example is [The Meatless Farm Company](#) who have recreated the texture of meat and made it delicious, another is [THIS](#) who have recently raised £4.7M to support their research and development into products that aren't chicken or bacon.

## **Healthy mind healthy body**

Food has always been all over Instagram. Healthy food, too, and especially in recent years. Considering the number of celebrity influencers posting about diets of all kinds, it's no surprise that large corporations are getting involved. “Consumers are more and more after healthy food”, explains Jérémie Prouteau. “Food has gone far beyond the primary function of eating, with a strong focus on health and care.” Beyond basic superfoods (chia seeds, acai...), “new foods – half foods, half superfoods – appeared, promising good health and wellbeing.”

At the centre of 2020's foodtech trends is brain health, and this is no surprise given that feeding your brain correctly maintains the stability of your cognitive functions and overall health. Sugars and high trans fats are known to impact both the brain and the body, that's why a balanced brain food intake is important.

## **Organic, locally sourced and sustainable**

[Based on 2019's Organic Report compiled by The Soil Association](#), the British spent almost £45 million a week on organic products. The market has remained

stable with a 5.3 per-cent growth in 2018. What does it mean? Consumers in the UK still choose to buy organic and their behaviours shifted towards being healthier and more environmentally and socially conscious.

Consumer awareness has risen and people want fewer pesticides and actively look for products that cause no harm to animals. Fresh startups such as Farmdrop understand these needs and launched a door-to-door delivery service working with local farmers to provide consumers with locally sourced, organic and environmentally friendly foods.

## **Insects will be part of our diet by 2029**

A survey conducted by the Agricultural Biotechnology Council found that a third of Britons think insects will become a staple part of the human diet within the next ten years. As a result of global meat production and its disastrous consequences on the environment, more aware UK consumers are expressing interest in sustainable meat alternatives such as edible bugs.

Insects have a smaller impact on the planet than pigs or cows, as they can be raised in significant numbers without taking up large amounts of land, water or food. You may not know it, but insects are good for health – they're nutritious, contain good proteins, fats, minerals and amino acids.

## **What's next in the food industry?**

Globally, according to a report made by Meticulous Research, the alternative protein market increased by 9.5% in 2019 and should represent 17.9 billion dollars by 2025. It's a global matter changing the way people consider food worldwide and the impact of its production in nature.

In the UK, consumers are taking a step further by pressuring supermarkets to ban plastic packaging in favour of recyclable alternatives, but there's still a long way to go before implementing these changes.