



# GINGER REASCENDS WITH THE WELLNESS MOVEMENT

A new instant ginger concentrate provides the attributes and versatility for a range of daily products appealing to today's wellness-oriented consumer.

If you know someone who has jumped on the wellness wagon since the pandemic—you are not alone. The idea of taking control of health with lifestyle changes that are both preventive and holistic was already on the rise prior to 2020, but since then it has gained momentum to create what is now a global market of more than \$5 trillion, according to the Global Wellness Institute. Traditional medicines and healthy diets with nutritionally functional ingredients are a big slice of that pie, accounting for nearly \$1.6 billion.<sup>1</sup>

One of the reasons these strategies have had so much success is that they are grounded in ancient wisdom but also have validation in modern clinical research. As these ideas see acceptance by consumers, many botanicals are finding their way back into modern daily tradition.

Ginger is a good example of this phenomenon. Across its many forms, ginger is an enormous global market predicted to reach almost \$8.5 billion by 2027.<sup>2</sup> Cultivating ginger has a history of more 5,000 years and *Zingiber officinale* is an indispensable spice and ingredient in both Asian and Western culture, noted Tom Tang, vice president for Casey Ingredients, the U.S distributor of MCB BiGinger™, a new instant ginger concentrate powder. “Due to the increasing demand and acceptance of herbal and natural products, plus

the health benefits of ginger, the use of ginger in various diets is increasing.”

Its use as a medicine is both long and fascinating. In ancient ayurvedic and Chinese texts, ginger is referred to as a “universal,” or “lifelong” medicine. Confucius, in his writings, noted that he would eat ginger at every meal.<sup>3</sup> Lost in the West over the ages, Marco Polo rediscovered the spice in his travels and brought it back to Europe where it became a sought-after ingredient in foods and medicine.<sup>4</sup> It was thought to support balance in the body, promote immunity and improve blood circulation.

## THE RISING SNAP OF GINGER

Ginger's medicinal and wellness effects are clearly well known from these ancient references, “but there are also numerous published studies indicating the benefits of ginger to support a healthy inflammatory response, healthy blood pressure levels, and enhanced digestion and immune function,” Tang said. “We believe the market for health and wellness is growing as people are considering taking herbal and natural ingredients like ginger when they choose daily foods and supplements.”

To support this use, there is a growing body of modern



evidence. In fact, there are now approximately 109 studies on the benefits of ginger in the National Library of Medicine. A analysis of these studies noted that evidence for its support of nausea relief, healthy inflammatory and metabolic performance, and digestive function are well established.<sup>5</sup> One paper from 2022 discusses reported health benefits of ginger root, including its evidence for immune support, healthy antioxidant and anti-inflammatory

properties, as well as its contribution to healthy heart function.<sup>6</sup> The paper does state that ginger’s mechanism of action is not well understood, although it contains many biologically active components including gingerol and related compounds that support its antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects.

This substantiation presents plenty of potential for brands looking to capitalize on this market trend. However, as with any botanical ingredient used in modern products, raw material sourcing matters. BiGinger is sourced from Southern Thailand where it is a native species. This is an optimal location for ginger growth characterized by low-altitude mountain areas with a warm humid climate, sufficient sunlight, and loosened and fertile natural sandy soil with rich humus.

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-Tom Tang, Vice President for Casey Ingredients

## FOOD AS MEDICINE

Consumers are making strong connections between nutrients they consume and maintaining health and wellness. This is especially true for conditions like immunity and digestive function. Both are seen as key to health and wellness. Ginger’s benefits are well established in both categories. Foods, beverages and supplements are seen as important to overall health and wellness, but effective supplements may pave the way for innovation in foods and beverages:

### Top trends with high consumer purchase intent for 2024:<sup>\*</sup>



**DIGESTIVE HEALTH**  
41% OF CONSUMERS



**IMMUNITY**  
37% OF CONSUMERS

### Health product categories consumers purchase to support health goals:<sup>\*\*</sup>



**Functional foods**  
58%

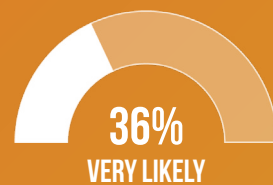
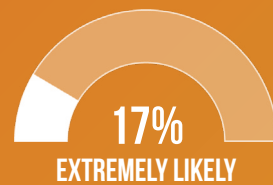


**Functional beverages**  
54%



**Supplements**  
47%

### Supplement users are more likely to also buy functional foods & beverages:<sup>\*\*</sup>



<sup>\*</sup>NBJ Next 2024 Trends and Innovations Report

<sup>\*\*</sup>NBJ Functional Food and Beverage Report 2023

Processing is another important element. There are two traditional processes for ginger, Tang explained. The first is to grind the dry ginger; the second is to use a chemical solvent to extract the ginger. “The disadvantage of the first method is the concern of microorganism risk since it’s from fresh ginger. In the second method, the concern is chemical solvent residues. Both powders come with poor solubility and dispersibility.”

BiGinger is different, he added, because pure water is used for extraction, the concentrate, and finally for spraying. It does not contain any solvent and the powder shows excellent solubility and stability, which is important for suitability in a variety of applications. BiGinger also passes food safety examinations for pesticide residues, heavy metals, and aflatoxins.

## AN ALL-AROUND INGREDIENT

The potency of BiGinger is well suited for supplement applications. The ginger powder is sold as a standalone supplement as well as in products that contain ingredients like probiotics, collagen, vitamin C or in powders designed for hydration and electrolyte replenishment. The powder can be consumed directly or dissolved in water to provide excellent flavor and health benefits in formats from capsules and gummies to powder packets.

BiGinger also brings versatility to functional food and beverage applications, providing both flavor and health benefits. In instant packaged beverages, BiGinger adds natural ginger aroma and sweetness with a clear bright color after dissolving. “Depending on the flavor profile of the product, the percentage of ginger can vary,” said Tang. “Based on our understanding of foods and beverages, delivering 1,000 mg per day is easily achievable and can support health benefits including anti-inflammatory properties, digestive health, nausea and motion sickness relief, antioxidant activity and support of heart health.”

BiGinger also has been tested by MCB for its sensory experience as compared to other ginger powders. A group of 30 subjects evaluated its appearance, taste, smell and similarity with other ginger. BiGinger received the highest scores for similarity to natural ginger in appearance, taste and smell, with a natural aroma and a touch of both spice and sweetness. This helps make BiGinger a versatile choice for applications like ginger beverages, bakery products, savory soups and sauces, and candies.

Given the rising profile of ginger use in both foods and beverages, Casey’s Tang predicts ongoing innovation with this versatile ginger ingredient in products like time-released capsules, infused gummies, protein bars, and infused beverages.



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3. The Analects of Confucius. <https://cup.columbia.edu/book/the-analects-of-confucius/9780231141642>
4. The Journey of Ginger and How Ginger Came to Be. FreshZEN. <https://freshzenfoods.com/blogs/blog/the-journey-of-ginger-and-how-ginger-came-to-be#:~:text=Following%20the%20fall%20of%20the%20Asia%20along%20the%20Silk%20Road>
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