

# FB

FOODBYTES

YOUR FREE DATASSENTIAL  
TREND REPORT

*+ news flash: plant-  
based is far from dead*



**THE FUTURE OF**

*+ AI made this!*

**PLANT-BASED**

*+ discover our just-  
sprouted latest research*



is plant-based dead? hardly.

40% OF CONSUMERS PLAN TO PURCHASE PLANT-BASED MEAT SUBSTITUTES IN 2023

-2023 Food Trends

beyond plant-based

Plant-based is just one of the trends we checked in on to understand what consumers and operators want in 2023. Here's what else we looked at in our 2023 Trends issue of FoodBytes:

Are ghost kitchens dead?

Nope. In fact, 63% of consumers agree that delivery-only concepts are fine as long as food is tasty, prepared safely, and a good value.

How about CBD?

CBD isn't going anywhere: today, 29% of consumers purchase CBD and over two-thirds of consumers agree it has health benefits.



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Veggies I'm currently obsessed with:

While I am notorious for loving meat, I'm also actually a huge fan of vegetables and fruits. There isn't much in the name of produce I won't eat, but one of my current favorites is Chinese eggplant (I finally made this garlic eggplant recipe and it's SO good). I've also always loved mushrooms but lately have been obsessed with pan-searing shiitake, oyster, and enoki mushrooms, and just eating them by the forkful. I love that mushrooms are one of Datassential's 10 Flavors To Watch in 2023 — they're full of umami and just so delicious and meaty.

A few of my favorite plant-based products:

I try to watch my carb intake, so I've really been liking all the new plant-based carb replacements. The newest one I've been able to try is Palmini, a "pasta" made out of hearts of palm. I also love the convenience of the veggie muffins from Veggies Made Great — I like being able to give my toddler something with veggies to start the day.

It sure feels like we've been talking about plant-based for forever and a half, right? And actually, I still remember writing Creative Concepts: Modern Vegan & Vegetarian, even though that was WAY back in 2016. I'm not sure that I would have predicted we'd still be talking so much about plant-based foods today, but even as much as I like to joke about how we surely must be past the plant-based hoopla, we definitely are not.

As we said in a recent Plant-Based Paradise webinar (apologies if you recall a Very Frantic Renee trying to hurry off to catch a flight), while some news headlines have been pointing to a decline in plant-based, due to flat or falling sales, plant-based is certainly not dead.

As my webinar co-presenter Marie Molde so eloquently said, plant-based has evolved beyond a trend. But that doesn't mean it's a fad, either: plant-based simply is. As sure as the sky is blue, plant-based is here, and here to stay, especially with rising animal protein prices. Plant-based eating has also been propelled by a surge in interest in sustainability. With plant-based still being such a powerhouse, Datassential has been hard at work creating new plant-based resources, such as awesome new plant-based menu filters in our SNAP tools, and an upcoming Plant-Based Keynote Report.

And that's exactly what this issue is about: it's an exclusive sneak peek at that upcoming Keynote Report. In the pages ahead, we showcase some key stats to fuel your innovation in 2023 and beyond, and also weave in some plant-based news to know, including a spotlight on new plant-based retail products and LTOs (all just in time for Veganuary, aka Vegan January). With that, raise an asparagus spear with me as we cheers to the future of plant-based trends.

Handwritten signature of Renee Lee Wege.

Renee Lee Wege, Senior Publications Manager

# DATA DIVE PLANT-BASED STATS TO KNOW

Ready to dive into our latest plant-based insights? Here's a sneak peek at some of the data you'll find in our *Plant-Based Keynote*. Contact us at [hello@datassential.com](mailto:hello@datassential.com) for access to the whole bushel of insights in the full report.

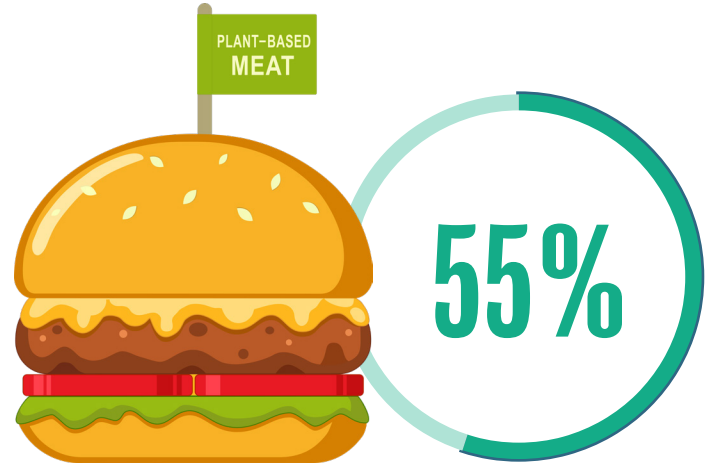


**PLANT-BASED BURGERS ARE ON 7% OF RESTAURANT MENUS, GROWING MORE THAN 2,000% OVER THE PAST 4 YEARS.**

-MenuTrends



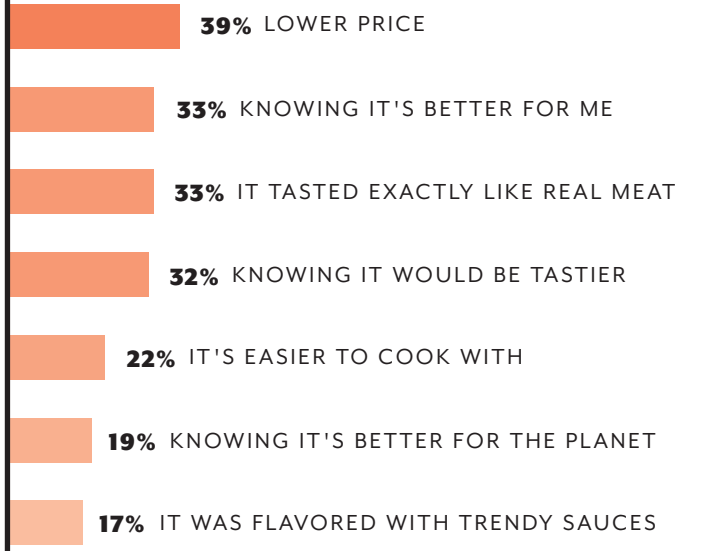
The plant-based burger at Washington, D.C.-based Shouk is made with whole plant-based proteins like black beans, mushrooms, and lentils. The brand's frozen patties are now also available for nationwide shipping.



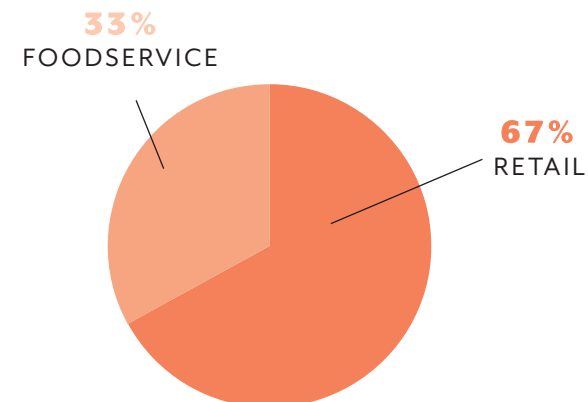
OF CONSUMERS WHO HAVE TRIED PLANT-BASED BURGERS LOVE OR LIKE THEM

-FLAVOR

Not to be Captain Obvious, but price remains a key component in consumers' purchasing decisions. We asked consumers what motivations would sway them to swap meat in a burger with plant-based proteins. Here's what they said:



Datassential asked consumers: If you were considering trying a new plant-based item, where would you be more likely to buy it from?

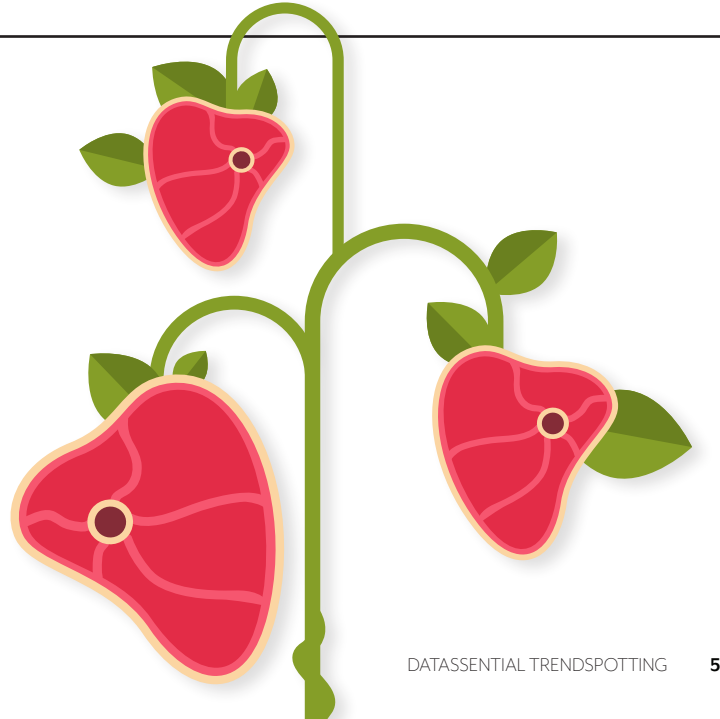


### + food for thought:

While it makes sense consumers might be more willing to spend a few dollars on a new plant-based snack at the check-out counter than order an entire entree they may or may not enjoy, consider ways to make up for this disparity. Foodservice operators could offer special complimentary tastes of new plant-based items, or put together a mini sampler appetizer that encourages customers to try new items.

### OPERATOR INSIGHT

**36%** OF OPERATORS CURRENTLY OFFER PLANT-BASED MEAT ALTERNATIVES



*Sure, the majority of consumers (71%) are meat eaters, but only a small minority (7%) say they've actually decreased plant consumption. Plant-based isn't going away.*



# 93 PERCENT

*OF CONSUMERS SAY THE AMOUNT OF PLANTS THEY'VE EATEN IN THE PAST YEAR HAS*  
**INCREASED OR STAYED THE SAME**

# JUMP START VEGANUARY WITH THESE PLANT-BASED PROMOS

+check out more consumer metrics for the plantville cheezeburger in SCORES!

43% UNIQUENESS



### BURGERVILLE PLANTS NEW PLANTVILLE BURGER

Vancouver, WA- based Burgerville released this 100% plant-based burger in fall 2022. The Plantville Cheezeburger is made with a Beyond Burger patty topped with Good Planet Foods vegan pepper jack, Secret Aardvark vegan aioli, lettuce, tomato, and red onions.

January is the month of two health-driven, start-the-year-off-right resolutions. There's Dry January (self explanatory at this point) as well as Veganuary, which may be a newer term to some. Veganuary is a 31-day challenge run by a nonprofit in the U.K. with the aim to encourage people to follow a vegan lifestyle for the month of January. Here are a few plant-based LTOs released just in time for Veganuary:



### CHIPOTLE DEBUTS TWO VEGGIE BOWLS

Chipotle started the year off with two new plant-based options including this Veggie Full Bowl with white and black beans, fajita veggies, fresh tomato salsa, roasted chili-corn salsa, and guacamole. Also available now is the Plant-Powered Bowl with a supergreens lettuce blend, white rice, Sofritas (the chain's tofu protein option), fajita veggies, fresh tomato salsa, roasted chili-corn salsa, and guacamole.



### STARBUCKS U.K. DEBUTS VEGAN OPTIONS

Starbucks is starting off Veganuary in the U.K. with new vegan options including the No'Beef and Red Onion Focaccia sandwich shown above. The sandwich is made with vegan beef supplied by The Vegetarian Butcher, a Dutch company that's part of Unilever.

+ GLOBAL INSPIRATION

OPERATOR INSIGHT

*Independent restaurants were most likely to forecast an increase in sales of plant-based items in the next year (43%).*



**95 PERCENT**

OF OPERATORS ANTICIPATE THEIR SALES OF PLANT-BASED OPTIONS WILL **INCREASE OR STAY THE SAME** IN THE UPCOMING YEAR

# PLANT-BASED RETAIL ITEMS TO KNOW



**datassential plant expert & dietitian marie molde's 2023 trend pick!**

*"These 'healthiest nuts in the world' are high in protein, fiber, and antioxidants and have fewer calories than other nuts. They're delicious and healthy, and not only great for human health, but planet health, too," Molde says.*



**Pictured from left to right:** Barukas nuts, also known as baru nuts or baru seeds, are small-but-mighty nuts that taste like a cross between peanuts and cashews. The nuts are exclusively grown in one region in Brazil, and baru nut startup, **Barukas**, is betting on the "supernut" they call the healthiest nuts on the planet. For every five pounds of Barukas nuts sold, the company plants a tree in the wild, putting their "good for you, good for the planet" motto to practice.

Kelp is the new kale, says AKUA, the New York City company banking on kelp being the next big "it" ingredient in plant-based proteins. AKUA is behind the **Kelp Burger** and **Kelp Krab Cakes** made from ocean-farmed kelp. AKUA says kelp is low-calorie, rich in nutrients and antioxidants, and is a "zero-input food," which means it requires no fresh water, land, fertilizer, or feed.

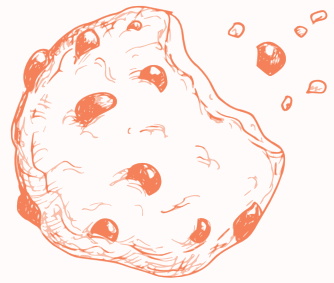
**Pictured from left to right:**

There are a variety of plant-based egg substitutes available now, including **Zero Egg's** precooked plant-based breakfast patties that are ready in 20 seconds in the microwave. Zero Egg is made from a blend of soy, chickpea, and potato proteins, and also comes in liquid form.

Your favorite square-shaped lunch kit from elementary school...but make it plant-based. That's the idea behind **Mighty Yum**, the maker of plant-based lunch kits. Varieties include Plant-Based Ham & Cheese and Plant-Based Pepperoni Pizza.

Something made with this company's product isn't meaty... it's "meati." Boulder-based **Meati** offers plant-based chicken and steak in a variety of cuts (carne asada, crispy cutlets, etc.). Meati's meats include 17 grams of complete protein and are made with the company's star ingredient, mushroom root (that's right: not mushrooms, already a powerhouse and growing trend in plant-based cuisine, but mushroom roots).





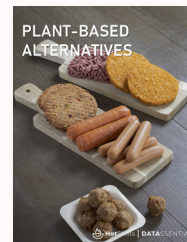
# A FEW FINAL TREND BITES

The plant-based trend is far from *over*, but sadly, this issue is. Don't worry, though, because there are plenty of plant-based insights in our full *Plant-Based Keynote Report*. And, even if you're getting mildly sick of hearing about plant-based all the time (we won't tell anyone if it makes you want to face plant), we'd bet our kale chips you'll be hearing more about the latest plant-based products again in upcoming TrendSpotting issues — or, just below, as we recap this issue's insights and point the way to more plant-astic related reading.

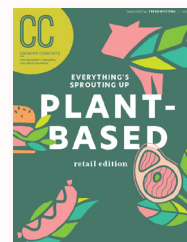
## 3 WAYS TO TAKE ACTION ON PLANT-BASED

- **Operators, listen up to these opportunities.** About two-thirds of consumers say they're more willing to try a new plant-based item at retail versus foodservice. Operators who are looking to capitalize on plant-based fare could take notes from a common retail strategy by offering free plant-based food samples. Restaurants could also spotlight new plant-based options in sampler appetizers to give consumers a taste (it also allows an opportunity to garner feedback).
- **Capitalize on flexitarian concepts.** While the majority of consumers are still meat eaters, only a small minority say they plan to decrease consumption of fruits and veggies. Make it easy for consumers to get what they want by highlighting customizable options that offer up loads of plant-based options and garnishes of meat.
- **Don't forget to look across the pond for plant-based inspiration.** From no-beef beef sandwiches at Starbucks U.K. to a variety of plant-based meat startups, keep an eye on overseas plant-based news. Stay tuned for our February issue of *International Concepts*, which will highlight healthy chains from around the world.

### RELATED REPORTS



**PLANT-BASED ALTERNATIVES HOTSHOT REPORT**



**PLANT-BASED RETAIL PRODUCTS**



**PLANT-BASED INSPIRATION REPORT**

### KEY QUOTE

"Vegan pop-ups are pulling up to breweries to offer plant-based takes on comfort food, while brewpubs are building food programs around dairy-free pizzas, pastas, and plant-based burgers. Sports and craft beer bars are also no longer having a cow, serving inclusive food that appeals to everyone."

- "The Brewpub Goes Vegan," on VinePair

## WHAT'S COMING UP NEXT?

For the first time in TrendSpotting history, we're unveiling a special Menu Planning issue for 2023. Our next *FoodBytes* will showcase everything you need to know about 2023, from special food holidays you never even knew existed to a list of all the food conferences you need to have on your radar. You won't want to miss this perfect-for-planners issue you'll definitely want to print (here's a head start at finding a printer for all you remote workers).

+ mark your calendar for our menu calendar issue!



**HUNGRY FOR MORE TRENDS?** Check out last month's Report Pro releases!



**FB: 2023 Food Trends**  
Huge drum roll for easily the most asked-about report of the year: our 2023 Trends issue of *FoodBytes* is here.

Which ideas, foods, and flavors will be big in 2023? In our annual trend forecast, we look at how AI will change everything, introduce Gen Alpha, discover why consumers need new "third places," check in on whether trends like the metaverse are dead, and even get a little weird. Plus, discover 20 flavors to watch in the year(s) ahead.



**WB: Global Seafood**  
Dive into the deep end of global seafood dishes in this *World Bites*.

You're in for a reel-y special seafood feast. In this issue, catch global seafood dishes that could add intrigue to a variety of menus, from fried fare fit for Lenten menus to four comforting seafood stews that turn up the comfort this cold-weather season.



**SIP: Casual Dining**  
Take a big sip of alcoholic beverage insights in this report covering drinking at casual dining.


What beverages did consumers drink most at casual-dining restaurants, and what occasions drove them there? What motivated consumers to try new drinks instead of go-to favorites? Did food play a major role in their casual-dining drinking experience? Discover these insights and more in this *SIP* report.






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