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# 9 Food Ingredient Trends shaping the UK Market in 2025-26



By Appointment to  
His Majesty The King  
Fine Food Ingredient Importers & Distributors  
Lupa Foods Ltd  
Borehamwood

“ The UK food industry is undergoing rapid transformation, shaped by evolving consumer values, global influences, and the demand for innovation across health, sustainability and flavour.

From high-protein ready meals and gut-friendly formulations to globally inspired flavours and clean-label innovation, these trends reflect where the market is heading and where the greatest opportunities lie.

”





# BRCS

Agents and Brokers

**CERTIFICATED**

## INTRODUCTION



## YOUR PARTNER IN FOOD SINCE 1902

Lupa Foods is a UK based full-service B2B partner to the food industry.

With a global and domestic sourcing footprint, we provide a selection of more than 600 bespoke and commodity products, combined with services that include NPD, technical, procurement, logistics and business.

Innovation and a customer centric approach is at the forefront of everything we do, and our 120 years' experience the foundation we build our customers' success on.





# HIGH-PROTEIN & MACRO-BALANCED MEALS

Consumers are demanding convenient meals that deliver on protein, satiety, and balanced nutrition without compromising on taste.

**Theme:** Health & satiety

**Drivers:** Active lifestyles, weight management, demand for functional nutrition

**Key Ingredients:**

Chicken, beef, salmon, eggs, **lentils\***, soy, **high-protein pasta\***

**Example Applications:**

Macro-counted trays, lentil Bolognese, protein-rich ready meals

# DIGESTIVE WELLNESS & FUNCTIONAL FLAVOUR

Consumers are embracing gut-friendly formulations that combine high-fibre ingredients with natural fermentation and bold, umami-rich flavour.

**Theme:** Digestive wellness, flavour depth & functional appeal

**Drivers:** Rising awareness of gut health, fibre deficiency in Western diets, demand for natural functional benefits.

**Key Ingredients:**

**Chickpeas\***, **oats\***, **barley\***, inulin, fermented veg (kimchi, **sauerkraut\***)

**Example Applications:**

Fibre-enriched bowls, gut-health grain mixes, probiotic slaws.



Shoppers are increasingly seeking products with recognisable, minimal ingredients and avoiding ultra-processed formulations.

**Theme:** Ingredient transparency

**Drivers:** Media scrutiny of ultra-processed foods (UPFs), trust in “real food”

**Key Ingredients:**

**Tomato\***, garlic, **olive oil\***, herbs, **lemon\***, sea salt and “whole” ingredients

**Example Applications:**

5-ingredient sauces, no-additive traybakes, “homemade-style” meals

## CLEAN LABEL & LOW-UPF

## PLANT-BASED EATING BEYOND MEAT

Plant-forward meals are evolving to feature whole ingredients like pulses, mushrooms and tofu, rather than imitation meats.

**Theme:** Sustainable flexitarianism

**Drivers:** Shift from meat substitutes to natural plant-forward meals

**Key Ingredients:**

Mushrooms, jackfruit, **pulses\***, tofu, tempeh, seaweed

**Example Applications:**

Veg-led curries, jackfruit stews, tofu stir-fries, mushroom ragù





# INDULGENCE & MODERN NOSTALGIA

Consumers are finding comfort in elevated classics, blending familiarity with indulgent twists and premium touches.

**Theme:** Comfort food, updated classics

**Drivers:** Emotional eating, affordable treats, elevated everyday dishes

**Key Ingredients:**

**Cream\***, cheese, **pasta\***, chocolate, sponge, jam, savoury fillings

**Example Applications:**

Sticky toffee desserts, mac & cheese bakes, heritage pies with twists



# SMART CONVENIENCE & ON-THE-GO

Busy lifestyles are fuelling demand for fast, nutritious, and high-quality meal solutions in easy-to-prepare formats.

**Theme:** Effortless eating

**Drivers:** Time pressure, solo dining, growing reliance on meal kits

**Key Ingredients:**

**Cooked grains\***, air-fryer-ready coatings, quick-cook **noodles\***

**Example Applications:**

3-minute noodle pots, one-pan kits, microwaveable global trays



**Brands are embracing sustainability through upcycled ingredients and waste-conscious formulations that resonate with eco-aware consumers.**

**Theme:** Eco-conscious innovation

**Drivers:** Climate impact, food waste reduction, ESG priorities

**Key Ingredients:**

Cacao pulp, surplus veg, okara, spent grain flour

**Example Applications:**

Zero-waste soups, bakery with food-waste narratives, upcycled snack pots

# SUSTAINABLE & UPCYCLED INGREDIENTS

**Next-generation ingredients like cultivated meat and precision-fermented dairy are signalling the future of protein innovation and climate resilience.**

**Theme:** Innovation & sustainability

**Drivers:** Next-gen nutrition, climate resilience, supply chain efficiency

**Key Ingredients:**

Cultivated meat, precision-fermented dairy, algae, air protein

**Example Applications:**

Pilot products, hybrid tech-plant meals, lab-protein sauces

# FOOD TECH & FUTURE PROTEINS



# GLOBAL CUISINES DRIVING DEMAND

Authentic and bold international flavours from Korean and West African to Greek and Argentinian are redefining everyday comfort food.

**Theme:** Culinary discovery, bold flavour, cross-cultural comfort

**Drivers:** Interest in authentic world flavours, social media influence, fusion formats, street food appeal

## Key Ingredients:

Greek: Feta, oregano, **lemon\***, **orzo\***, **olive oil\***

Turkish: Sumac, köfte, pomegranate molasses, **bulgur\***

Argentinian: Chimichurri, flank steak, **black beans\***

Portuguese: Piri-piri, sardines, bay leaf, **rice\***

Southern US: Cajun spice, cornbread, smoked meats

Swiss: Raclette, rösti, nutmeg, Alpine herbs

Korean: Gochujang, kimchi, **sesame oil\***, **glass noodles\***

West African: Jollof spice blends, cassava, groundnut, plantain

Middle Eastern: Za'atar, freekeh, **chickpeas\***, **tahini\***

Southeast Asian: Lemongrass, galangal, **coconut milk\***, **rice noodles\***

Italian (Regional): Nduja, fennel, **durum wheat pasta (various shapes)\***

Sichuan Chinese: Fermented **black beans\***, **chilli oil\***, Szechuan pepper

## Example Applications:

Globally inspired ready meals, pasta/noodle kits, curry pots, street food trays

\* LUPA CAN SUPPLY

SEARCH OUR PRODUCTS ONLINE





READ ABOUT OUR SUSTAINABILITY JOURNEY



# MISSION



## WHY LUPA FOODS?

**We aim to be an integral partner to the food industry for quality ingredients.**

To be a leader in the development, supply and production of sustainable, high quality and innovative products. We earn the respect and loyalty of customers through consistency and product excellence, and by focusing on customer service.

We care for the environment, striving to continuously reduce our impact on the planet, ensuring a better future for all that calls it home.







**Your partner in food since 1902**



# REACH OUT

