



New Product Trend: Adding Fruit for Flavor and Health

Product developers are revamping everything from confectionery to breakfast foods to savory items, choosing to include fruit for flavor and health.

The pandemic has caused a shift in consumer buying behavior, with a significant focus being placed on **nutrition and health** and an increasing demand for functional benefits. As consumers take a closer look at better for you products, product developers choose to include fruit to enhance flavor profiles and tap into the natural nutritional benefits fruits add. When it comes to product formulation, developers can choose from many fruit-derived ingredients – powders, fresh, frozen, concentrates, and of course, dried fruits.

There are many reasons product developers choose to use dried fruit – performance consistency, piece integrity, the avoidance of water activity in formulations, texture, and the pop of color that dried fruits can give to products. Whether they be whole, sliced, or diced, distinctively shaped fruit pieces allow consumers to visualize the whole food they are eating. Dried fruits deliver a health halo to all **applications**, they are versatile ingredients that provide deep flavor profiles and long shelf lives. Explore our dried fruit products [here!](#)

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What's New at
Graceland Fruit





Necedah Cranberry, Inc.
Jeff & Cindy Bentz

Grower Spotlight: Necedah Cranberry

When Jeff Bentz founded Necedah Cranberry, Inc. in 1996, he was looking to spend more time enjoying the outdoors after a career as a stockbroker.

Today, Jeff and his wife Cindy produce more than 25,000 barrels of high-quality Stevens variety cranberries. They proudly focus on conserving water by closely monitoring irrigation, recycling water through their reservoir system, and using spring snowmelt to encourage the growth of fresh vines. Instead of working only with rented bees, many of their bees are released into the nearby woods so their populations stay local and thrive.

We are proud of Jeff & Cindy's environmental efforts and their commitment to providing us with exceptional cranberries!

Industry News: Opportunities for Blueberries in Consumer Packaged Goods

The U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council's weekly podcast, **The Business of Blueberries** recently discussed the market possibilities for blueberries in consumer packaged goods.

Lynn Dornblaser, Director of Innovation & Insight at Mintel, and Chef Dina Paz, Culinary Director at Sterling-Rice Group, reviewed opportunities for blueberries in consumer packaged goods. In last week's podcast, they discussed four market trends that we all should be thinking about right now that link to blueberries.

1. **The Notion of Well-Being** – Weight Loss, Health and Wellness
2. **Wholesomeness** – Clean Label, Simplicity of Formulation
3. **Sugar Reduction**
4. **Immunity**

Blueberries are a natural fit into these trends. They are nutrient-dense, health forward, and functional. Graceland Fruit cultivated blueberries offer the superfruit nutrition, delicious taste, distinctive texture, and all-natural health cues consumers crave.

As discussed in the podcast, ingredients are becoming the star, and there is a place for blueberries to show up beyond baked goods. Consumers want to be able to see the blueberries in their finished product. Visual cues are important to today's consumers, as well as texture, flavor, and of course, health benefits. You can learn all about the health and nutrition of our infused dried blueberries [here](#).

Listen to the full Business of Blueberries podcast [here](#)!



Nutrition News: Infused Dried Fruits (of course!)

Nutrients in dried fruit are more concentrated than fresh fruit, allowing a smaller quantity of dried to provide similar benefits to a large quantity of fresh. Click on each of the infused dried fruits below to learn more!

Infused Dried Cranberries

Cranberries have an array of naturally occurring flavonoids and phytonutrients including anthocyanins, a polyphenol that gives cranberries their bold red color and contain powerful antioxidants, and Proanthocyanidins (PACS), bioactive compounds unique to cranberries that provide antioxidant and anti-inflammatory benefits.

Infused Dried Cherries

Montmorency cherries owe their tart taste and deep red color to an abundance of naturally occurring anthocyanins and anthocyanidins. Their broad array of flavonoids, phenols, and bioactive compounds provide antioxidant and anti-inflammatory benefits. In addition, tart cherries are one of the few food sources of natural melatonin, the sleep hormone that helps regulate the circadian sleep wake rhythm.

Infused Dried Blueberries

Cultivated and wild blueberries owe their deep blue color and powerful health protection properties to an abundance of naturally occurring anthocyanins and anthocyanidins. Dietary antioxidants such as those found in the blue pigments of blueberries neutralize free radicals and help prevent cell damage and inflammation.

Infused Dried Apples

Apples also contain naturally occurring antioxidants, phytonutrients, and flavonoids that help strengthen immunity and reduce inflammation.



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We have built an exceptional resource library on our new website, check it out!

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- [Bits 'n Pieces Newsletter](#)
- [Company & Product Brochures](#)
- [Certifications & Documentation](#)
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What's New at Graceland Fruit

We've been busy! Graceland Fruit hires new Chief Financial Officer, Commodity Manager, and Administrative Assistant, appoints a Vice President of Corporate Development and promotes a new Director of Supply Chain.

Joe Winowiecki

Chief Financial Officer

Sounding almost like a superhero, Joe Winowiecki...CFO! Joe joins Graceland Fruit from Atlas Space Operations, Inc., located in Traverse City, MI. Joe will lead our Accounting, Finance, and IT teams. He has terrific experience in many different areas and is already helping develop a collaborative environment with sales and operations. His experience is truly amazing, but more important was the cultural and leadership fit with our team. We are privileged and excited to have Joe join our Graceland team. Welcome Joe!

Jon Ball

Vice President of Corporate Development

Jon Ball will continue with the Company, moving out of the role of Chief Financial Officer and into the role of Vice President of Corporate Development, a newly created position within the company. As we continue to look for growth opportunities through our existing channels, we are also looking at growing our Company through other means. Jon will be leading this charge at Graceland.

John Snow

Director of Supply Chain

John was promoted to Director of Supply Chain this February. He joined Graceland in 2001, where he managed both the Forrester Road and Main Street plants. He subsequently created and currently manages the critical function of Sales and Operations planning. In his new role, John will oversee his previous responsibilities of Sales and Operations planning as well as all procurement activities related to direct, indirect, MRO, transportation and warehousing activities.

Bryan May

Commodity Manager

Another Spartan fan joins the Graceland team! A Michigan State alum and former Production Supervisor at the Forrester Road

facility, Bryan has returned to Graceland Fruit as Commodity Manager. Bryan's primary responsibilities will be managing the procurement and logistics for all indirect materials. Bryan says there are still many familiar faces from when he worked for us nearly 18 years ago!

Marley Lively

Administrative Assistant

The newly appointed Administrative Assistant - she does it all! Marley joins Graceland Fruit from Gillco Ingredients, a San Diego based ingredients company where she helped to support sales, provide customer support, and help organize tradeshow efforts. Marley grew up in Leelanau County on her family's very popular, community supported vegetable and flower farm.

Graceland Fruit is lead by a passionate team of ingredient experts with a singular focus: to deliver delight everyday through exceptional product and service performance - to our customers and the customers they serve, our growers, our employees, and our communities.



We deliver *delight*

Graceland Fruit, Inc. is a leading producer and global distributor of premium quality dried fruit ingredients for the food industry. Our exceptional product and service performance make it easy for innovative food manufacturers and providers to create delicious, on-trend products to surprise and delight their consumers.

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