

## **IMPROVING THE CONSUMER PROPERTIES OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES**

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The Ukrainian alcoholic beverage market is currently quite saturated. The consumer properties of alcoholic beverages are shaped by the raw materials used and the specifics of the production technology.

When choosing a beverage, consumers are guided by the following key criteria: organoleptic properties, content of natural ingredients, health benefits, etc. The gradual increase in demand for quality beverages from various groups of alcoholic beverages containing natural plant-based ingredients encourages the creation of new original recipes.

The use of innovative food technologies is expanding the range of products enriched with biologically active additives. These beverages have a high biological value due to the content of vitamins, macro- and microelements, organic acids, proteins, essential oils, etc.

With the majority of people nowadays opting for a healthy diet, spirits producers around the world are striving to use only natural ingredients. In the production of spirits, natural food flavours or additives consisting only of natural, all-natural ingredients are more often used. Aromatic spices, fruits, vegetables, herbs, leaves and more are used as additives.

Manufacturers pay considerable attention to the quality of raw materials, which determines the quality and safety of the finished product. Currently, the development of new technologies and improvement of existing ones is a pressing issue for the industry. Most alcoholic beverages can be classified as multi-component beverages, with ingredients that shape the taste and aroma.

Ukraine's raw material resources are rich in natural, environmentally friendly fruit and berry and vegetable spice and flavouring raw materials, which can be an alternative to hazardous food additives of synthetic origin. The use of natural additives made from plant materials in the form of pastes, powders, concentrates, extracts, fillers, etc. is widespread. Extracts derived from spice and aromatic and medicinal raw materials, wild berries are popular, as they can enhance the antioxidant, immunomodulatory, and preservative properties of the finished product.

The use of natural plant materials with certain functional properties

is promising in the production of alcoholic beverages. The selection of herbal ingredients allows not only to create the original taste and aroma of drinks, but also enriches them with biologically active substances and antioxidants.

Manufacturers use various compositions of ingredients, alcohol infusions, and fruit drinks made from spicy and aromatic raw materials with a high content of biologically active substances that help to improve the body's defence functions against the adverse effects of alcohol and form high taste properties of the product.

Products that reduce the effects of alcohol intoxication include chemical compounds – components of plant extracts – that have a sufficiently stable therapeutic and prophylactic effect and minimal side effects.

The components of natural plant materials have a certain therapeutic and prophylactic effect, enriching beverages with biologically active substances. In addition, antioxidants contained in natural raw materials improve the stability of the beverage during storage.

For the production of alcoholic beverages, non-traditional types of plant materials are used, namely wild fruits, berries, leaves and stems of medicinal raw materials, etc. Given consumer demand, producers are expanding the range of spirits (vodka) by using sources of natural flavour, including essential oils: anise, caraway, clove, rose, citrus, orange and star anise, etc. Beer has been growing in popularity lately. Adding extracts from lemon balm, St John's wort, bleach leaves, chokeberry fruit, pine needles, oak bark, etc. to the intoxicating beverage improves the taste of the finished product and has a positive effect on the stability of the finished product.

The use of spicy and aromatic raw materials with a high content of essential oils (fennel, lofthorn, mountain savory, lavender, peppermint, fragrant savory, lemon balm, oregano, etc.) in the technology of flavoured beverages allows us to produce vermouths with multifaceted taste characteristics depending on the background components of the herbal compositions used.

The main trend in the development of the modern market of alcoholic beverages of various groups is the development and implementation of the latest technologies based on raw materials or extracts of various natural plant materials.

The use of natural biologically active complexes made from natural plant materials in the production of alcoholic beverages enriches the beverage with biologically active substances, forms the original taste properties of the beverages and imparts certain functional properties.