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# food technology

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Advancing Food & Health Through Sound Science

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There was no lack of ingredient innovation at the IFT Food Expo® as exhibitors showcased ingredients to solve functionality challenges and provide added health benefits.

#### **The Versatility of Hibiscus**

The hibiscus is a beautiful, brightly colored flower that evokes images of a tropical island. Dried petals can be steeped in tea, resulting in a tart flavor. At one point, cutting-edge culinary professionals began to use hibiscus as a flavoring and coloring ingredient. Then, food formulators began to use hibiscus ingredients in food and beverage formulations. It is one of those on-trend ingredients, along with other floral flavors, seen in beverages like tea and in baked goods, confections, and ice cream, remarked Greg Robertson, President, Teawolf, Pine Brook, N.J. ([www.teawolf.com](http://www.teawolf.com)). The company offers liquid hibiscus extracts and spray-dried powders, which have a rich red hue

that can be used as a natural alternative to artificially derived colorings.

Tea is one of the most popular beverages that features hibiscus flavor. Teawolf also focused on its extensive line of tea extracts and distillates from black and green tea, oolong tea, white tea, Darjeeling, gyokuro, matha, rooibos, tisanes, herbal teas, and more. Tea is the second-most-consumed beverage after water around the world. Market research has shown that consumers will continue to choose tea for its health benefits and variety of flavors,

and Robertson said that Teawolf is prepared to help product developers meet the growing demand. What makes these tea ingredients exciting is that they can be used in more than just beverages since there are growing numbers of non-beverage food products that use tea as a flavoring, added Robertson.