

From Science to Shelf

Choosing the Right Collagen Format for your Product Application

Two brands can source the exact same collagen peptide and end up with completely different products. One dissolves cleanly and disappears into the formula. The other fights cloudiness, an off-taste, or a dose nobody finishes.

Often the difference is because of the way the **collagen matches the product format, the formulation, and the manufacturing process.**

Collagen format is one of the first decisions in product development, shaping how much collagen you can use, how it performs during processing, and ultimately how consumers experience your product.

Collagen format choice sets the rules for how the ingredient dissolves, how much you can use, how it tastes, and whether it survives the way your product is made.

Here is how each format changes the job, and how to choose.



In a drink: it has to disappear

A collagen peptide should dissolve completely, maintain the desired clarity, and have minimal impact on taste and mouthfeel. These qualities allow the ingredient to blend seamlessly into the finished product, letting the intended flavour profile remain the focus.

Low molecular weight collagen peptides can support faster dissolution and a cleaner sensory experience, making them well suited for clear beverages and ready-to-drink applications. However, product performance ultimately depends on how the collagen interacts with the complete formulation and manufacturing process.

When selecting a collagen for beverages, it should be evaluated under your regular processing systems, including pH, heat treatment, concentration, and interactions with other ingredients, to ensure consistent performance from product development through commercial production.



In a soft gel capsule: less is what makes more possible

A soft gel offers only so much room, so the less collagen it takes to reach a functional dose, the more the format can do. When a clinically effective dose can be achieved with a smaller amount of collagen, manufacturers have greater flexibility to develop a smaller, easier-to-take capsule or reduce the number of capsules per serving.

Much of that comes down to how the smallest bioactive tripeptides, such as **Gly-Pro-Hyp**, are absorbed intact rather than broken down first.

In a gummy: the hardest test

Heat and an acidic gelling system will expose a weak grade fast, showing up as cloudiness, a fishy note, or pieces that drift from batch to batch. For Collagen gummies, the grade needs to be checked to ensure it holds its potency through the cook, stays clear, adds no off-taste, and comes out the same in every batch.

In sports nutrition: claim what is proven

The evidence for collagen in sport sits in recovery, joints, and connective tissue, not athletic performance. Collagen positioned around recovery and mobility means your claim stands up to scrutiny, delivered in the stick packs and ready-to-drink formats active consumers actually use.

In ingestible beauty from within products: daily dose matters

Two things decide success: a dose people take daily, and evidence behind it. A published human trial^[1] saw skin hydration improve within two weeks at 1 gram a day, and 1 gram fits a stick pack, shot, or small capsule far better than a 10 gram scoop nobody finishes.

Collagen Format Preferences by market

Powder remains a major collagen format across the UK, Europe and US, while gummies and liquids are increasingly important convenience formats and capsules and tablets remain well established.

From market to format to finished product, consistency matters.

Different markets and applications place different demands on collagen peptides, from solubility and sensory performance in powders and liquids to processing considerations in gummies and other delivery formats. Having confidence that the ingredient will perform consistently from batch to batch can therefore be just as important as selecting the right format for the market.

The fish collagen peptides supplied by Willows Ingredients are single-sourced from ASC-certified farms and fully traceable from farm to batch. This provides manufacturers with one consistent ingredient to qualify, one supply source to audit and one specification that can support multiple applications and SKUs.

Ultimately, the value of a versatile collagen peptide is its ability to travel across formats, across markets and consistently from batch to batch.

To discuss formulation options, request samples or technical documents please do get in touch with our team.

[1]Lee SH, et al. Oral Supplementation with Low-molecular-weight Collagen Peptide Improves Hydration, Facial Lifting, Dermal Density, Skin Desquamation and Nails. Journal of Food and Nutrition Research (2022), 10(8), 546–559
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