

Welcome to *The Kernel™*, your new industry resource, spotlighting trends, consumer preferences and market opportunities across the dynamic world of grains, flour and pulses. Our goal? Providing your team with the knowledge and insights required to help you elevate your organization's potential, maximize revenue opportunities and gain (or maintain) a competitive advantage.

In this inaugural edition of *The Kernel™*, we're thrilled to spotlight **ancient grains** – which are steeped in heritage yet finding their place in the cutting-edge, modern formulations of today. Read on to learn why incorporating ancient grains should be a critical part of your innovation strategy, and how you can overcome the common barriers to working with them.

Ancient Grains Trends to Watch

Positive purchase interest extends across both Grocery and Foodservice. 



of consumers would purchase Ancient Grain Foods¹



say Ancient Grain Foods are a purchase tiebreaker²

Products that contain grains are perceived as healthier. 



agree Ancient Grain Foods are nutritious³



agree Ancient Grain Foods are "better-for-me"⁴

Grains allow consumers to eat healthy on a budget. 



64% agree grains are an affordable way to eat "well"⁵

What Constitutes an Ancient Grain?

Ancient grains are loosely defined as grains that have remained largely unchanged over the last several hundred years. Health-conscious consumers and innovative manufacturers are driving the discovery (and purchase) of these historical grains with new generations of consumers.



Sales of ancient grain-attributed products are outpacing products without ancient grain ingredients in several key categories:

Category	With AG-stated*	Without AG-stated*
Artisanal Prepackaged Bread	+6%	+7%
Cereal	+16%	-5%
Cereal and Granola Bars	+3%	-7%
Crackers	+2%	-7%
Packaged Flour	+8%	+6%
ISB Sandwich Bread	+24%	-2%
Bread Mix	+7%	-2%

*% change vs. a Year Ago in Unit Sales: L52 weeks through March 3, 2024⁷

Breaking Down Barriers to Work with Ancient Grains

When incorporating ancient grains into your formulations, we understand how important it is to minimize disruption along the way. So, we've put together this quick primer on how we help our customers overcome common obstacles and win with ancient grains.

Barrier 1: Consumers who don't know about ancient grains



One of the best ways to start your ancient grains journey is to blend these grains with ingredients you already know and use. This allows you to gradually introduce the ingredient to consumers in an already familiar product.

Barrier 2: High ingredient costs



When you partner with a large, established supplier, like Ardent Mills, you'll benefit from the supplier's vast supply chain, helping to keep pricing and supply more consistent.

Barrier 3: Misfires with new product innovation



Ancient grains have been around for a very long time, which means a wealth of nutrition and culinary data is available to inform innovation. Ardent Mills offers research and development support, formulation expertise, market insights and the ability to conduct small-market tests ahead of going to market with a new product.

Product Spotlight

Sorghum & Sorghum Flour

This inherently gluten-free, medium-size round grain is a member of the millet family. Intact sorghum's uses are broad since it can be extruded, flaked, popped or even brewed into beer. Sorghum flour incorporates well with other flavors due to its mild, slightly sweet taste. For CPG manufacturers, sorghum's also cost-effective, which can help improve profit margins.

Sorghum's contribution to finished products when used as an ingredient⁸

Characteristic	% Positive Impact ⁷
Taste of the Food Item	55%
Nutritional Profile of the Food Item	53%
Eating Texture of the Food Item	48%

⁸Among consumers aware of sorghum



Ancient Grains, Modern Applications

As awareness and demand continue to grow, ancient grains offer opportunities to innovate that don't require taking big risks, and they bring a host of benefits for the consumer.

CPG manufacturers are continually challenged to shorten innovation cycles to stay relevant with consumers and to reduce the risk of innovation misfires. Ardent Mills Emerging Nutrition, our alternative grain center of expertise, was created to assist your innovations with ancient grains.

Whether you're navigating market opportunities, creating unique formulations or looking to manage costs, our team will help you become a leader in this ever-growing category.

Let's move food forward – together.

Continue the Conversation

1 Ardent Mills Proprietary Research, U.S. Consumers 18+
2 Ardent Mills Proprietary Research, U.S. Consumers 18+
3 Ardent Mills Proprietary Research, U.S. Consumers 18+

4 Ardent Mills Proprietary Research, U.S. Consumers 18+
5 Trend to Table™, Ardent Mills Proprietary Research, U.S. Consumers 18+, 2023
6 Ardent Mills Proprietary Research

7 Byzzer/Nielsen, Total FMCG, L52 weeks through March 3, 2024; non-exhaustive
8 Ardent Mills Proprietary Analysis/Research