



# food trends

Q1 - Q2 2021

# HEART CREATIVE

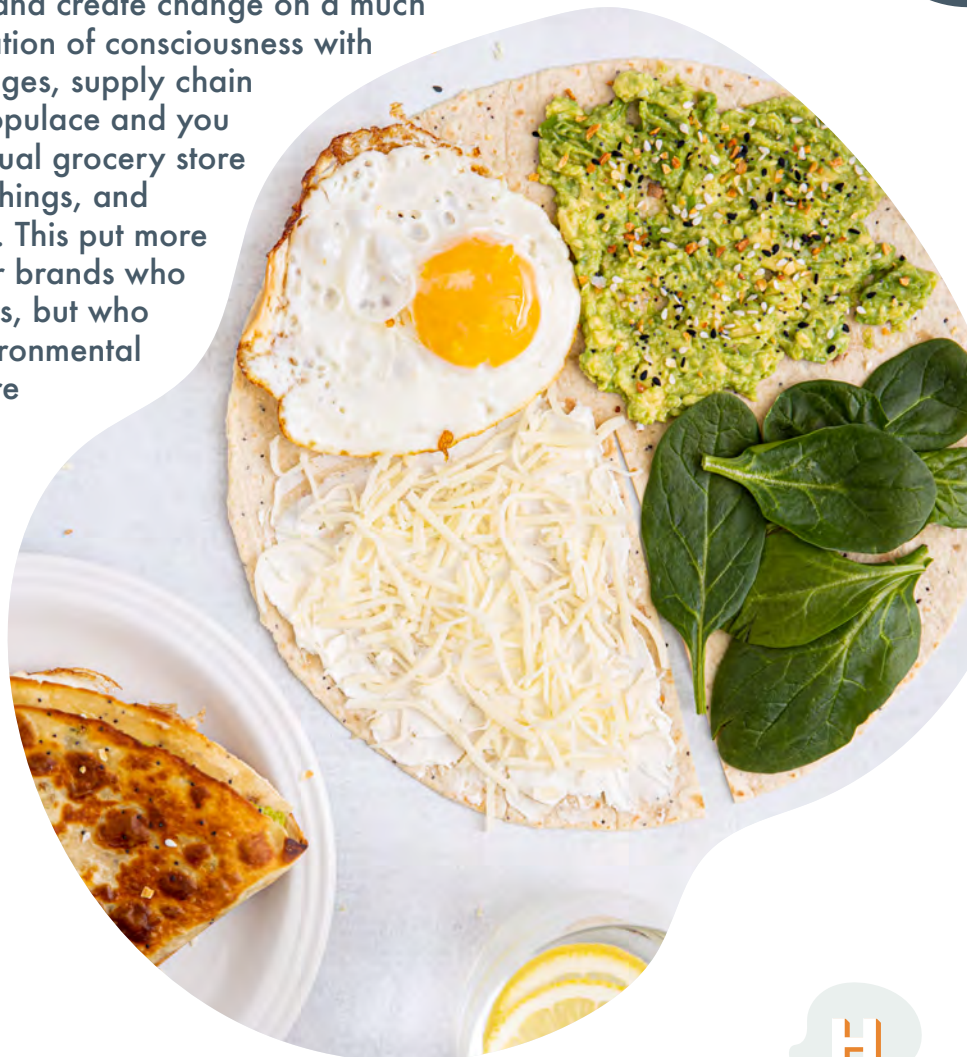
radical goodness

**Writing a trend report is always tenuous.** Trends are ephemeral by nature, and in the era of shortened attention spans, constant scrolling, and social media overload, they change on an almost weekly basis. At Heart, we take note of micro trends, but we're more interested in larger seismic trends that are changing the food and beverage landscape. And the past year (and counting) has changed so much about how we cook, eat, and think about food.

**The Covid-19 pandemic** made our physical worlds a lot smaller, but social media and the internet allowed us to have, if only virtually, a vastly expanded existence. Social media has connected us quite intimately to the experiences of others. The dark corners of windowless restaurant kitchens have been exposed to the sun, and kingmaker chefs have had to answer for themselves publicly. More and more casual consumers of media are demanding accountability and equity in the wake of worldwide protests against police brutality and the iceberg of baked-in systemic racism that looms beneath the surface of our daily lives.

**And finally, consumer shopping habits** have been shifted by a confluence of external pressures. Many consumers are realizing that alleviating their climate change anxieties through recycling and buying local isn't moving the needle; that companies need to step up and create change on a much larger scale. Pair that transformation of consciousness with pandemic-related grocery shortages, supply chain disruption, and a homebound populace and you get shoppers less wed to their usual grocery store staples, more willing to try new things, and attracted by targeted digital ads. This put more power in the hands of challenger brands who not only offer innovative products, but who are more invested in equity, environmental impact, and transparency and are wearing it all on their sleeves.

**In this report,** we delve into some of the larger trends we're seeing as a result of these massive cultural realignments.





# tiktok recipes

**Tiktok is driving trends** in home cooking and bleeding into other platforms, from the versatile tortilla hack to a feta pasta so good that it made an appearance in the Washington Post. Look out for more quick and snappy cooking ideas that start on Tiktok. If you don't see them there, you'll probably catch the second wave on Instagram or Twitter, or the third wave on Facebook.



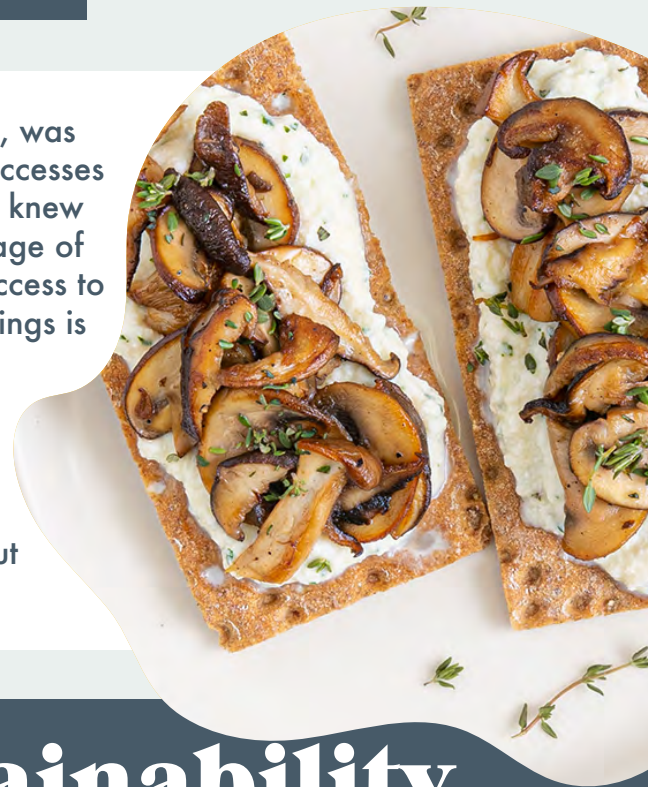
## accountability and ownership in food media

**Food & Wine magazine** posted a photo of green mole that was styled with hot sauce. They got called out, but rather than simply reshooting the photo or offering a simple apology or statement, they featured an interview with the recipe developer where she explained why garnishing mole with hot sauce wasn't appropriate. No one got canceled. There was no cop out. Just a good conversation that probably taught a lot of people something.



# mushrooms

**When Paul Stamets**, a well-known mycologist, was fictionalized as a Star Trek Discovery character who accesses a “mycelial network” to transcend time and space, we knew mushrooms were on our minds in a big way. The passage of measures in Oregon and Washington D.C. allowing access to psychedelic mushrooms in mental health treatment settings is also opening up the discussion. In food, you’ll see mushrooms pop up in coffees, teas, and now even oatmilk, as consumers embrace the larger trend in functional foods. While there’s still a lot we don’t know about what medicinal mushrooms can do for us, consumers are interested anyway and are willing to put dollars toward finding out.



# sustainability claims

**There are plenty of labels to go around:** non-GMO, certified gluten free, organic, cage free, certified humane...and now there’s a new crop of certifications for consumers to ponder. Among them is the newly fledged Upcycled Certification Standard, which designates products containing a certain percentage of ingredients that are byproducts that might otherwise be discarded. Think Renewal Mill, which uses soybean pulp (okara) left over from soymilk manufacturing. Or Ugly Pickle Co, which makes pickles from ugly produce. While the old certifications aren’t going anywhere, expect to see more niche labeling claims that go above and beyond to entice planet-conscious consumers.



# restaurants and chefs

**The pandemic** is creating a sea change in the restaurant industry. Tens of thousands of restaurants have shuttered. Millions of service industry workers have been laid off (and, if my conversations with friends in the industry are any indicator of larger trends, many are changing careers or at least reevaluating things). But as the nation opens back up, albeit in a halting and clumsy two-step, our question is what big changes are going to stick? We're keeping an eye on pioneering chefs looking to really shake up the paradigm, like Chef Gregory Gourdet, whose restaurant Kann is notable not just for its pandemic pivot to socially distant yurt dining, but also for Gourdet's commitment to creating a new type of restaurant kitchen that empowers BIPOC, women, and LGBTQ cooks, pays almost all employees the same wage, and shares tips equally between front and back of house.

**Up in Seattle**, Chef Eric Rivera of Addo has made pivoting a specialty. While big-name Seattle chefs like Tom Douglas were shuttering their restaurants and laying off employees, Rivera turned his restaurant into a warehouse for homemade pantry goods, spice blends, meal kits, custom hot sauces, and online cooking classes. Sales are driven not only by Seattleites who are trying to support local businesses, but also by Rivera's magnetic, assertive social media presence. On Twitter he has been a vocal critic of the good ol' boys' club style of restaurateurism that prioritizes growth and profit above all and takes advantage of underpaid and often undocumented workers, and his fans are here for it.

