

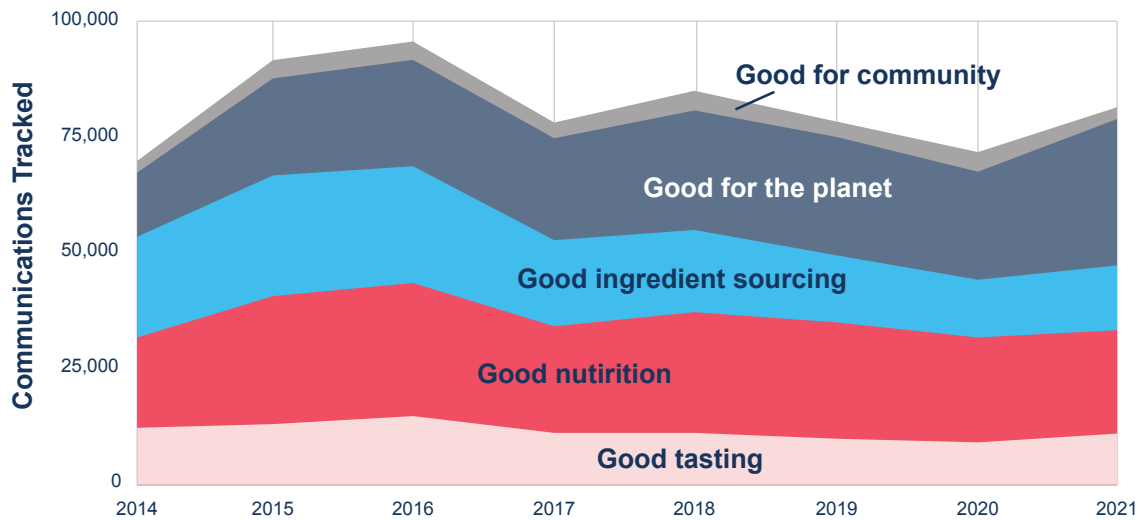
'Good' Food: An Evolving Definition

Trends come and go, but one of the larger movements we've tracked over the years is how leaders in the food and beverage industry define "good." By tracking conversations among the most influential voices in the industry, Intel Distillery analysis uncovered just how widely these definitions can vary. Factors have run the gamut from texture and flavor to ingredient lists and social agendas.

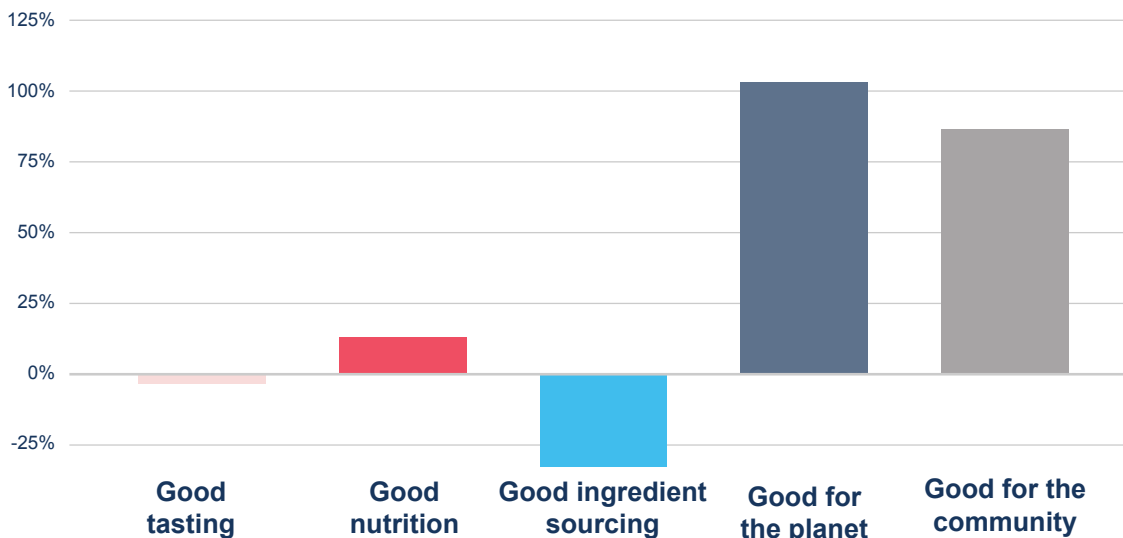
Comparing data from the 1,500 most influential voices in food production, we plotted out how conversations around what makes food "good" have shifted since 2014. Overall, our data indicate that more traditional definitions of "good," such as taste and nutrition, aren't going away — but newer definitions are growing in importance.

- Overall, concerns about our planet and nutrition have historically commanded the largest share of influential food production conversations.
- Conversations surrounding communities and our planet have seen the largest increase in volume, while discussions around ingredient sourcing have declined.

How Influential Voices Define 'Good' Food (2014-2021)



Change in Conversations Around 'Good' Food (2014-2021)



Source: Bader Rutter Intel Distillery annual assessment of food production conversations. © 2021

Good Tasting (-4%)

The taste, texture, aroma and appearance of a product are some of the oldest forms of product differentiation. Discussion of these attributes remains stable from year to year. Most recently, producers of alternative proteins have focused heavily on replicating the taste and texture of traditional meat.

- Kellogg's Morningstar Farms [launches](#) Incogmeato brand (2019)
- Vice [investigates](#) the intricacies of vegan egg replacements (2021)

"TASTE AND FRESHNESS ARE NON-NEGOTIABLE, COST AND HEALTH ARE DIFFERENTIATORS."

- [MINTEL, WHAT AMERICA EATS \(2021\)](#)

Good Nutrition (+12%)

Nutrition and diet trends contribute to the perceived healthfulness of a product. While the shifting popularity of diet plans can quickly change *what* is considered healthy, the link between a "healthy" food and a "good" food remains consistently strong.

- TIME [declares](#): "Eat Butter" (2014)
- Eater [writes](#): "How Protein Conquered America" (2018)
- NPQ Group [publishes](#) report: "Consumers Increasingly Turn to Food as Medicine During Pandemic" (2021)

Good Ingredient Sourcing (-34%)

Attention to ingredient lists and production practices has fallen in the past decade, mainly due to this topic's dominance prior to Congress passing a national GMO labeling standard in 2016. Transparency and "clean label" foods still hold sway in the marketplace.

- Panera [releases](#) "The No-No List" of artificial ingredients (2015)
- Campbell's [calls for](#) national GMO labeling standard (2016)

"BUT JUST BECAUSE SOMETHING IS ARTIFICIAL OR ITS NAME IS HARD TO PRONOUNCE DOESN'T MEAN IT'S UNSAFE. ... THOSE MOVES ARE MORE ABOUT PUBLIC RELATIONS THAN PUBLIC HEALTH."

- [MICHAEL JACOBSON, FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR SCIENCE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST \(2015\)](#)

Good for the Planet (+104%)

Carbon footprint and sustainability hold an increasingly important place in the idea of a "good" food. During the Trump administration, brands began addressing this proactively, rather than waiting for the government to spark change.

- Danone North America [commits](#) to researching regenerative agriculture (2018)
- Cargill, McDonald's and Target [partner](#) with The Nature Conservancy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from beef production (2020)

"THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT TODAY WE HAVE MORE CHOICES THAT CAN HELP US REDUCE OUR IMPACT ON NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE CLIMATE WHILE STILL ENJOYING TASTY FOOD."

- [ANDREW STEER, PRESIDENT AND CEO, WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE \(2020\)](#)

Good for the Community (+87%)

In the past, the people supporting and surrounding food and beverage production were rarely featured in messaging about the products. Since the onset of the pandemic, worker well-being, as well as diversity, equity and inclusion, have worked into brand images.

- Quaker Oats [retires](#) its Aunt Jemima brand to address racist imagery (2020)
- Tyson hires chief medical officer to [fight](#) the impact of coronavirus in food production (2020)
- Coca-Cola [weighs in](#) on voting rights (2021)

"FOSTERING AND FEEDING OUR COMMUNITIES IS MORE THAN JUST WORDS, IT'S ABOUT THE ACTIONS THAT SUPPORT THEM. WE'RE PROUD TO SEE OUR PEOPLE STANDING FOR WHAT THEY'RE PASSIONATE ABOUT, AND WE'RE CELEBRATING ALONGSIDE THEM."

- [MCDONALD'S \(2021\)](#)

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