

Four Considerations When **Formulating Peanut Butter Bars**

As one of the most popular flavors in bar applications and the perfect balance between sweet and salty, peanut butter usually pairs well with just about anything. In fact, as a classic favorite, peanut butter flavored snacks, cereal, and energy bar releases have grown between 2024-2026 according to Datassential.

As such a familiar flavor, hitting the perfect profile can sometimes be difficult because each consumer has a different expectation of what they believe peanut butter should taste like. Let's take a look at some important considerations when formulating with peanut butter.

Step 1: Determine Your Gold Standard

When starting your development on a new peanut butter bar, it is important to determine your gold standard. Below are a few examples of some popular peanut butter market products:

- **Once Again®** - Sustainability Forward
- **American Dream Nut Butter** - Health Forward
- **Nerdy Nuts** - Fresh Forward
- **Santa Cruz Organic®** - Sustainability Forward

Step 2: Identify Preferred Profile Characteristics

It is also important to identify the profile characteristics you like about your gold standard to allow your flavor supplier to create the perfect peanut butter profile for your product.

Below is a list of common descriptors used to describe peanut butter. Using these descriptors can help your flavor supplier understand exactly what taste you are looking for.

Peanut Butter Descriptors:

- Raw Bean/ Beany
- Green Grassy
- Caramelized Sugar
- Molasses
- Roasted/ Burnt
- Woody
- Skin/ Shell
- Earthy
- Oily/ Rancid Oil
- Cardboard
- Painty
- Fishy
- Musty
- Smokey
- Astringent
- Metallic



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Step 3: Consider Raw Materials

Once you have identified your gold standard it's important to consider the raw materials you can use in your formulation to achieve that craveability.

- **Peanut Butter:** Typically added to the binder and helps with the mouthfeel and nut perception.
- **Peanut Flour:** Typically added to dry ingredients and adds roasted notes. As peanut flour can affect the texture of the bar, you may need to adjust the dry-to-liquid ratio to achieve desired texture.
- **Peanut Extract:** Typically added to the binder and adds oily and roasted notes. It is important to note that different extracts can have different profiles.
- **Flavor:** Typically added to the binder. Adds nuance and differencing notes to round out the profile and allows for customization of your bar.
- **Sugar and Salt Levels:** Can be added to either the binder or dry ingredients. A little salt and sugar can go a long way when trying to hit your candied and roasted profiles. When manipulating these levels on a lab scale, it may be useful to increase the usage @ 0.05% at a time.
- **Peanut Inclusions:** Typically added to dry ingredients. Depending on size and roast, they can contribute different profiles while adding texture for an added eating experience.

Step 4: Consider Shelf Life and Equilibration

Now that you have perfected your base formula, it is important to consider equilibration time. Depending on the bar type that can range anywhere from two weeks to two months, roasted notes that seem high on the first day will fade over time. This would allow the creamy and buttery notes to become more apparent.

Additionally, the impact of the natural peanut butter and peanut inclusions can fade especially in dairy protein bars. This is where flavor is important, as it may allow for your profile to last for the length of your shelf life.



Formulating peanut butter bars may be challenging, but our experts are here to help. We can help guide you through these considerations to lead you the perfect formulation for your brand!

Reach out to discuss a customized peanut butter flavor solution.