

Press release

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Holzminden, February 24, 2026

Gen alpha explained: tasting tomorrow's trends today

- Opens market opportunities and early brand loyalty for partners
 - Reveals unique eating and drinking behaviors of generation alpha
 - Positions Symrise as a pioneer in understanding future consumer needs
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A recent study by Symrise across Europe, Africa and the Middle East reveals how generation alpha shapes choices of food and beverages. By combining in-depth qualitative and broad quantitative research, Symrise helps customers to accelerate advantage and delivers a comprehensive and unique understanding of the youngest consumers' preferences, behaviors, and influence on family decisions. These insights empower brands to anticipate emerging trends, create products that truly resonate, and build lasting connections with 2 billion adolescents shaping the markets of tomorrow.

A new generation brings fresh opportunities for innovation. Symrise's EAME Food & Beverage Business Unit explores generation alpha's eating and drinking behaviors, recognizing their growing influence on household purchases and future market trends. Customers gain a head start in developing products that resonate with the youngest consumers and their families.

Two-phase study unlocking next-gen needs

The study features two distinct research approaches. In the qualitative phase, Symrise conducted video ethnography with 24 participants across four countries. Insights from UK, Poland, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia captured real-life perspectives on how Gen Alpha shapes family food and drink choices. "The video ethnography delivers valuable insights by allowing us to experience Generation Alpha's influence and preferences firsthand," says Micaela Kraft, SCI Project Leader EAME.

The quantitative phase surveyed 2,618 participants including children aged 6 to 14 and their parents across 11 countries. Covering UK, Spain, France, Germany, Poland, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Nigeria, South Africa, Pakistan, this dual approach reveals how Generation Alpha's tastes, values, and digital habits differ from previous generations. "Generation Alpha increasingly values exploring new food experiences. Our research shows that 64% of participants enjoy trying cuisines from other countries," explains Micaela. "These insights enable us to help our customers create concepts that appeal to both children and parents."

Comprehensive overview over multiple generations

Symrise's generational framework now extends from baby boomers to generation alpha, offering a comprehensive view of evolving consumer needs. The Generation Alpha persona "Tala" developed by Symrise for instance shows how strongly children are already shaping purchasing decisions today: The 9-year-old girl from Saudi Arabia discovers new tastes via social media, prefers international cuisine and at the same time expects products that combine enjoyment and health.

These findings in conjunction with Symvision AI™ give rise to validated product ideas: At Gulfood Manufacturing 2025, for example, Symrise combined popcorn with coconut water and pineapple flavor ("Poptail Bliss") – a snack concept with Nutri-Score A that combines fun for children and functional added value for parents. These results empower partners to co-create innovative food and beverage concepts, ensuring relevance and appeal in a rapidly changing market. On top, the findings highlight the cohort's strong sway over family shopping, their openness to new flavors, and their desire for experiences that blend fun, health, and sustainability.

"Generation Alpha fascinates us with their curiosity, creativity, and influence on family choices. Exploring their world has given us fresh perspectives and valuable insights. By understanding their preferences today, we help our customers create products that win hearts and taste buds tomorrow," says Lisa Wilks, Marketing Director F&B EAME, Symrise.

Outlook

The findings from the study will enable Symrise to continually anticipate consumer trends at an early stage in the future. In this way, it can reliably support partners in the development of products that contribute to the wishes and brand preferences of Generation Alpha today and tomorrow.

About Symrise:

Symrise is a global supplier of fragrances and flavors, cosmetic active ingredients as well as functional ingredients. Its customers include perfume, cosmetics, food and beverage manufacturers, the pharmaceutical industry and producers of dietary supplements and pet food.

With sales of around €5.0 billion in the 2024 financial year, the company is one of the world's leading providers. The Group, headquartered in Holzminden, Germany, has more than 100 locations in Europe, Africa and the Middle East, Asia, the USA, and Latin America.

Together with its customers, Symrise develops new ideas and market-ready concepts for products that form an indispensable part of everyday life. Economic success and corporate responsibility are inextricably linked.

Symrise – always inspiring more...

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