

A collage of various plant-based dishes including bread, vegetables, and sushi. The background features a top-down view of several food items: a bowl of roasted chickpeas with fresh basil, a bowl of green leafy vegetables with cucumber and radish, a bowl of golden-brown fried patties with quinoa and broccoli, and a tray of colorful sushi rolls. The text is overlaid on a dark purple semi-transparent box in the center.

Plant-Based Trends: PART 3, MEAT ALTERNATIVES

With a 90% increase in sales compared to last year, plant-based foods have been a much sought-after alternative for consumers as they look to amplify their health and find balance in their diet. We've mentioned these trends in our Plant-Based [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#) reports where we discussed consumer interest in health and wellness focused and indulgence focused plant-based alternatives. Today, we're talking plant-based meat and protein alternatives. Thriving in popularity, plant-based protein options go far beyond veggie burgers. Let's take a look at what's trending in plant-based protein and meat alternatives from consumer interest, product and menu introductions and more.

ON THE RISE

POPULARITY IN PLANT-BASED EATING:

As mentioned in our recent [Fast Facts](#) on plant-based products in the pandemic environment, sales of plant-based foods have considerably outpaced total foods sales in the US, according to the Plant Based Foods Association and SPINS. Plant-based food sales spiked 90% (compared to last year) at the height of pandemic buying, which is 25% higher than total food sales.

SOCIAL LISTENING FOR “PLANT-BASED & PROTEIN” SEARCH

Top Hashtags: #vegan, #plantbased, #plantbasedprotein, #healthylifestyle, #vegetarian



PRODUCTS OF NOTE

PLANT-BASED PROTEIN ALTERNATIVES

- Soy
- Lentils
- Jackfruit
- Tofu
- Chickpeas
- Edamame
- Beans
- Tempeh
- Quinoa
- Chia Seeds
- Nutritional Yeast
- Nuts

Source: Healthline, EatingWell, NBC News



SWEET EARTH ENLIGHTENED FOODS AWESOME GROUNDS PLANT BASED PROTEIN offers 16 grams of protein and 4 grams of fiber per serving is sold in a 12-oz. pack. 35 percent of consumers in a Mintel GNPD panel said they likely or definitely would buy this product, outperforming its subcategory.



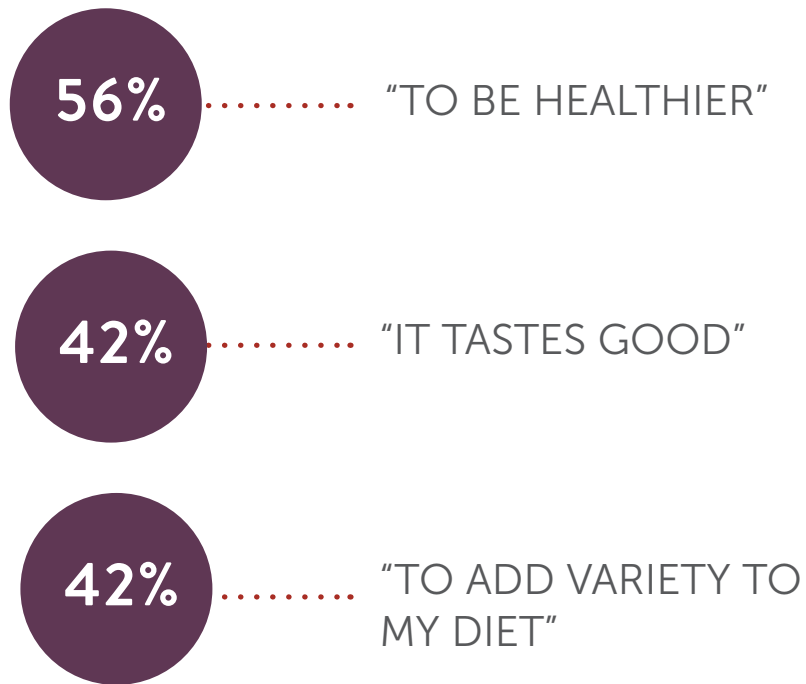
BEYOND MEAT HAS RELAUNCHED ITS BEYOND SAUSAGE HOT ITALIAN PLANT-BASED SAUSAGES with a new meatier formula and a new package design.

WHY PLANT-BASED?

Though consumers are most motivated to eat plant-based due to health concerns, 42% state taste as a crucial factor. Brands that are able to highlight both health benefit to the consumer and flavorful taste have a unique advantage.

MOTIVATIONS FOR EATING PLANT-BASED PROTEINS

March 2020



Source: Mintel

“Plant-based foods enjoy a health halo, and adults who use plant-based protein sources state they do so to be healthier more than any other reason. But taste and variety are also motivators, and during these challenging times may be more important factors for brands to promote than nutritional profile alone.”

-MINTEL





TOP FLAVORS

FASTEST GROWING FLAVORS GLOBALLY:

Q1 2019 VS. Q1 2020

Spice/Spicy.....	+650%
Herbs/Herbal.....	+500%
Bean(Black).....	+300%
Carrot.....	+266.67%
Quinoa.....	+140%
Bean.....	+100%

TOP FLAVORS GLOBALLY

- Unflavored/Plain
- Vegetable
- Smoke
- Spice/Spicy
- Mushroom
- Beetroot/Beet
- Barbeque/BBQ/Barbacoa
- Curry
- Broccoli
- Peppers/Bell Peppers

ON THE MENU

Restaurant chefs and operators have been getting creative with crave-worthy alt-meat menu items, too. Meat substitutes in particular have experienced strong overall growth in retail and dining, while incidences of plant-based proteins on menus have increased as well (Q1 2017-Q1 2020). This growth provides opportunity for food operators and developers to find success in offering meatless options from plant-based burgers and beyond.

MENU MENTIONS

- The Bac'n Cheeze Burger at Arlo's in Austin, Texas, is a house-made plant-based burger topped with seitan bacon and plant-based mac and "cheeze."
- The Chick'n Fried Chick'n at The Southern V in Nashville is made with crispy seitan covered in mushroom gravy.
- In a pilot test last year, KFC quick-service restaurants sold out of plant-based chicken nuggets and boneless wings in a matter of hours.

**MEAT SUBSTITUTES INGREDIENT:
+51% MENU INCIDENCE Q1 2017-Q1 2020
(# MENU MENTIONS) - MINTEL**



“Consumers are most likely to cite health as their primary motivation for eating plant-based proteins, yet dining out is a treat. Operators must find a balance of highlighting the health benefits of plant-based proteins while also delivering on taste.”

-MINTEL



CENTER STAGE PRODUCE

For many people, the same cravings for animal proteins can be satisfied with vegetables or fruits that serve as center-of-the plate attractions. The filet becomes the cauliflower steak. The burger becomes the portabella mushroom. The battered chicken breast becomes the breaded eggplant slice.

FOODSERVICE FEATURE

The Smoked Cantaloupe Burger at Ducks Eatery in New York City shows the tantalizing possibilities of fruit-based protein, with cantaloupe that's been transformed by curing, smoking, baking and searing it and pairing it with fried caramelized onion, ranch and lettuce.

VEGETABLE-BASED

Vegetable-based options also appeal to consumers as a less processed meat substitute. As consumers look for "good-for-you" products, highlighting vegetable content and featuring appealing flavors can strengthen consumer interest in meat substitutes.

- In the US, some 61% of consumers think that whole plant foods are healthier than processed meat substitutes. - Mintel

PRODUCTS OF NOTE



VEGGIE MAGIC MANGO MAGIC TANGY MANGO SAUCE Filled Puy Lentil Burger is said to be suitable for vegans and gluten free. The product pack includes four lentil burgers filled with a tangy mango sauce



CRAFTY COUNTER WUNDER NUGGETS: Made with lentils, chickpeas, cabbage, cauliflower, chia seeds and aromatic seasonings, the plant-based product provides 6 grams of protein per serving.

- **37%** of consumers said they likely or definitely would purchase this product.



WHOLLY VEGGIE SOUTHWEST BEET VEGGIE PATTIES features beets, red peppers, and black beans, providing 7 grams of protein and 3 grams of fiber per serving.

THE GREAT MASHUP - MEAT & POULTRY

The rise of the flexitarian consumer -- open to both animal and plant-based proteins -- has also spurred the advent of premium protein blends in the traditional meat and poultry market. According to the Power of Meat 202- survey from FMI, 75% of are people interested in meat and poultry blends. The ratio of meat to plant ingredient may vary, but these blends also are a way to savor the best of both worlds.

PRODUCTS OF NOTE



RAISED & ROOTED PATTIES are blended with Angus beef and plant protein, with 19 grams of protein per serving and 60% less saturated fat than an all-beef burger.

Image Source: Raisedandrooted.com



PERDUE CHICKEN PLUS RICE BREADED CHICKEN BREAST & VEGETABLE TENDERS are made with chickens raised with no antibiotics ever with a veggie blend of chickpeas and cauliflower. The product has 3 grams of fiber and 10 grams of protein per serving and contains 100% natural ingredients.

- **56%** of consumers responded they would likely or definitely purchase this product.

75% OF ARE PEOPLE INTERESTED IN MEAT AND POULTRY BLENDS.

- FMI



CRACKING INTO A FAVORITE CATEGORY

Eggs are a staple ingredient in a number of indulgent dishes, from morning omelets to batters used various for griddled and baked goodies. Here, too, plant-based upstarts are making inroads as a swap for traditional eggs.

SALES OF PLANT-BASED EGGS IN THE U.S. HAVE JUMPED 192 PERCENT.

- GOOD FOOD INSTITUTE & PLANT BASED FOODS ASSOCIATION



PRODUCTS OF NOTE



JUST PLANT-BASED SCRAMBLE EGG, sold in a 12-oz. bottle, is said to scramble just like a scrambled egg yet does not contain any egg, GMO, cholesterol, dairy or gluten.

- 14% of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would purchase this product



EARTH ISLAND VEGAN EGG PLANT-BASED EGG REPLACER has been recently reformulated and now contains 3 grams of soy protein. It is kosher certified and vegan and sells in a compostable package with 10 to 12 vegan eggs.



“The popularity of plant-based dieting will drive demand for egg substitutes with improved sensory qualities.”

-MINTEL



THE TAKEAWAYS

It's no doubt that growth is occurring in the plant-based space and fast. With consumers adjusting their diets as the COVID-19 pandemic evolves, opportunity in good-for-you plant-based alternatives in retail and dining has soared. The key – finding balance between benefit to the consumer and desirable flavor and texture. Egg and meat alternatives to vegetable-based options that serve as a significant protein source, the opportunities for product developers in this space seem endless.

YOU DESERVE MORE. LET'S GET STARTED.

What does true partnership look like? You deserve a flavor partner ready to turn these trends into the tangible.

Let FONA's market insight and research experts get to work for you. Translate these trends into bold new ideas for your brand. Increase market share and get to your "what's next." Our technical flavor and product development experts are also at your service to help meet the labeling and flavor profile needs for your products to capitalize on this consumer trend. Let's mesh the complexities of flavor with your brand development, technical requirements and regulatory needs to deliver a complete taste solution.

From concept to manufacturing, we're here for you – every step of the way. Contact our sales service department at **630.578.8600** to request a flavor sample or **chat us up at www.fona.com/contact-fona/**

SOURCES

- Mintel
- Mintel GNPD
- Infegy Atlas
- EatingWell
- NBC News
- Healthline
- Good Food Institute
- Plant Based Foods Association
- FMI
- RaisedandRooted



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