

# nutripro

NESTLÉ PROFESSIONAL NUTRITION MAGAZINE

05/2023

## Grow with it

Plant-Based Meat  
Alternatives

Meat Alternatives  
get Tasty

Feeding  
Flexitarians

A Taste for  
Plant-Based  
Proteins



# WHAT'S *Cooking?*

## SURPRISE, IT'S NOT MEAT.

It's not often that the industry gets to welcome a whole new category to the menu. But that's exactly what's happening with the latest plant-based alternatives to meat.

In response to a rising demand for sustainable, healthy ways to eat, plant-based proteins are popping up on menus all over the world. And unlike traditional tofu, tempeh, or even early meat alternatives, these new foods capture the taste and texture of real meat and poultry, making them a hit with all kinds of consumers, from vegans and vegetarians to flexitarians.

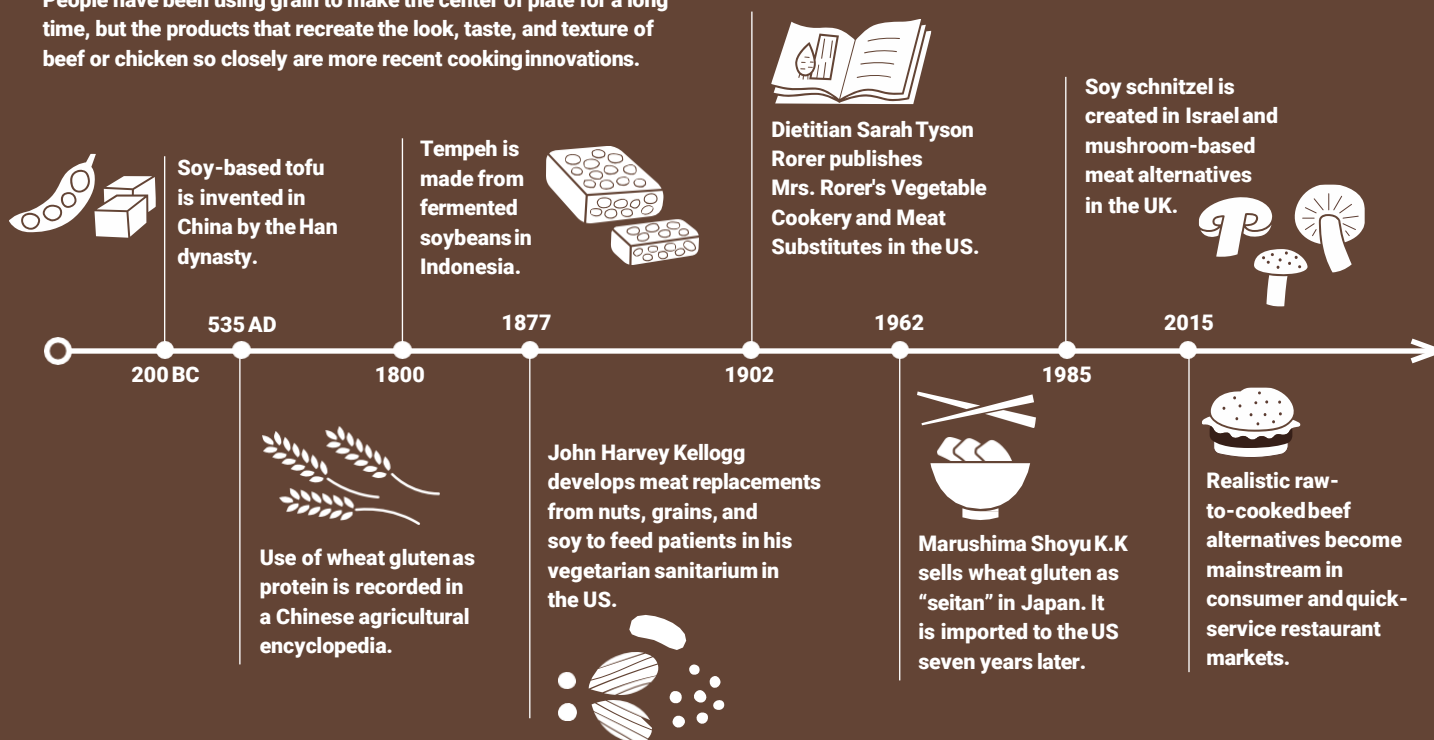
These advances come as many consumers are looking for ways to reduce their meat consumption. Whether they're changing their eating habits out of concern for their health, the environment, animal welfare, or other reasons, people are actively looking for options when they're dining out. While this trend began in fast food, these products are becoming

widely accepted in different channels around the world.

It all adds up to create an exciting opportunity for you. To help you make the most of it, we've put together a primer on these new products, who's eating them and why, and how you can make the most of them to satisfy this new demand. Dig in.

### History of Meat Alternatives<sup>2</sup>

People have been using grain to make the center of plate for a long time, but the products that recreate the look, taste, and texture of beef or chicken so closely are more recent cooking innovations.





## DID YOU KNOW?

The main reasons behind the rising demand for plant-based foods are a desire for a healthier diet, climate concerns, animal welfare, food restrictions, and religion.





# meet your new CUSTOMER

## HERE COME THE FLEXITARIANS

Vegetarians and vegans aren't the only ones looking for plant-based proteins. Increasingly, many people in Australia are following a flexitarian diet, which means they actively choose to eat less meat<sup>3</sup>. Here are some of the reasons that may influence their dining choices.

### Jorge

**Trend-setter | Age: 23**

**Dines out 4 times per week at fast food outlets, pubs and restaurants.**

I keep hearing about meat alternatives and how much they look and taste like real meat. People are saying they can't even tell the difference! Now I'm curious. I want to see what everyone's raving about, so I'm going to order one next time I see it on the menu.



### Piper

**Animal-lover | Age: 16**

**Dines out twice per week at fast food restaurants**

I grew up eating meat, but I don't like the way cows, pigs, and chickens are treated on some farms. By eating less meat, I can send a message to the industry that I don't support poor living conditions for animals.



### Ryan

**Fitness Junky | Age: 30**

**Dines out 3 times per week at both fast food and fine dining restaurants**

My doctor wants me to eat less meat to lower my cholesterol. But I still want to get the protein I need for building muscle. Eating plant-based alternatives instead of beef or pork is an easy way for me to change my diet without rethinking everything I eat, and I like the way they leave me feeling full after a meal.



### Giselle

**Mom | Age: 45**

**Dines out once per week at casual family restaurants**

My daughter recently became a vegetarian because she's concerned about climate change. However, the rest of our family still eats meat, and we don't want to be limited to eating at vegetarian restaurants every time we go out together. If we can find a place that offers both plant-based proteins and real meat on the menu, it's easier for everyone, and each of us can order what we like.



### Wei

**Activist | Age: 18**

**Dines out once per week at fast casual restaurants**

I know that some intensive animal farms are hard on the environment because they use so much land and water and create harmful runoff and emissions. So I'm doing my part to protect the earth by eating less meat. With so many restaurants adding plant-based sausage and burgers to their menus, it's easy to make that switch and stick to my commitments.



# GREEN... AND GROWING

**FLEXITARIANS  
ARE A LARGE  
AND GROWING  
POPULATION**

**1 in 4**

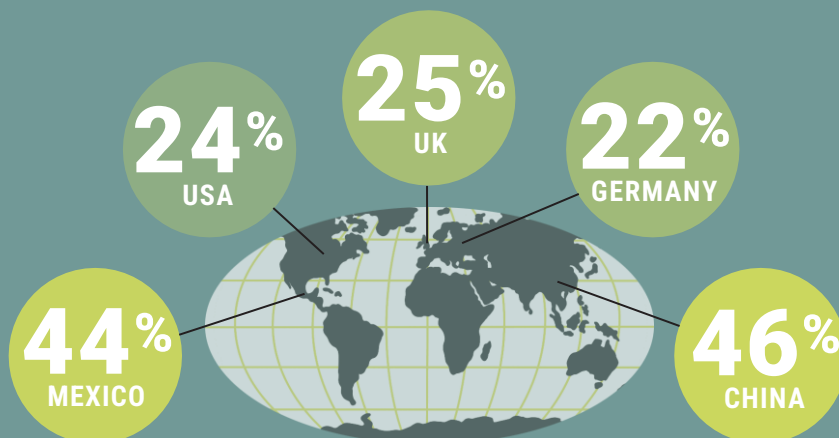
AUSTRALIANS IDENTIFY  
AS FLEXITARIAN OR  
REDUCING MEAT  
CONSUMPTION<sup>4</sup>.

**9%**

OF AUSTRALIANS  
EAT MEAT FREE &  
FOLLOW A  
VEGAN OR  
VEGETARIAN  
DIET<sup>4</sup>.

**40%**  
OF CONSUMERS  
**CHOOSE**  
PLANT-BASED FOR  
**HEALTH**  
REASONS<sup>4</sup>.

**28%**  
**CHOOSE**  
PLANT-BASED  
BECAUSE  
IT'S BETTER FOR THE  
**ENVIRONMENT**<sup>4</sup>.



**GLOBALLY, PEOPLE ARE  
TRYING TO INCREASE THEIR  
INTAKE OF PLANT-BASED PROTEIN<sup>6</sup>**

**18%**  
CHOOSE  
PLANT-BASED  
FOR ANIMAL  
WELFARE<sup>4</sup>.

**40%**  
OF YOUNG  
CONSUMERS TRIED  
PLANT-BASED  
FOR THE FIRST TIME  
OUT OF HOME<sup>5</sup>.

4. Nestlé Professional & fiftyfive5. Consumer Insights, 2023

5. Kantar, PBMS Consumer Segmentation in OOH. (UK, FR, DE, US, SG), 2022.

6. GlobalData, Consumer Survey Results, 2021 and 2022



# LOOK *Closer*

INSIDE PLANT-BASED MEAT ALTERNATIVES

Typically made from soy, peas, wheat, or mushrooms, these products look and taste similar to real meat, making them easy to substitute and integrate into favourite recipes. Using only plant-based ingredients, it's possible to create the look, taste, texture, cooking properties, and even some of the key nutrients found in real meat. Let's take a look at the main ingredients in plant-based meat alternatives.

## PROTEIN

The proteins in these foods may come from soy, wheat, peas, mushrooms, potatoes, fava beans, brown rice, or other sources.

## COLOURING

Pigments from vegetable extracts, spirulina, and malt mimic the red hues of beef and pork which then brown when cooked.





### **JUICINESS**

Plant-based oils may be added for juicy texture, flavour, and the appearance of marbled fat.

### **BINDERS**

Egg whites can be used in non-vegan foods, but methyl cellulose (made with vegetable fibre) is an effective binder for vegan options.

### **NUTRIENTS**

Some recipes contain vegetables, nuts, and seeds, along with the vitamins, minerals, and dietary fibre they provide. Others may have vitamin B12, iron and zinc added to more closely resemble the nutrient profile of meat.

### **FLAVOUR**

Yeast extract may be added to enhance the savoury umami flavours.

### **ALLERGY ALERT**

Some meat alternatives 'may contain' food allergens, so be sure to check with guests before serving.

## CHEF'S SECRETS

- Choose products that don't contain artificial colours. Instead, pick products with pigments from vegetable extracts.
- Try to provide a complete protein. Soy offers all essential amino acids in sufficient quantities, but sources like pea are best combined with rice or wheat.
- Look for products made with 100% plant sources.
- Choose products with the shortest list of ingredients.







# IN THE *kitchen*

## CULINARY TIPS

### STOCK YOUR KITCHEN

When thinking about how to use these products, consider the application. Do you want to substitute directly for an item traditionally made with meat (such as a burger, sausage, or schnitzel) or just add minced protein to a sauce, omelette, etc.? Thanks to the many different formats available, you have lots of options.

### PREP & SETUP

From a chef's perspective, the great advantage of these products is that they are simple to use. Kitchen organization can be pretty similar to your process for meat. However, avoid cooking these products on the same hob where you cook meat if you plan to offer them as vegetarian/vegan options.


### COOKING & SERVING

Keep in mind that not everyone has tried meat alternatives before, so customers might be more critical than they are with "familiar" dishes.

Just as you would with meat, don't hesitate to add flavours, seasoning, and herbs to complete and enhance the dining experience. You can also add mushrooms and onions to increase the umami flavour.

Let your creativity speak!



A close-up photograph of a hand sprinkling a mixture of seeds and spices over a dish of stir-fried vegetables. The vegetables, including bell peppers and green beans, are piled on a white plate. The background is blurred, showing a kitchen setting with a stove and other kitchenware.

DID YOU KNOW?  
Since 2018, plant-based items on U.S. menus have grown from 0.4% to 4.7%. In 2021, it represented a yearly growth of 35%<sup>7</sup>.

## 5 REASONS TO USE MEAT ALTERNATIVES IN YOUR KITCHEN

- 1 They give you an easy way to satisfy the growing number of consumers who want something besides meat.
- 2 They're quick and easy to prepare.
- 3 Their wide range of choices provide a blank slate for your creativity.
- 4 They contain protein and fibre, which helps nourish your customers and satisfy their hunger.
- 5 Their familiar look and flavour lets you swap them into standard dishes without overhauling your recipes.



# MIX IT UP

*express  
your  
creativity*

Where can you use meat alternatives? Almost anywhere! With forms ranging from burger patties, mince, schnitzel and fillets, these foods lend themselves to all different styles and levels of cuisine. Whether you specialise in street food or fine dining, if you can make it with meat, you can make it with plant-based meat alternatives.

*Plant-based  
Portobello Burger*







*Korean bowl with plant-based ground mince*



*Plant-based bowl*



*Plant-based Schnitzel Caesar Salad*



# overcoming CONCERNS

Meatless proteins only recently came on the market, so you may need to take some extra steps to help your staff and guests learn more about them. The following tips can help you introduce these in-demand foods to your restaurant, anticipate some of the questions you may hear, and serve them to your guests with confidence.

## I need my protein.

Many of these products are high quality proteins or protein combinations, like soy or pea and wheat, offering essential amino acids and similar protein to that found in real meat.<sup>8</sup> For a high quality protein profile, pick products containing soy, or protein blends such as pea with brown rice or pea with wheat.

## I've heard that soy can cause health problems.

Soy has been a common food since ancient times and with normal consumption, no available studies have linked it to specific health issues for humans.<sup>9</sup>

## Are plant proteins enough to fill me up?

Yes they are. Research shows whether you choose plant or animal based high protein foods the positive effects on your hunger and satiety (how full you feel) appear to be much the same.<sup>10</sup>

## Some products specify they don't contain GMOs. What do they mean?

GMOs (Genetically Modified Organisms) are usually the result of selecting a desirable gene from a microorganism (such as a bacteria, virus or animal) and then placing it into a plant (like soybean, cotton or corn). The process has been widely used in global agriculture to improve crop yields by making them more resistant to insects, weeds and diseases. Regulatory agencies around the world including the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) have concluded that approved Genetically Modified (GM) crops and food ingredients derived from them are safe for human consumption. However, their use remains controversial. That is why many meat alternatives specify that they don't contain ingredients derived from GMO crops.

## Are these foods highly processed?

The term "processed foods" is usually negatively perceived. However, foods are processed for many reasons, including making raw ingredients safer, more palatable, and easier to digest.

Food processing can also minimize food safety risks, reduce food waste, increase shelf-life, increase the bio-availability of nutrients in some products, and create flavours.

Food processing, either conducted at home or in an industrial environment, may decrease the content of certain heat-sensitive vitamins. But the food industry minimizes these losses through controlled and often very fast processes and by restoring the original vitamin content after heat exposure.

Finally, processing can also increase the nutritional value of foods. For example, it enables us to eliminate anti-nutritional factors in pulses or to increase the digestibility of starch.<sup>11</sup>

In the case of plant-based meat alternatives, processing is what allows us to achieve an acceptable texture, flavour, and variety. Without advances in food technology, it wouldn't be possible to provide a nutrient profile and experience so similar to meat, which is what many flexitarian consumers want.

8. Marsh, K. et al. Protein and Vegetarian Diets. Medical Journal of Australia, 2013

9. Simon, S. Soy and Cancer Risk: Our Expert's Advice. American Cancer Society, 2019

10. Nielsen, LV. et al. Protein from Meat or Vegetable Sources in Meals Matched for Fiber Content has Similar Effects on Subjective Appetite Sensations and Energy Intake—A Randomized Acute Cross-Over Meal Test Study. Nutrients. 2018

11. Nestlé Research & Development. How to explain food preparation steps and their benefits in a simple way GLOSSARY. 2022



# SPEAKING OF PLANT-BASED MEAT ALTERNATIVES

Use “plant-based” descriptions on your menu. Your diners have heard of plant-based foods and are eager to try them!

Talk about the taste and texture, describing them as “delicious” and “juicy.”

Tell guests if these foods are vegan, or gluten free since some diners are actively seeking these choices.

Promote the high protein and high fibre content of these foods (if mentioned on the label).

DO



DON'T

Don't use words like “fake” or “like meat,” which may be unappealing to your guests.

Don't forget to ask your guests about food allergies and check the ingredients carefully.





# *opportunity* REVEALED





From the environment to health concerns to simple curiosity, there are many reasons behind the recent rise in flexitarians. And just in time for this growing trend, there's also a brand new category of flexitarian-friendly food that's versatile, easy to work with in the kitchen, and good to eat.

From a chef's standpoint, this is an exciting time to add something new to your repertoire. Make room for plant-based meat alternatives, and let's get cooking.

# Six Steps to Success

Since demand for these products is already high, it's easy to plan a successful launch and create buzz.

## Flavour

Taste is one of the most important factors for consumers when choosing plant-based alternatives<sup>12</sup>. Emphasise the flavour of plant-based dishes, for example "crunchy golden crumb and juicy plant-based schnitzel" or "Thai green curry with pumpkin and hearty plant-based mince.

## Highlight on the Menu

List plant-based meat alternatives alongside meat-based proteins as part of the main menu so diners can find them easily and understand their options<sup>13</sup>. Research shows integrating plant-based options within the main menu help draw the attention of consumers and increase sales of plant-based items<sup>14</sup>.

## Train Your Staff

Educate your front of house about which dishes can and cannot be made using meat alternatives. Skill them up to answer questions about the taste and texture of these foods and how they compare to real meat, and remind them to ask guests about food allergies before serving.

## Familiar Formats

Try a two-step plan where you begin by modifying your customers' favorite dishes, such as chili con carne, spaghetti bolognese, etc. Start with familiar formats your customers enjoy to demonstrate how delicious plant-based options are. Then branch out into more creative plant-based dishes for your customers to try<sup>13</sup>.

## Make Dishes Dazzle

Since it's a new category, some customers might approach these foods with a more critical attitude. You can break down these barriers and win them over by pulling out all the stops to make dishes using meat alternatives visually appealing and delicious.

## Offer Samples

Consider introducing these items to diners with a complimentary appetizer. Think sliders with burger patties or chargrilled pieces with a dip. You might also plan a special tasting event for new menu items.

12. Food Frontier & Colmar Brunton. Hungry for Plant based: Australian Consumer Insights. 2019.

13. Food Frontier. Engaging with Food Service. 2022.

14. World Resources Institute. Plant Based Menu Items. [Internet] 2019. Available from: <https://www.wri.org/insights/its-all-name-how-boost-sales-plant-based-menu-items>

**The topic of plant-based meat alternatives is very high in the agenda of regulators. Please be aware that the term "plant-based" could be regulated at some point. In 2022, the Alternative Proteins Council developed Industry Guidelines for the labelling of meat alternatives in Australia & New Zealand.**



# Read More

## Available Nutripro Issues

Food Allergens  
More Plants on the  
Plate

Coffee – The  
Love of the  
Bean

Sodium – It's  
Time to Shake  
Things Up

Carbohydrates –  
Quality Choices  
for Better Health

Your Practical  
Guide to  
Protein in Aged  
Care

Practical Guide to  
Gluten Free in  
Food Service



**A TASTE  
FOR  
BETTER  
BUSINESS**

Find out how Nestlé Professional can  
make more possible for your business at  
[nestleprofessional.com.au](http://nestleprofessional.com.au) or call on 1800 20 30 50

**Nestlé**  
PROFESSIONAL