# Advancements in sustainable food innovation and the rise of plant-based alternatives



The latest developments in sustainable food innovation have seen significant advances in the plant-based sector across various global markets, according to Green Queen. This week's update highlights new product launches, company updates, and policy changes that may shape the future of food.

In the UK, discount retailer Lidl has introduced a new range of 28 affordable plant-based products, including items such as Meat Free Cordon Bleu, Barista Oat Milk, and Smoked Tofu, with prices starting at £1.09. This move is part of a broader trend towards increasing accessibility of plant-based options among consumers. Additionally, British foodservice wholesaler Brakes has expanded its plant-based offerings with nearly 40 new products and has launched a Vegan Hub in light of Veganuary.

The plant-based revolution continues to thrive with new entries into the market. For example, the London-based Chinese restaurant chain Tofu Vegan has opened its fifth location on Gloucester Road. Meanwhile, across the Atlantic, tofu maker Hodo is expanding its reach by establishing a retail presence in Meijer, Harris Teeter, and Giant Martin’s. Notably, New York's Edenesque has launched a barista edition of its pistachio milk, available for $7.99 per carton.

AI-driven innovation is also prominent in this sector, with ingredient discovery company Shiru seeking partnerships with beverage manufacturers to develop a natural sugar replacer. Meanwhile, popular fast-food chain Slutty Vegan has launched a new Bar Vegan location in Baltimore, contributing to the city's culinary landscape.

The rise of plant-based products has prompted companies to diversify their portfolios. Griffith Foods has introduced an Alternative Proteins Portfolio, while Dutch vegan food distributor GreenPro International has rebranded to Plantitude to signify its commitment to the protein transition. Additionally, Crafty Counter has unveiled Eggless Salad under its vegan Wundereggs brand.

In the airline industry, Emirates Airlines has expanded its plant-based meal offerings for children, now including a range of dishes such as pizza and vegetable fajitas, complementing over 300 existing plant-based options.

Meanwhile, in India, Blue Tribe Foods, supported by prominent figures like cricketer Virat Kohli and actor Anushka Sharma, has launched sweet potato fries available through various online retailers.

In terms of company dynamics and investment, Belgian agrifood firm Arvesta has inaugurated its Nuverta facility focused on producing pea protein concentrate. Ecotricity, a British green energy innovator, claims to have opened the UK’s first fully vegan workplace canteen. Furthermore, the University of Nottingham is collaborating with the UK plant-based food company Jampa’s and Canadian manufacturer Tartistes to develop next-generation vegan products, benefitting from funding through the UK-Canada Innovate UK scheme.

Spanish vegan meat startup Heura has also opened an innovation lab in Barcelona, signalling its intent to increase its patent portfolio significantly. In the US, Nexture Bio has acquired Matrix Food Technologies, a producer of plant-based scaffolds and microbeads for cultivated meat.

The research and regulatory landscape is evolving as well. The UK House of Lords has acknowledged cultivated meat as a significant opportunity in engineering biology, urging for better regulation of these products in a recent report. Additionally, the Centre for Sustainable Protein at Imperial College London, backed by the Bezos Earth Fund, has recently opened, facilitating discussions on innovative protein sources.

Noteworthy awards were given to vegan seafood company BettaF!sh and upcycled apricot kernel firm Kern Tec, which each received a €5,000 award from EIT Food's Marketed Innovation Prize.

Academic institutions are also contributing to advancements in this sector, with the University of Galway launching a 12-week course on Animal Law, and researchers at the University of Guelph working on improving vegan cheese functionality through innovative ingredient combinations.

In a further development, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors has approved a motion to enhance the procurement of plant-based foods, indicating a strategic shift towards reducing emissions and enhancing public health through dietary changes. As the industry continues to evolve, these trends indicate a burgeoning future for plant-based alternatives and sustainable food innovations.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://corporate.lidl.co.uk/media-centre/pressreleases/2024/lidl-triples-plant-based-range> - Corroborates Lidl's introduction of a new range of 28 affordable plant-based products and the company's commitment to increasing accessibility of plant-based options.
* <https://www.foodnavigator.com/Article/2024/10/21/Lidl-bets-on-plant-based-with-new-brand-after-sales-boom> - Supports the details of Lidl's new Vemondo Plant range, including the types of products and the pricing strategy.
* <https://corporate.lidl.co.uk/media-centre/pressreleases/2024/lidl-triples-plant-based-range> - Provides context on Lidl's broader strategy, including its targets for plant-based protein sales and commitment to the planetary health diet.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - Although not directly linked, this is the source mentioned for the overall article, which discusses various developments in the plant-based sector.
* <https://corporate.lidl.co.uk/media-centre/pressreleases/2024/lidl-triples-plant-based-range> - Quotes from Richard Bourns, Chief Commercial Officer at Lidl GB, on their commitment to plant-based products and sustainability goals.
* <https://www.foodnavigator.com/Article/2024/10/21/Lidl-bets-on-plant-based-with-new-brand-after-sales-boom> - Reiterates Lidl’s plant-based focus and the expansion of its product range, including the mention of specific products like tofu, burgers, and sausages.
* <https://corporate.lidl.co.uk/media-centre/pressreleases/2024/lidl-triples-plant-based-range> - Details Lidl's partnership with WWF and its commitment to reducing the environmental impact of UK shopping baskets by 2030.
* <https://www.foodnavigator.com/Article/2024/10/21/Lidl-bets-on-plant-based-with-new-brand-after-sales-boom> - Mentions Lidl’s target to grow plant-based sales to 25% of total protein sales by 2030 and its industry-leading targets.
* <https://corporate.lidl.co.uk/media-centre/pressreleases/2024/lidl-triples-plant-based-range> - Quotes from Rebecca Tobi, Senior business and investor engagement manager at the Food Foundation, on the importance of setting targets for plant-based protein sales.
* <https://www.foodnavigator.com/Article/2024/10/21/Lidl-bets-on-plant-based-with-new-brand-after-sales-boom> - Supports the information on Lidl’s commitment to making high-quality plant-based foods accessible and affordable.