



For questions and additional implications for food marketing and communication professionals, contact [borderlessnutrition@ketchum.com](mailto:borderlessnutrition@ketchum.com)

## 1 Food Blockchain Revolution

Deployed in the tech and banking industries, the blockchain movement will come to food in full-force in 2018 as global and domestic food companies embrace the practice of recording and disclosing transactions to track transparency through the supply chain from farmer, to processor, to packer, to distributor, to packaged goods maker, to retailer, foodservice operator and exporter. The blockchain will transform the brand promise from words (here's what we do) to demonstrable proof of how food is made at each stop in the supply chain. Here is a [good read](#) on food blockchain in *Forbes*.

## 2 Beyond Ingredients: There's a Test for That

Increasingly sensitive testing tools will surface unexpected elements or derivatives in food. These are not ingredients in a food, but could be trace elements from processing or packaging. While these elements may be inconsequential to the taste, nutritional value or safety of a food, these tests have the potential to raise more angst about 'what is really in my food.' For the food tech geeks out there, here is a [longer read](#) in *Food Safety Magazine*.

## 3 A Peaceful World = A Food Secure World

Malnutrition as a destabilizing force in our world will gain more attention as it becomes clear to governments and NGOs alike that poor diets and access issues are the root cause of non-communicable diseases. Food security will shift from feeding people to nourishing people for economic stability and growth in communities and nations. Taught to treat diseases, doctors will increasingly look to food access and dietary patterns to prevent disease. Here's a [quick read](#) from *Food Tank* on culinary programs for doctors.

## 4 Upcycling Our Way Out of Food Waste

Move over 3Rs — reduce, reuse, recycle — and make room for U. Upcycling — using an existing low-value product to create a higher value product — comes out of craft industries and into mainstream food as smart food companies find solutions for food that is past its prime. Upcycling also becomes a factor in assessing a food's environmental lifecycle, as farmers and ranchers make the case that much of what they produce uses inedible or low-nutrient feed to create nutrient-rich foods. Read more about what's to come in 2018 in [this story](#) in the *The Washington Post*.

## 5 Planting a Major New Trend

What was once viewed as a fringe diet of animal-loving coastal hippies will increasingly become mainstream as food media, restaurant menus and grocery store aisles provide more options to live vegan, vegetarian or flexitarian lifestyles. Food start-ups will continue to market their plant-based products, including meat substitutes formulated to "bleed" like burgers. The world's largest food companies will continue to carve out their plant-based position through new brands, line extensions and acquisitions. And fast food chains will continue to take visible steps to expand their menu offerings based on vegetables, legumes, seeds, nuts, rice and meat imposters. This choice will no longer be relegated to a certain socio-economic, coastal or urban consumer. Consumers across different races, nationalities and regions will be presented with vegan options. PBS offers [a closer look](#) at the implications of the shift from meat to plant on plates.

## 6 More Than Munchies

Mealtime is all the time. Snacking is increasingly how people eat. Take-out, pick-up, foodservice drive-thru and grocery foodservice are some of the fastest growing food channels because they fill our mini-meal needs. How we now eat is influencing how we now shop, with more spontaneous purchases and trial that supplement the traditional shopping list. You can find the latest facts about snacking [in this story](#) on *Food Dive*.

## 7 Taste Remains King But Texture Becomes Queen

Driven by Millennial's desire for new experiences, consumers are craving unique sensations and distinctive sounds in the mouth. These qualities will become dominant in new product formulations and recipe innovations at foodservice. From sparkling sodas with pulp, layered cakes, and seeds in juices, novel textures will emerge as passing fads flooding Instagram and other social platforms for weeks at a time, while others will stick. Examples of B2B ingredient innovations that could become the hero [of this story](#) are highlighted in *Food Business News*.

## 8 Bazaar of Food Blurs Traditional Lines

Device-enabled consumers are voting with their keystrokes and acquiring needs and wants in an instant. While there is still some "sport and entertainment" to the physical retail buying experience, fewer and fewer have the time or interest to make the trip. We see an emergence of "experience destinations" designed more for entertainment and education than selling on property. Take Apple's new flagship store on Chicago's Magnificent Mile. There is virtually not a product to be purchased in the giant, gleaming new store; all that happens in the cloud. Can food go that far? Certainly Eataly's success is proof of concept, now with two dozen locations in eight countries, [as described in](#) *Nation's Restaurant News*. We're seeing examples emerge of the "third space" as explained by *The Great Good Place* author Ray Oldenburg's where a "bazaar" of food experiences and samplings blurs the lines between retail, restaurant and entertainment. The enterprising retailer of tomorrow will be energized by this new reality.

## 9 The Lipstick Effect Emerges in Food

Referring to an economic and psychological theory that when consumers are facing an economic crisis, they shun costly luxury goods and turn to small luxuries, like lipstick, the current climate of uncertainty around the world is manifesting itself in consumers seeking out new, luxurious spices and flavors. This is true not only for what consumers are drawn to on restaurant menus and in supermarket aisles, but also inspiring what they cook at home. *Forbes* has [a fun read](#) on how this trend is manifesting itself in coffee.

## 10 Food as Proxy for Independence

Aligned with anti-globalization and separatist movements, there will be an upsurge of local cuisines and revalorization of country cooking and protected designations for food. From Catalonia to regions in India, generalizations like Spanish or Indian foods are now completely out of fashion. A true food expert will be able to tell the differences between each province, region or city cuisine. New restaurants devoted to a specific hyper-local cuisine and applying to get a DOC (Controlled Origin Denomination) or PDO (Protected Designations of Origin) like Champagne or Malbec will create opportunities for food makers, a sense of preciousness among food followers and a new wave of competitiveness among food exporters, as [CNN's story](#) about the 12 best food and drink trails suggests.

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