


10 ways to sell CBD, fish, flax and coconut oils

From cross-merchandising to consumer education, here's how to sell more nutritional oils from the aisle



Today's consumers no longer live in fear of all fats. Research and popular diet plans have enlightened Americans about the potential of a wide spectrum of oils. However, many still appreciate learning how to integrate these products into their daily lives. Here are some strategies to help prompt consumers to consider an oil change—or add a completely new oil to their diet.



Give it away

The tried and true method of getting products into consumers' hands—and mouths—is popular for a reason: it works. And it's particularly important when it comes to healthy oils. The variety and versatility of nutritious oils like flax, fish, hemp-derived CBD and coconut oils offer a ton of options for tempting all five senses. "It's like a song," says retail expert Ossie Cohen, "you can't just take someone's word that you're going to love it. A description is not enough. You need to experience it yourself to understand it."

This is especially true for products like fish oils, the idea of which might prompt fishy flashbacks to cringe-worthy flavors of old-school cod liver oil. A taste of one of the delicious, emulsified oil products is worth a thousand words—especially for kids. Try offering kids prizes, like fish or mermaid stickers in exchange for a sample of one of the children's emulsified omega-3 products.

Sample prepared foods like flaxseed oil salad dressing, CBD hemp oil brownies or a curry made with coconut oil. Remember to give away store-branded recipe cards as takeaways.



Cross-merchandising opportunities

- ✓ Flax oil, which makes delicious salad dressing, near leafy greens.
- ✓ Coconut oil, with its rich flavor and high smoke point, next to the meat counter.
- ✓ Hemp-derived CBD oil, with its muscle recovery and stress-busting properties, near the yoga mats.
- ✓ Children's omega products near kids' lunchbox snacks.



Get social with sampling

Sampling is powerful. It's even more powerful when fueled by social media. "Activate digitally engaged shoppers even before they get to the store by letting them know via social media when and where they'll be able to enjoy samples," says Cohen, Chief Brand n'Crowd Commando for Pickl—a new app that connects shoppers, brands and retailers to one another and merchandising data.

Mix it up

Cross-merchandising oils with other products can reach multiple shopper demographics at once, says Jessica Hochman, a consultant to The Movitz Group. "Consider an endcap, cross-merchandised to include food and beverage ingredients along with smoothie mix-ins [such as nutritional oils]." This can reach two shopper segments, she says. First, consumers familiar with the ingredients will be reminded of their presence. Second, shoppers who find the ingredients "unfamiliar, or even a little intimidating" can be empowered by a display that shows how to use them, reinforced with simple recipe cards. This is where thoughtful collateral is key, she says—"in the store and in the digital space, where an email can be as suggestive as an endcap without the premium of floor space."



Meet them at the bar

Incorporating foods made with nutritious oils in your store's deli case, salad bar and smoothie bar gives shoppers an easy entrée (or side dish) into the world of nutritious oils. Don't forget to call out the oils with signage, says Cohen.

Educate (and feed)

Leverage consumer curiosity about healthy oils—especially hemp-derived CBD—with engaging educational events. Partner with brands for content and collateral and be sure to offer samples of products made from relevant products—whether it's a spread of chips and guacamole made with flax oil, minty lemonade made with CBD hemp oil or hand lotion made with coconut oil. Offer nutritional information straight-up or deliver it within a cooking class format. Staff can explain the benefits of different types of oils and how to integrate them into daily life while they show—and sample—a recipe that uses the ingredient.

Convert the masses

Make switching to a more nutritious oil for cooking and baking easy for consumers by posting tear sheets with conversion charts by the oils or measuring tools. Include recipes that will prove to shoppers and their families how easy and delicious it can be to use more nutritious oils.

Hail the diet tribes

Coconut oil fuels paleo and keto dieters around the world. Millions of vegetarians depend on plant-based flaxseed oil for their omegas. Empower consumers with education and tools for these special diets. For example, Natural Grocers launched Resolution Reset Day in January to help shoppers keep their New Year's health and wellness resolutions. The store offers samples of special diet-friendly foods, discounts off diet books, diet consulting and deals to help customers stock up on items to help them reset their diet resolutions.

DIY delights

Do-it-yourself kits that use coconut oil to make personal care products, like headache salves, hand cream and scrubs are fun, easy and make great gifts. Invite shoppers to personalize the recipe with their favorite scented essential oil.

Artisan storage solutions

Flaxseed oil and fish oil in particular must be stored away from light and heat—providing the perfect excuse for consumers to buy decorative bottles and dispensers.

Explain the differences

Simplify shopping and help demystify the benefits of nutritional oils with signage or handouts explaining the importance of quality—in processing and ingredients. For example, explain on shelf-talkers or handouts that fish oil made from smaller fish from more pristine, cold waters like around Iceland and Alaska make for cleaner, more potent products. Likewise, full-spectrum hemp-derived CBD products offer a greater benefit than oils made from isolates; cold-pressed coconut oil provides more nutrients than refined oils.

