The Future of Wellness in Convenience Foodservice

How better-for-you expectations may continue to evolve

SIGNALS OF CHANGE

+5%

growth in functional beverages in c-stores over two years, now ahead of soft drinks

NIQ, via BevNET (2025)

67%

of Americans are concerned about synthetic food colors

IFIC, via BakeryAndSnacks (2026)

53%

say healthful prepared foods are worth the extra money, down 4 points since 2022

Technomic

40%

don’t buy better-for-you foodservice items, up 8 points

Technomic

FIVE FORCES SHAPING WHAT COMES NEXT

Functional Benefits

Protein, gut health, and energy move from drinks into food

Ingredient Transparency

Cleaner labels and clear ingredient information

Personal Eating Patterns

GLP-1 use, protein focus, plant-forward, allergen needs

Value Pressure

Healthier choices must be priced within reach

Regulation

Synthetic dye phase-outs and proposed labeling changes

Proposed FDA front-of-package label

A “Nutrition Info” box would rate three nutrients on most packaged foods.

Nutrition Info	
Saturated Fat	Low · Med · High
Sodium	Low · Med · High
Added Sugars	Low · Med · High

Proposed January 2025 · not final as of October 2026

Durable needs to build on

- Protein and freshness
- Recognizable ingredients
- Sensible portions
- Everyday value

Signs of wellness overreach

- Chasing short-lived trends
- Broad, unverifiable health claims
- A separate menu for every diet

HOW TO PREPARE

Test before scaling

Use LTOs and supplier pilots for new trends

Clean up labels

Ingredients, allergens, and nutrition for prepared food

Pair food and drinks

Match functional beverages with food that fits

Keep it modular

Shared components, many better-for-you builds

Sources: NIQ data reported by BevNET (June 2025); IFIC data reported by BakeryAndSnacks (August 2026); Technomic, Health in C-Stores analysis (2025); FDA proposed rule, Federal Register, January 16, 2025.