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5 Reasons Mushrooms will be a 2021 Food Trend

(Nov. 17, 2020) – Make even more room for ‘shrooms in your kitchens. As 2021 approaches, there are multiple signs mushrooms will be one of the top trending foods for the year ahead.

The reason is simple: Fresh mushrooms’ multiple attributes align with the changing dynamics of both dining in and dining out. A nutrient powerhouse, mushrooms also bring a filling, comforting taste. Mushrooms are one of the most sustainably produced foods and are also ideal for holding flavor in carryout dishes.

Consider these five reasons mushrooms will be a 2021 food trend:

1. **Grocery shoppers are buying mushrooms at a near record pace.** According to grocery sales data¹, mushrooms have been one of the top three produce items realizing the highest sales compared to the same period last year with weekly sales increases ranging from 20-40% throughout the spring and summer.
2. **Consumers report they plan to eat more mushrooms in the future.** Even with consumer demand for mushrooms at record highs, a recent survey² suggests the demand has staying power. 25% of consumers plan to cook more with fresh mushrooms “after things get back to normal.” Another 63% plan to use mushrooms “about the same.”
3. **Chefs consider mushrooms ideal for takeout foods.** With delivery and takeout on the rise, mushrooms are an ideal ingredient for helping meals retain flavor and moisture, particularly in [meat/mushroom blended dishes](#). “Carryout has become more critical than ever for our business, and the meat/mushroom burger we’ve had on menu for years is now more popular than ever thanks to mushrooms helping the patty stay juicy and tasty during travel,” said Fiore Moletz, owner of Burgh’ers Brewing in Pittsburgh.

¹ <https://www.mushroomcouncil.org/industrystaff/research-reports/retail-tracker/>

² “Fresh Mushroom Attitudes & Behaviors During COVID-19” survey of 750 shoppers conducted by Mark Lang, MBA, Ph.D., University of Tampa, April 2020



4. **Mushrooms are a prime ingredient for the plant-forward movement.** According to a recent study by Hearst³, 40% of consumers have tried plant-based products, and 25% of consumers are interested in eating less meat. Mushrooms, with their umami flavor and meaty quality, are an ideal ingredient to star in plant-based dishes or to blend with meat.

5. **Feeding your immune system.** Studies⁴ conclude there are a variety of micronutrients important for supporting a healthy immune system. Consider these three nutrients, all found in mushrooms:
 - Selenium⁵ is an essential trace mineral, which means your body must get this mineral in the food you eat. Selenium helps your body make special proteins called antioxidant enzymes. These play a role in preventing cell damage.⁶ For example, four crimini mushrooms can provide 38% of the recommend daily allowance (RDA) of selenium⁷.
 - Vitamin D⁸ helps build and maintain strong bones by helping the body absorb calcium. Vitamin D is available via diet, supplements and sunlight, which is why it is also referred to as the “sunshine vitamin.” Vitamin D has other roles in the body, including modulation of cell growth, neuromuscular and immune function, and reduction of inflammation³. One portabella mushroom, exposed to UV light, can provide 120% of the RDA for vitamin D⁴.
 - Vitamin B₆⁹ helps convert food into usable energy and assists in the formation of neurotransmitters, red blood cells, proteins and DNA¹⁰. Four whole shiitake mushrooms provide 13% of vitamin B₆ RDA⁴.

About the Mushroom Council:

³ “We Are What We Eat: A Look at Food in the New Normal,” Consumer study conducted by Hearst and GlobalWebIndex, April – June 2020

⁴ <https://lpi.oregonstate.edu/mic/health-disease/immunity>. Written in March 2016 by: Giana Angelo, Ph.D. Linus Pauling Institute, Oregon State University. Reviewed in February 2017 by: Catherine Field, Ph.D. Professor of Nutrition, Department of Agricultural, Food and Nutritional Science, University of Alberta. This link leads to a website provided by the Linus Pauling Institute at Oregon State University. The Mushroom Council is not affiliated or endorsed by the Linus Pauling Institute or Oregon State University

⁵ <https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/Selenium-HealthProfessional/>

⁶ U.S. National Library of Medicine. Selenium in Diet. <https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002414.htm>

⁷ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service. FoodData Central, 2019. fdc.nal.usda.gov.

⁸ <https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/VitaminD-HealthProfessional/>

⁹ <https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/VitaminB6-HealthProfessional/>

¹⁰ <https://lpi.oregonstate.edu/mic/health-disease/immunity#micronutrients>.



The Mushroom Council® is composed of fresh market producers or importers who average more than 500,000 pounds of mushrooms produced or imported annually. The mushroom program is authorized by the Mushroom Promotion, Research and Consumer Information Act of 1990 and is administered by the Mushroom Council under the supervision of the Agricultural Marketing Service. Research and promotion programs help to expand, maintain and develop markets for individual agricultural commodities in the United States and abroad. These industry self-help programs are requested and funded by the industry groups that they serve. For more information, visit mushroomcouncil.com.

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