

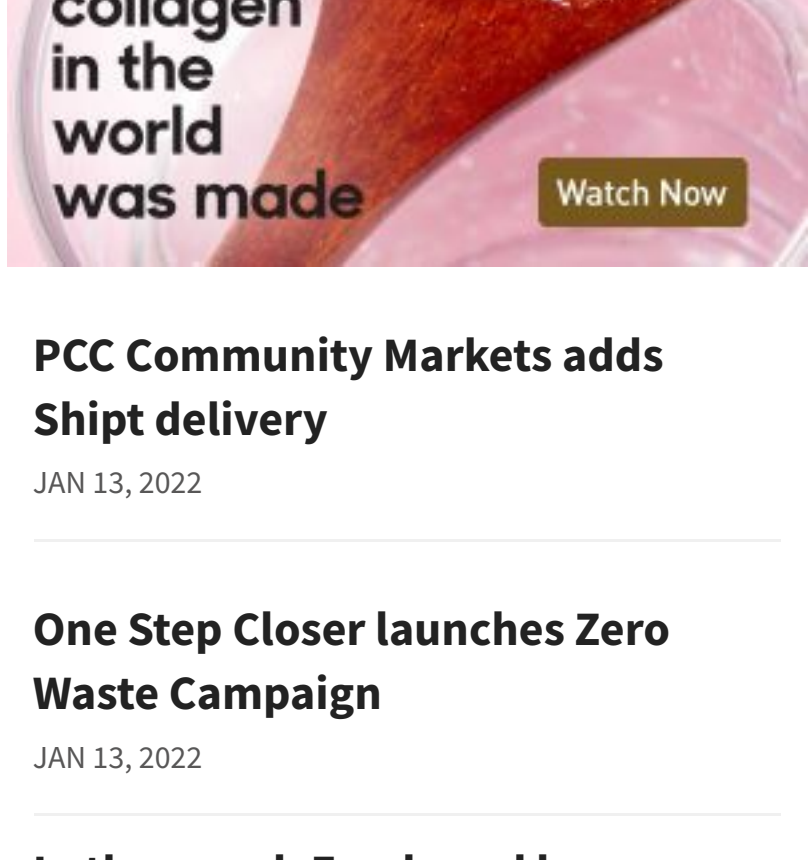


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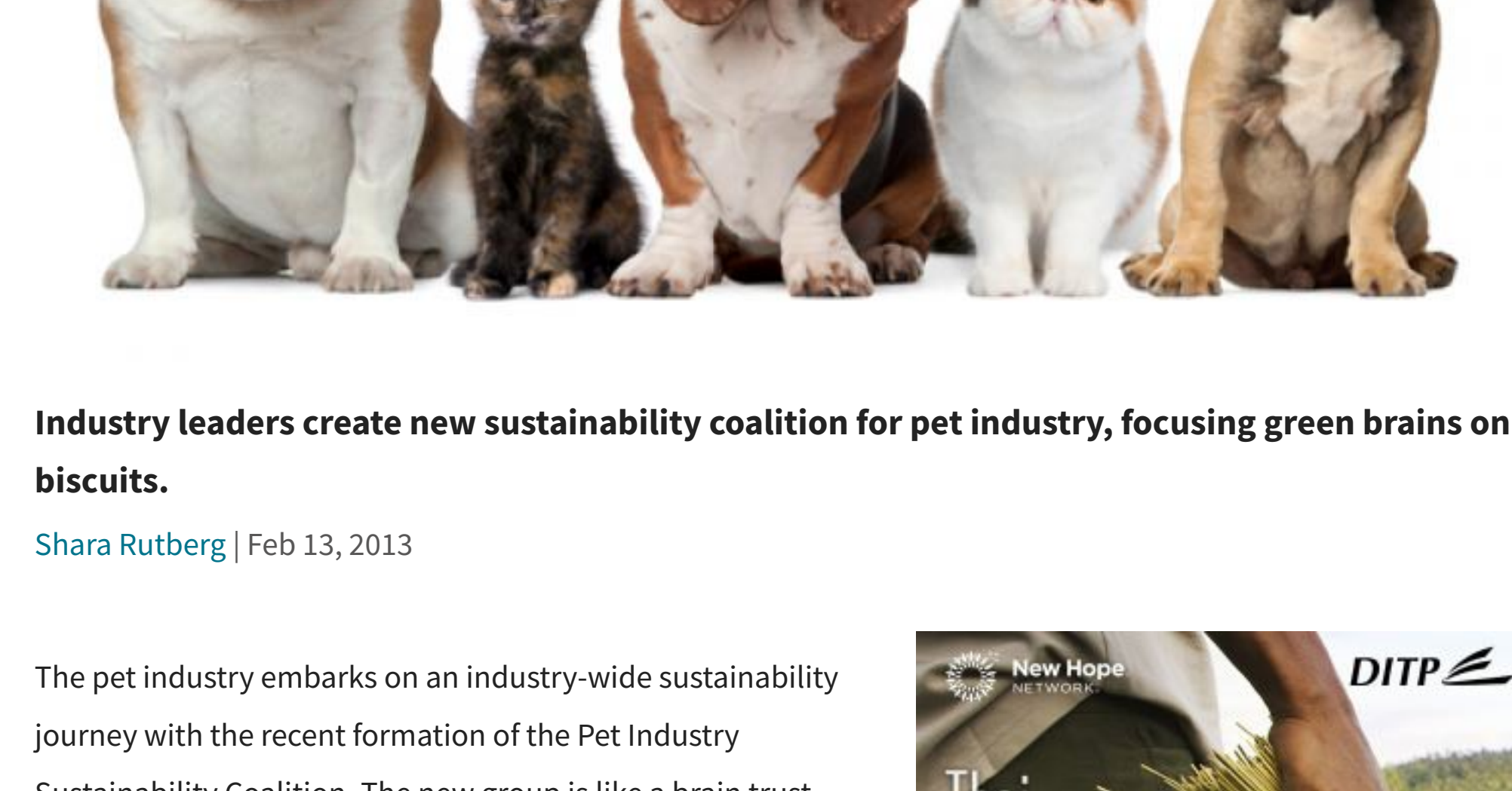
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Pet Industry Sustainability Coalition unleashes tools, accreditation



The pet industry embarks on an industry-wide sustainability journey with the recent formation of the Pet Industry Sustainability Coalition. The new group is like a brain trust of industry vets and green rock stars on a Noah's Ark of progressive thinking, lifted by the rising tide of sustainability in business, buoyed by waves like the Outdoor Industry Association Sustainability Working Group.

The Colorado nonprofit Natural Capitalism Solutions and Chief Instigator Chris Bentley of Only Natural Products and "I and love and you" pet products are partnering to fuel the new coalition, which features a mission-driven approach. Natural Capitalism Solutions, led by Hunter Lovins, iconic pro-business environmental advocate (named "Hero of the Planet" by Time, and "Green Business Icon" by Newsweek), is developing an interactive web-based platform including a variety of learning modules and sustainability implementation tools that will serve the pet business community and provide them with the resources they need to move sustainability forward.

"Sustainability drives a business' profitability but more often than not organizations are scared to embrace what they see as a complex undertaking," said Toby Russell, CEO of Natural Capitalism Solutions. "We are very excited to be part of a coalition that will help educate organizations in the pet industry and bring them all the resources they need to create and implement a sustainability program." The tools they provide may do for sustainability progress in the pet industry what the Chuckit did for the game of fetch.

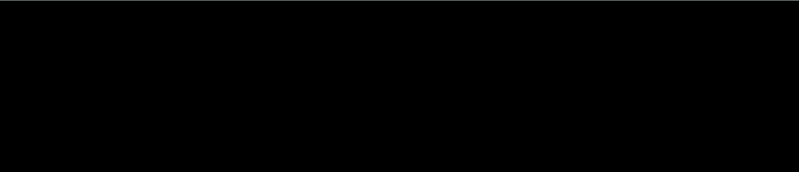
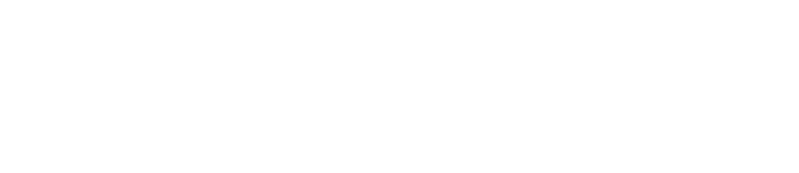
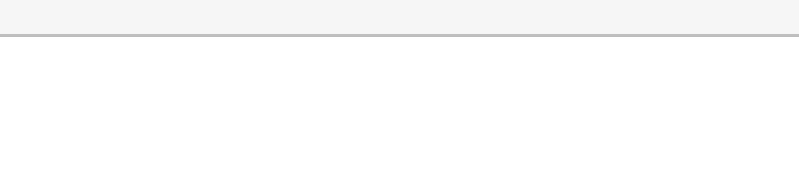
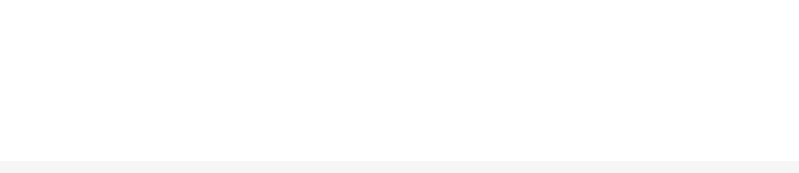
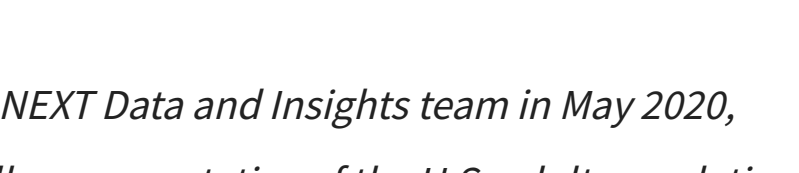
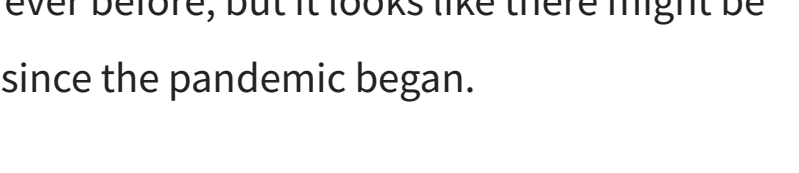
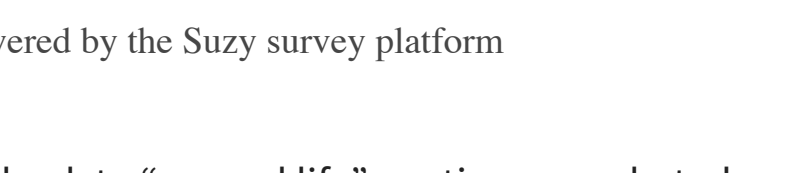
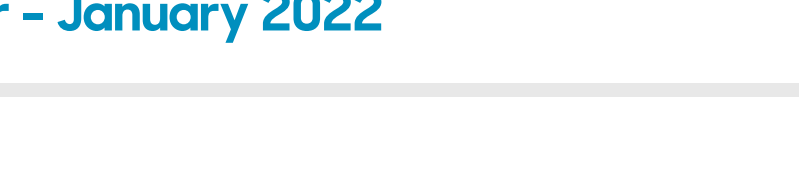
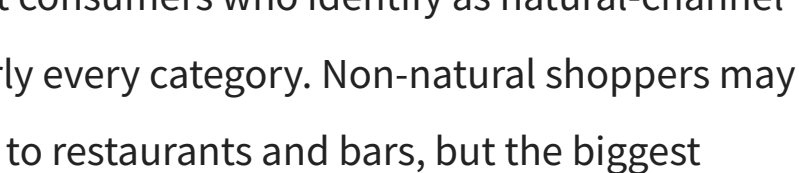
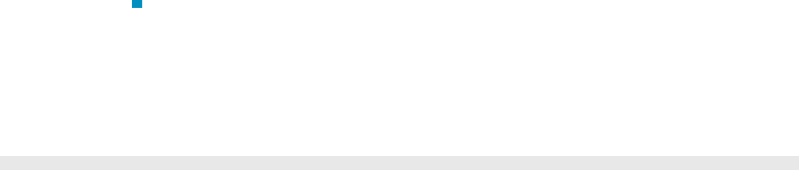
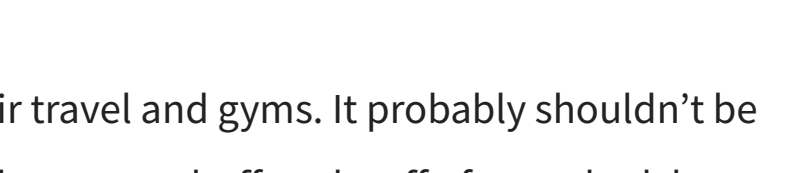
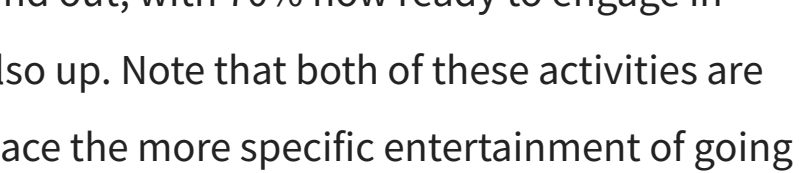
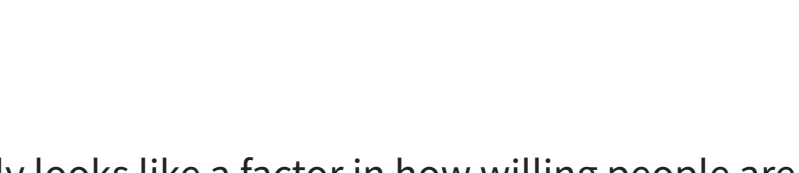
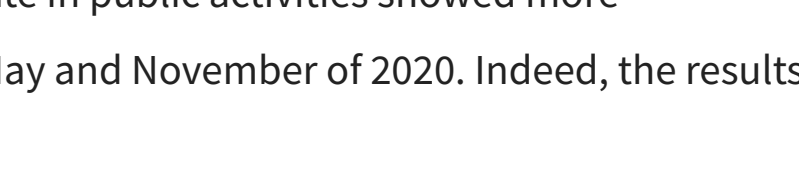
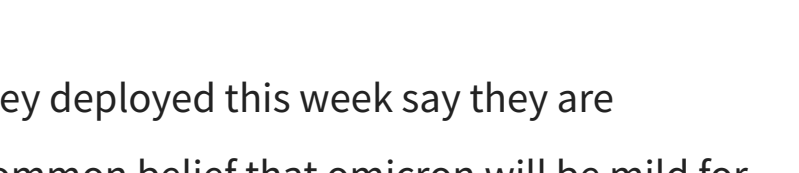
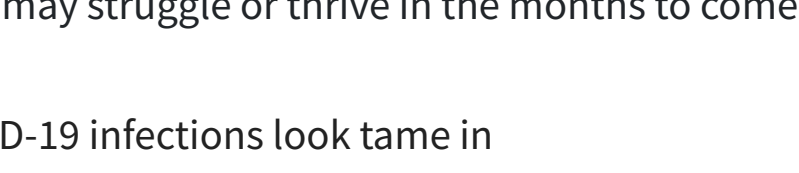
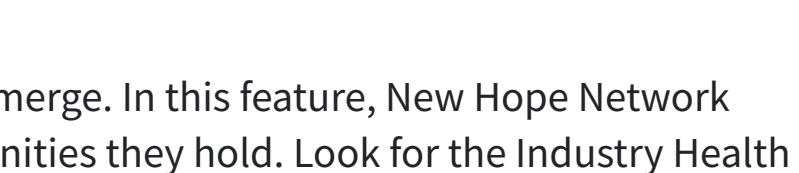
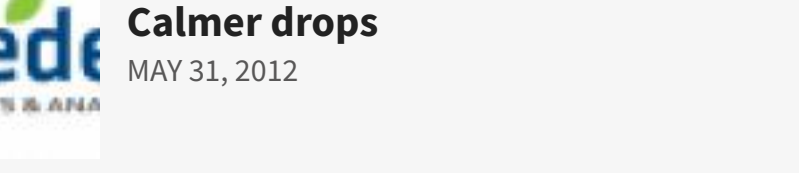
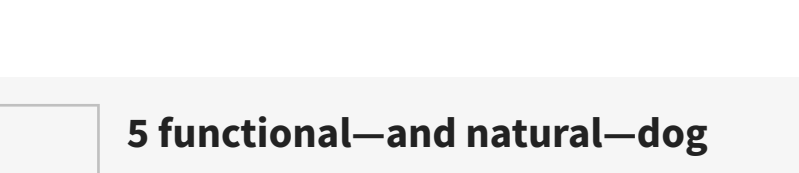
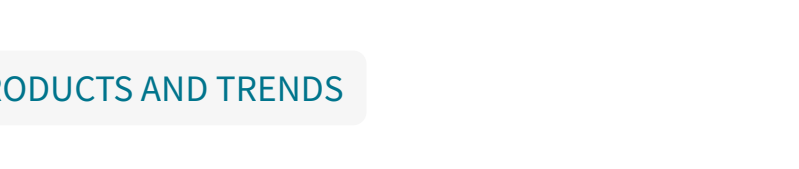
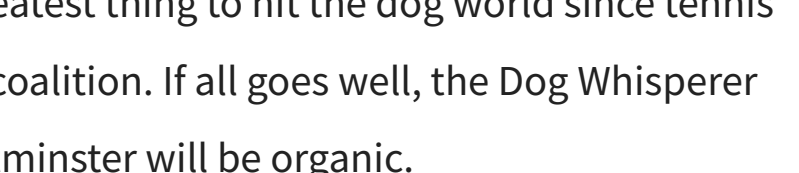
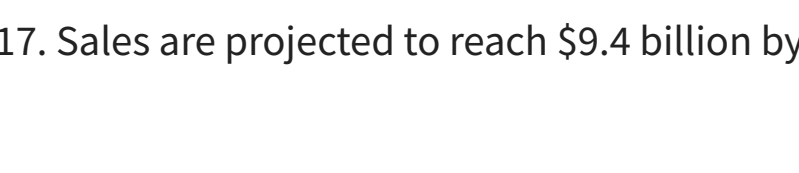
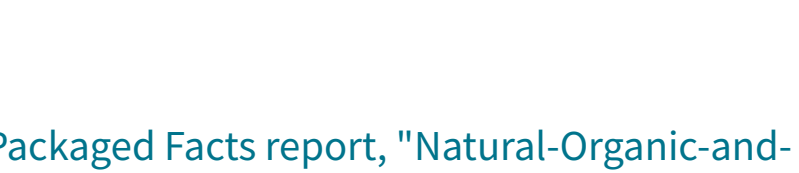
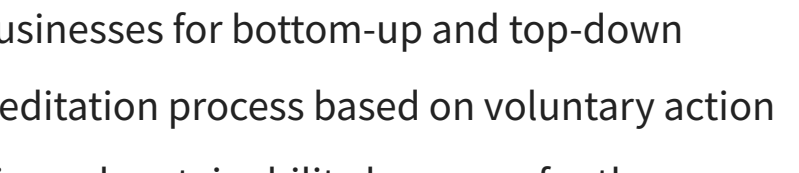
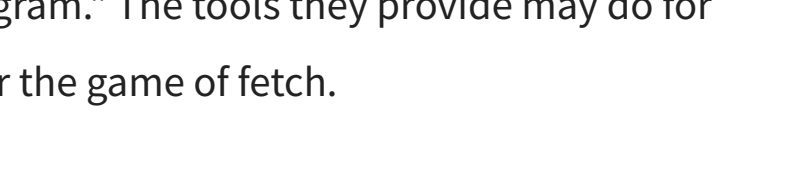
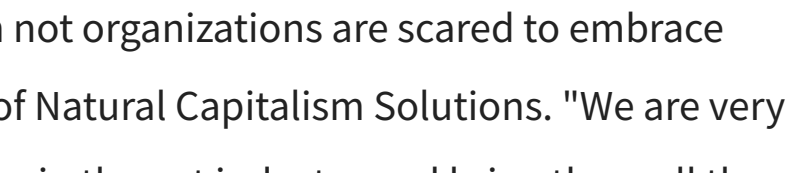
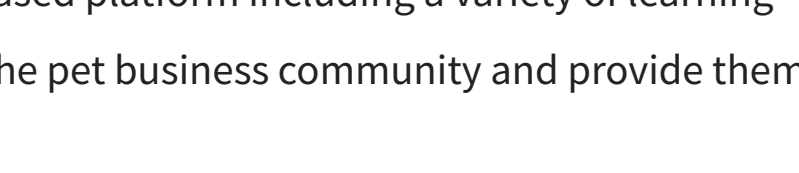
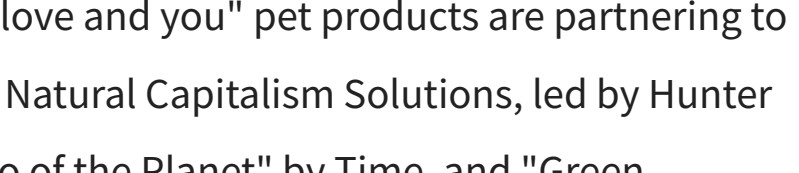
Chris Bentley, co-founder of the coalition, is one of the founders of Aspen Pet Products, which reached annual sales of over \$100 million before selling to Petmate in 2004. "I've been passionate about the environment my entire life," he said. "It's time to apply my passion and 23 years of experience in the pet business toward facilitating sustainable progress in the pet industry and protecting the resources our children, grandchildren and great grandchildren deserve."

Harvard Sustainability and Environmental Management graduate Caitlyn Bolton, the new coalition's executive director, will help members navigate the sustainability needs of businesses for bottom-up and top-down innovation and collaboration. The group will also manage an accreditation process based on voluntary action toward implementation to create trustworthy standards and a universal sustainability language for the industry as a whole.

Greening kibbles could change more than a bit. According to the Packaged Facts report, "Natural-Organic-and-Eco-Friendly-Pet-Products-in-the-U-S-Edition," combined sales of natural pet foods and natural pet care products will grow by 10 to 15 percent over the period from 2014-17. Sales are projected to reach \$9.4 billion by 2017, up from an estimated \$4.1 billion in 2012.

Kong, producer of the bouncy, rubber, stuff-able toy that is the greatest thing to hit the dog world since tennis balls started coming in three-packs, has already signed on to the coalition. If all goes well, the Dog Whisperer may start cooing Lorax lullabies and the champagne toast at Westminster will be organic.

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Monitor: Omicron not slowing down return to normal



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New Hope research reveals consumers are more ready than ever to return to stores, restaurants and other public venues, even as tidal wave of omicron variant sweeps country

Rick Polito | Jan 13, 2022

Natural Products Industry Health Monitor, Dec. 16, 2021

As the world emerges, haltingly from COVID-19, new challenges emerge. In this feature, New Hope Network provides an ongoing update on those challenges and the opportunities they hold. Look for the Industry Health Monitor every other Friday to learn the major news that is affecting the natural products market immediately and the less obvious insights that could dictate where the market may struggle or thrive in the months to come.

While the omicron variant may be making previous waves of COVID-19 infections look tame in comparison, there is another "variant" that looks remarkable in New Hope Network's latest consumer research.

We might call it the "oh, whatever" variant as consumers in a survey deployed this week say they are increasingly ready to go on with their lives. Perhaps accepting a common belief that omicron will be mild for them, consumers who were asked how ready they are to participate in public activities showed more willingness to engage in every single category than they were in May and November of 2020. Indeed, the results look very much like a classic stair-step progression.

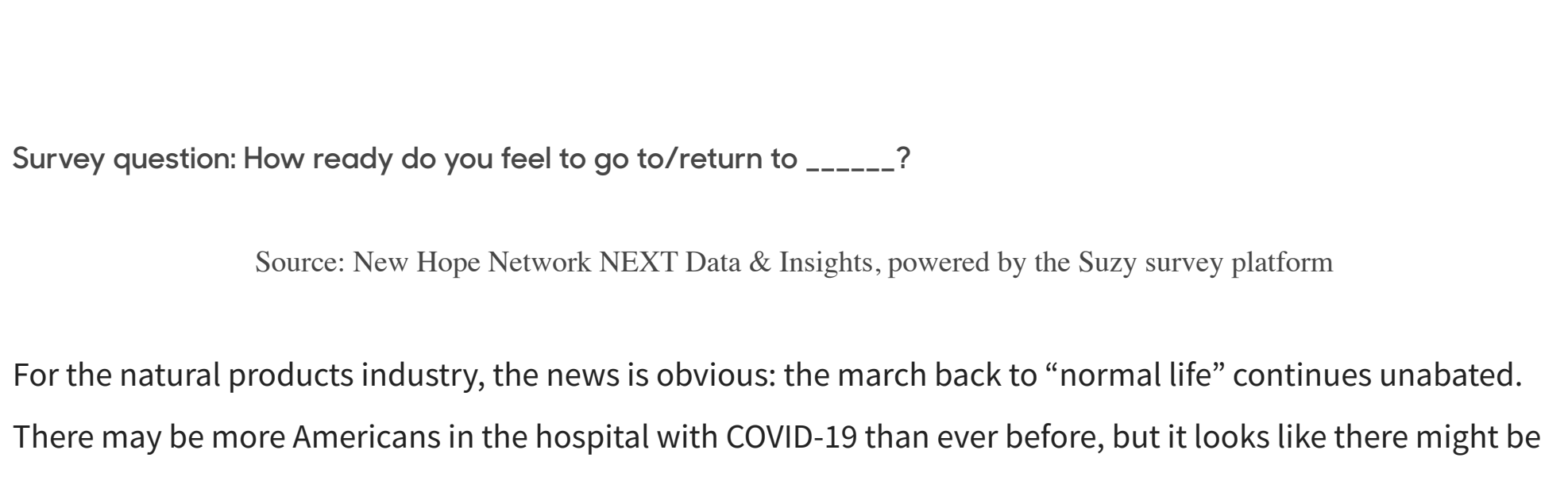
Normal life, it appears, is not pausing its comeback for omicron.

A short attention span certainly isn't a comorbidity, but it definitely looks like a factor in how willing people are to return to normal life. The results for non-essential shopping stand out, with 70% now ready to engage in some retail therapy. The appetite to visit restaurants and bars is also up. Note that both of these activities are optional and could be described as entertainment, and both outpace the more specific entertainment of going to the movies.

Going into a theater to see a movie, however, comes in ahead of air travel and gyms. It probably shouldn't be surprising, however, that closed-in spaces such as airplanes and the sweaty, huff-and-puff of gyms look less appealing.

Consumer readiness to engage in public activities

All shoppers



Consumer readiness to engage in public activities

Natural vs. Non-natural shopper - January 2022



Note: The referenced surveys were fielded by New Hope Network NEXT Data & Insights team in May 2020, November 2020 and January 2021 to 1,000 consumers directionally representative of the U.S. adult population.

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