

Global Foodscapes

Forecasts from our Global Food
and Nutrition Affairs Team

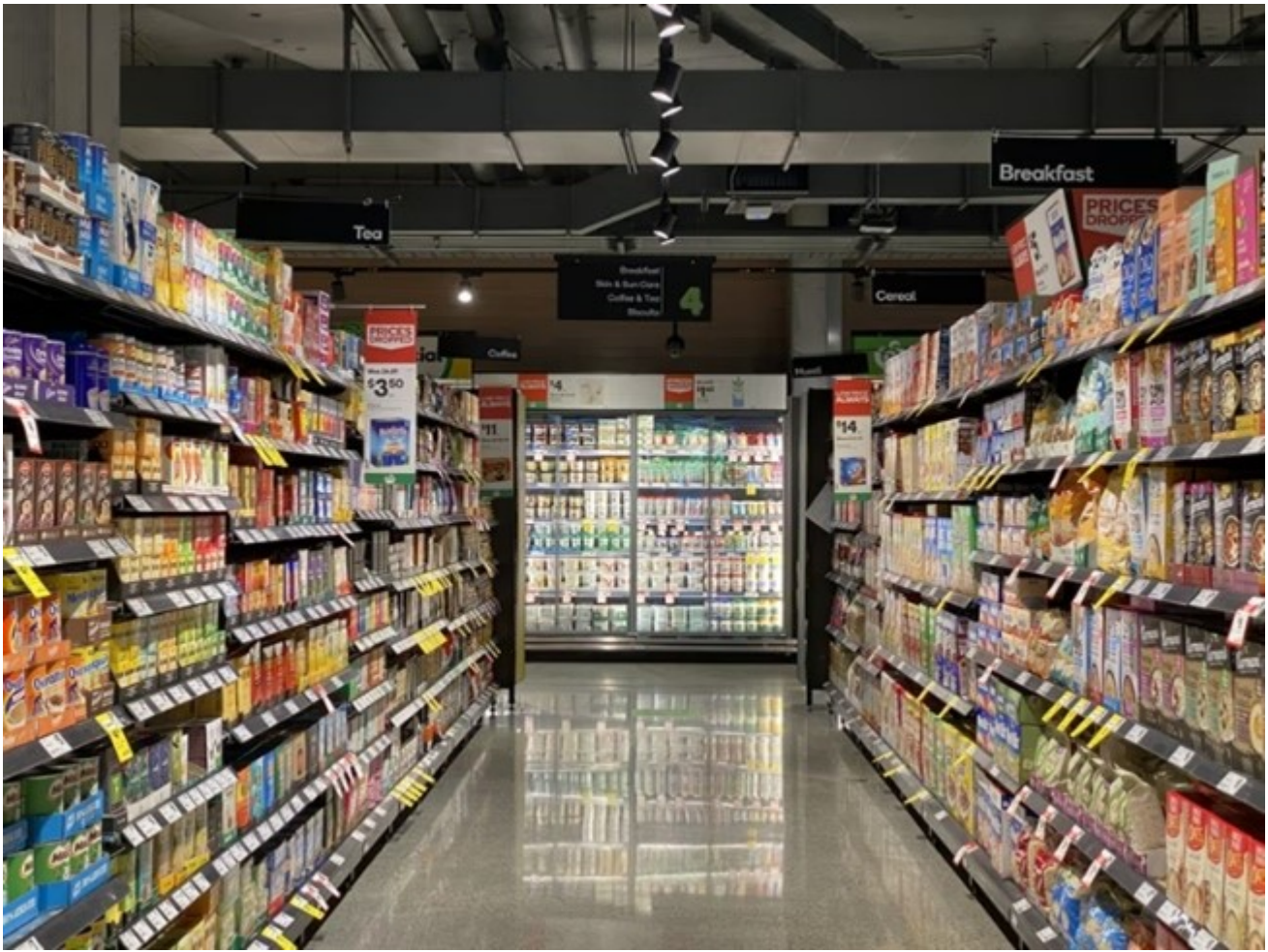
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Welcome to Global Foodscapes, news and insights you can use from FoodMinds' global food and nutrition affairs team. Today's edition focuses on implications of the growing global dialogue on ultra-processed foods and beverages.

Is there a particular topic you'd like to see covered in a future Foodscapes? Let us know [here!](#)

***– Sarah Levy, FoodMinds' Global
Director of Food & Nutrition Affairs***





Four Things You Should Know About...



Ultra-Processed Foods

1. **Recommendations to avoid ultra-processed foods and beverages (UPF) are permeating global dietary guidelines.** More than ten countries explicitly discourage UPF consumption in dietary guidelines, due to concerns around how these products impact health outcomes and diet quality. Many of these guidelines were updated in the last five years to reflect new scientific evidence, increased public discourse and expanding regulatory activity. For the first time, a [scientific question](#) on UPF will likely be explored during the U.S. *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2025-2030* development process. Because dietary guidelines form the basis of other food and nutrition policies, early engagement in these processes to inform UPF definitions, evidence gaps and scientific protocols is critical.

2. Policy momentum continues in the absence of a validated, consensus

definition. [NOVA](#) is the most widely used classification system to define UPF, though food system stakeholders have challenged its appropriateness for several reasons. Criticisms include that it neglects the [benefits](#) of processed foods including nutrient density and nutrition security, as well as food safety. Others point out that UPF categorization is [inconsistent](#) with global nutrient profiling systems that rate or rank these foods and beverages positively. Policy momentum to curb UPF consumption is strong enough that the concept and terminology is unlikely to disappear – the real, immediate opportunity lies in defining these foods (and subsequent policy approaches) in a manner that is evidence-based and avoids unintended consequences.

3. How dietary patterns and food policies will reconcile UPF recommendations and sustainable food systems goals is a crucial question yet to be determined.

Plant-based foods and diets are touted as important contributors to healthy and sustainable food system transformations, and under most definitions are considered UPF. In the next couple of years, the World Health Organization European Office will issue [nutrition guidelines](#) for ultra-processed plant-based foods and a reformulation manual, and the forthcoming [EAT-Lancet 2.0 report](#) is expected to discuss the role of UPF in sustainable, healthy diets. Food system stakeholders will need to have data and systems in place to identify trade-offs and communicate the value of UPF and plant-based foods within evolving health and sustainability recommendations.

4. UPF constructs will require companies to think beyond reformulation. If

NOVA or a similar UPF definition is used as the basis for labeling regulations, marketing restrictions, taxes, sales bans and/or other food profiling policies, certain products and even categories of foods and beverages will face more expansive limitations. Ingredients used to replace sugar, sodium, and other nutrients of concern, or to add nutritional benefits through fortification, would lead to a UPF designation and subsequent policy and regulatory restrictions. Businesses may need to place more emphasis on innovation, mergers and acquisitions and novel strategies to maintain freedom to operate.

Interested in learning more? FoodMinds' global food and nutrition affairs team helps clients navigate and participate in the evolving landscape and prepare for the future. Reply to this email or reach out to [Sarah Levy](#) to start the conversation.



Global Food Views



What global UPF developments are you tracking, and how will they impact the food and nutrition landscape?

“Dialogue around ultra-processed foods is growing and in LATAM, we have seen calls to implement policies that will help consumers shift to “whole” and “traditional” foods thought to be of higher nutritional quality. However, the term “ultra-processed food” is not well-defined, and common classification systems tend to ignore the fact the degree of food processing does not necessarily reflect the nutritional content or value of a food. It’s important to ensure nutrition recommendations are consistent with dietary guidelines to minimize consumer confusion and support nutrient dense, healthy dietary patterns.”

- Cecilia Robles-Martínez, member of FoodMinds' Global ExpertBench™ based in Mexico

Food for Thought



Reflections and perspectives from the FoodMinds team on emerging food systems topics.



[Global Foodscapes – U.S. and U.K. consumers' perceptions of healthy, sustainable foods - April 2022](#)

"This issue features results from new research on how U.S. and U.K. consumer perceptions of healthy, sustainable foods have changed since the COVID-19 pandemic. Survey findings can help food, beverage and nutrition stakeholders plan and prioritize future actions and communications based on what matters most to consumers."

[Processing the News on Ultra-Processed Foods](#)

"Strawberry yogurt, potato chips, fortified water, soda, frozen meals, cookies, infant formula and sliced wheat bread. What do these products have in common? According to a public health movement that's sweeping the globe, they are all "ultra-processed." Some public health nutrition advocates are using this terminology to judge a food or beverage's impact on health – arguing that it's the processing aids and methods (versus nutrient composition) contributing to obesity and disease."

[What Gen Z Trends Reveal About Changing Consumer Values](#)

"As the youngest consumer group, Gen Z adults (ages 18-24) are beginning to make their mark on industry trends. Learn what the latest data reveal about how this emerging generation's beliefs and attitudes are impacting their food and beverage purchases."

Global food and nutrition affairs is FoodMinds' point of difference. Learn more here.

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