

The Role of Plant-Based Foods in Building a Healthy and Ecologically Responsible Lifestyle

Roxana Procopie¹, Magdalena Bobe² and Robert-Daniel Miu³

¹⁾²⁾³⁾ *Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Bucharest, Romania*

E-mail: roxana.procopie@com.ase.ro; E-mail: magdalena.bobe@com.ase.ro;

E-mail: miurobert21@stud.ase.ro

Please cite this paper as:

Procopie, R., Bobe, M. and Miu, D., 2025. The Role of Plant-Based Foods in Building a Healthy and Ecologically Responsible Lifestyle. In: C. Vasiliu, D.C. Dabija, A. Tziner, D. Pleșea, V. Dinu eds. 2025. *11th BASIQ International Conference on New Trends in Sustainable Business and Consumption*. Oradea, Romania, 26-28 June 2025. Bucharest: Editura ASE, pp. 426-433

DOI: 10.24818/BASIQ/2025/11/049

Abstract

In the context of climate change and global concerns regarding environmental sustainability, the food sector plays a crucial role in reducing ecological impact. Conventional food systems, based on animal-derived products, are associated with significant greenhouse gas emissions and the depletion of natural resources. In contrast, plant-based foods offer an environmentally friendly alternative, while also promoting a health-conscious and responsible lifestyle. This article is based on quantitative research conducted among Romanian consumers through the application of a self-administered questionnaire. The main aim of the study is to explore consumer perceptions of plant-based diets and to identify the factors that either facilitate or hinder their adoption as part of a sustainable diet. The study highlighted a significant interest among Romanian consumers in plant-based products, considering their effects on health and the environment. However, several major barriers to adoption were identified, including higher costs, perceived inadequate taste, and uncertainty regarding the nutritional value of such products. In addition, limited access to plant-based alternatives and the lack of adequate informational flow are significant factors contributing to the persistence of traditional dietary behaviors. The study makes a valuable contribution to the academic literature by identifying the main barriers and opportunities in the transition towards a plant-based diet at the national level, as well as by emphasizing informational gaps that influence consumer decision-making. These findings provide a deep understanding of the complexity of dietary behavior change within Romania's socio-economic context. The results can inform the development of effective public policies and tailored marketing strategies that support plant-based food consumption. Educational campaigns and measures aimed at improving access to sustainable products can contribute to changing dietary habits by promoting a responsible lifestyle from both an environmental and public health perspective.

Keywords

Plant-based foods, responsible lifestyle, health and ecology, consumer behavior.

DOI: 10.24818/BASIQ/2025/11/049

Introduction

Passiou et al. (2023) argue that the global food system is under increasing pressure to meet the food demand generated by rapid population growth, without compromising ecosystem balance. Moreover, the simultaneous crises of climate change and public health deterioration—driven by the industrialization of agriculture and the widespread adoption of diets based on ultra-processed foods—are undermining both environmental sustainability, through increased agricultural emissions, deforestation, and food waste, and population well-being, by promoting an imbalanced and nutritionally deficient food consumption pattern (Mambrini et al., 2025). In this context, concerns regarding human health and environmental protection have led to significant transformations in food systems, both globally and locally. According to Eisen and

Brown (2022), these changes are reflected in technological advancements in food production, as well as in a significant shift in consumption habits, marked by a growing interest in plant-based foods.

However, Dagevos and Verbeke (2022) point out that in industrialized Western societies, the market for high-protein food products is still dominated by those of animal origin, and traditional market structures continue to promote meat consumption as a normalized component of the diet. In this context, market actors play a crucial role in facilitating the transition toward more sustainable food systems, and one of the main challenges they face is promoting plant-based foods and dietary practices in a way that appeals to an increasing number of consumers (Aschemann-Witzel et al., 2021).

Plant-based foods can represent a viable solution to support the transition to new dietary models that foster a lifestyle that is both health-conscious and ecologically responsible, helping to mitigate the difficulties associated with dietary restructuring (Alae-Carew, 2022). This article extends the scope of research in the field by focusing on the connection between ecology, health, and responsible consumer lifestyles in Romania, as there are gaps in previous studies from this perspective. The growing interest in plant-based food consumption requires further investigation, starting from the analysis of consumers' perceptions and behaviors towards such products, in order to determine the role of plant-based foods in promoting health and supporting a sustainable future.

1. Review of the scientific literature

A study conducted by Faber et al. (2020) compared consumer perceptions of three dietary categories associated with plant-based eating ("vegan," "vegetarian," and "plant-based") and found that the term "plant-based" was generally viewed more favorably than the other two. The vegetarian diet is characterized by diversity in dietary practices, with the common feature being the exclusion of products derived from slaughtered animals, namely meat (McEvoy, Temple and Woodside, 2012). In contrast, the vegan diet includes exclusively plant-based foods such as fruits, vegetables, grains, oilseeds, and legumes (Bobe, Procopie and Bucur, 2025). The term "plant-based," which is increasingly used, proves to be more ambiguous. In the context of plant-based diets (Storz, 2022), some individuals perceive them as including only plant-derived foods, while others define them as being predominantly composed of plant-based ingredients. Other authors classify plant-based diets based on their specific composition, such as: semi-vegetarian (a regular diet with reduced portions or frequency of animal products), pescatarian (which includes fish, with or without eggs and dairy), lacto-ovo-vegetarian (including eggs and dairy), and vegan (Williams and Patel, 2020).

The adoption of alternative vegetarian diets is often influenced by health considerations, while concerns about animal welfare and environmental impact also contribute to supporting these dietary choices. In this context, new plant-based food products are being promoted as viable alternatives to animal-derived foods, responding to consumers' individual dietary preferences. The scientific literature highlights a number of key drivers behind the consumption of plant-based products, such as trust, ethical and ecological motivations, along with significant barriers, including cost, taste, and lack of information (Rini et al., 2025).

Among the main factors supporting the transition to a plant-based diet are the health benefits, as such diets are associated with a reduced risk of chronic diseases due to their high content of fiber, vitamins, and antioxidants. Ecological arguments emphasize the role of plant-based food consumption in promoting sustainability, given its lower environmental impact compared to animal-based products. Scientific research reinforces and validates the positive effects of environmentally and socially responsible behavior, as well as its benefits for human health. Therefore, Figure no. 1 provides an integrative perspective on the multiple benefits of plant-based foods, linking individual behaviors and lifestyle choices with social implications and sustainability.

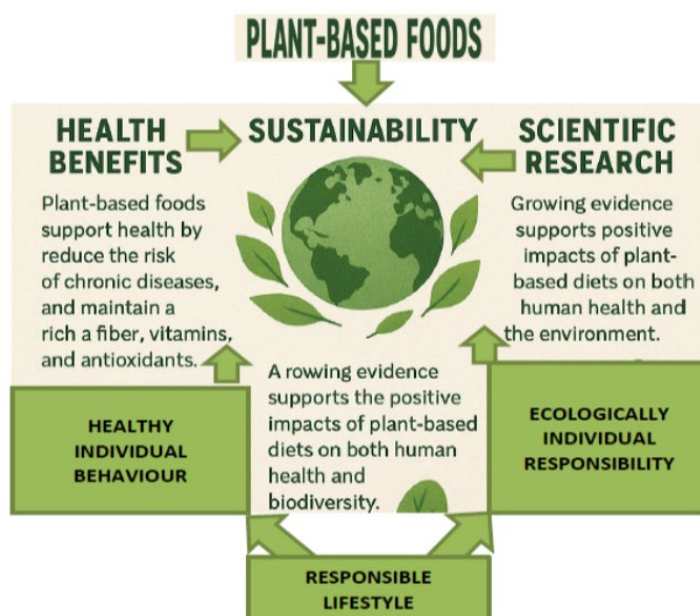


Figure no. 1. Impact of the plant-based foods on a responsible lifestyle

Source: our representation

The plant-based food market in Romania is relatively small and still developing, compared to other countries in Europe. Currently, it focuses primarily on plant-based dairy and meat substitutes, which are the only categories for which official statistics are available. However, sales data indicate a rapid increase in consumer demand, signaling that the market is expanding (Gfi, Europe, 2023). According to data provided by Statista (2025), the plant-based food market in Romania has experienced significant growth in recent years. In 2021, sales were 35.14% higher compared to 2020, and in 2022, the increase compared to the same reference year reached 66.84%. This evolution reflects an emerging trend among Romanian consumers toward adopting diets that include plant-based alternatives, indicating a growing inclination towards responsible and conscious consumption practices. Changes in consumption behavior not only reflect a diversification of food preferences but also a heightened concern regarding health and environmental impact.

According to data presented by Euromonitor (2025), plant-based dairy alternatives have proven to be the most popular category of dairy products purchased by Romanian consumers. In 2024, sales of these products reached 178.4 million RON, representing a remarkable increase of 3.6 times compared to 2018 levels. This significant growth suggests a major shift in Romanian food preferences, with consumers increasingly attracted to plant-based alternatives to traditional dairy products. The second most popular category in sales is plant-based yogurt substitutes, which have shown a remarkable jump, reaching a value of 43.2 million RON by the end of 2024. This represents an approximately sevenfold increase compared to sales in 2018, while plant-based cheese substitutes take the third position, with sales reaching 6.7 million RON in 2024, compared to an estimated 0.5 million RON in 2018. The significant increases in sales demonstrate an important shift in the Romanian food market, moving toward greater diversification and wider acceptance of plant-based products.

The plant-based dairy alternative market in Romania is dominated by Danone, which holds 68.6% of the total market share, enjoying a significant advantage over its competitors (Figure no. 2). Since 2016, Danone Romania has included plant-based products under the Alpro brand in its portfolio, contributing to the growing popularity of this segment (Danone Romania, 2025).

The growth dynamics of plant-based meat substitutes follow a similar trend to those of dairy alternatives, registering a 43% increase in 2021 and an 82.9% increase in 2022 compared to 2020. This reflects a significant change in consumer behavior, driven by factors such as health concerns, food innovation, and ecological awareness. According to the Gfi Europe report (2023), the most popular plant-based meat alternatives in Romania are processed plant-based products (replacing burgers, minced meat, and nuggets), which account for 85% of sales by value, followed by plant-based pâtés, which represent 15%.

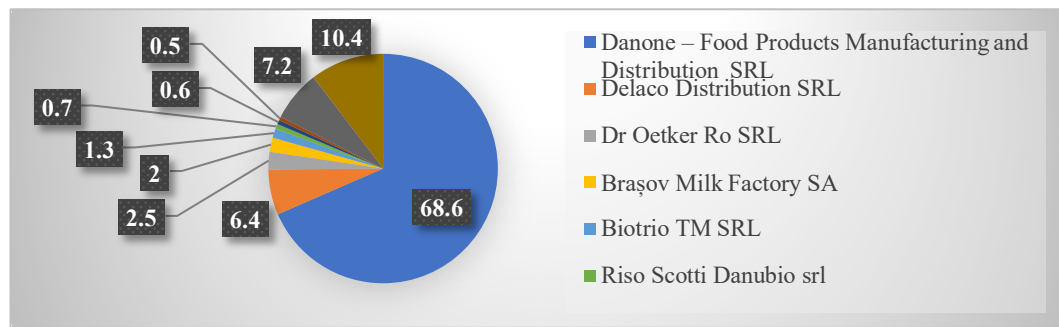


Figure no. 2. Market Shares of Companies for Plant-Based Dairy Alternatives - 2024

Source: Euromonitor International, 2024

This dynamic can be explained by the frequent focus of promotional campaigns on the three main rationales that underpin the motivation for adopting plant-based diets: health benefits, environmental impact, and animal rights considerations (Hopwood et al., 2020). The motivational complexity of eating behavior calls for a reevaluation of public policies and awareness strategies that align with the growing interest in an ecologically and health-conscious responsible lifestyle.

2. Research Methodology

This study aims to understand how sustainable food choices can contribute to building conscious, informed, and balanced daily practices in the context of transitioning to a healthy lifestyle. This approach seeks to integrate consumers' perceptions of plant-based food consumption with social and ecological responsibility in nutrition. The premises of this study are based on the results of a previous qualitative research project regarding young people's perceptions of vegan diets, conducted within the university environment in Romania. This previous study highlighted the multiple dimensions of motivation for choosing a vegan diet, particularly with respect to ethical, health, and environmental considerations (Bobe, Procopie, and Bucur, 2025). Building upon the themes identified as research directions, the present study aims to expand the analysis by exploring the role of plant-based foods in shaping a responsible lifestyle, both in terms of individual health and ecological impact.

For data collection in this study, a quantitative research methodology was adopted, using a self-administered questionnaire as the main tool. The questionnaire was distributed online via the Google Forms platform, which allowed for the rapid collection of responses. Participants were selected using a convenience sampling method, utilizing the "snowball" technique, where initial respondents were encouraged to share the questionnaire within their social networks. This strategy facilitated the expansion of the database in a short period of time and with limited resources, but it also limits the generalizability of the conclusions to the entire population. The questionnaire consisted of 23 items, including questions dedicated to collecting socio-demographic information. The data collection process took place over a period of six days, from February 23 to February 28, 2025. The goal of the paper is to examine the role of plant-based foods in promoting health and supporting a sustainable future by analyzing consumers' perceptions and behaviors towards these products. The main objectives of the research include: the analysis of socio-economic factors that influence the frequency of plant-based product consumption, the investigation of the role of nutritional counseling in shaping positive perceptions regarding the nutritional value of plant-based products, as well as the exploration of plant-based food consumption behavior in the context of adopting a responsible lifestyle. The obtained data were processed and analyzed using Microsoft Excel, applying the CORREL function to determine correlation coefficients in order to test the formulated hypotheses. Based on these specific objectives, three main research hypotheses were formulated:

- **Hypothesis 1 (H1):** It is hypothesized that there is a strong, positive correlation between the level of monthly income and the frequency of plant-based product consumption.
- **Hypothesis 2 (H2):** It is hypothesized that there is a strong, positive correlation between consulting a nutrition specialist and a positive perception of the nutritional value of plant-based products.
- **Hypothesis 3 (H3):** It is hypothesized that there is a moderate, positive correlation between the level of education and the frequency of plant-based product consumption.

3. Results and discussion

The sample consists of 100 respondents, of which 52% are female. The majority are young individuals aged between 18 and 34 years (88%), with higher education (74%, of which 66% have a bachelor's degree and 8% have a master's/doctorate/postdoctoral degree). Most live in urban areas (66%), 45% have an income between 2.001-4.000 RON, and 27% have an income between 4.001-6.000 RON, according to Table no. 1.

Table no. 1. Socio-demographic profile of respondents

Variables	Percentage (%)	Variables	Percentage (%)
Gender		Monthly Income	
Woman	52	Below 2. 000 RON	18
Man	46	2.001-4.000 RON	45
Prefer not to answer	2	4.001-6.000 RON	27
Age		6.001-8.000 RON	7
18-24 years	52	Above 8.000 RON	0
25-34 years	36	Residence Area	
35-44 years	7	Urban	66
45-54 years	5	Rural	34
Last level of education completed			
High school	20		
Post-secondary school	6		
University	66		
University (Master's/Doctorate/Post-doctorate)	8		

Based on the processed responses, it is noteworthy that 17% of respondents frequently consume plant-based products, 52% consume them occasionally, 15% have tried them in the past but no longer consume them, and 16% do not consume them at all. These results show that, although not all respondents are regular consumers, the majority are open to plant-based alternatives, especially dairy and meat substitutes: plant-based milk is the most popular, followed by plant-based cheeses and plant-based meat, then oils and plant-based yogurts. Consumers are increasingly interested in how foods can support health through functional and nutritional benefits. The responses from the survey show that many are aware of the advantages of plant-based products, particularly for health, chronic disease prevention, and improving digestion. Additionally, 35% of respondents recognize the positive environmental impact, highlighting that these foods produce lower emissions, use fewer resources, and pollute less than animal-based products.

One of the main disadvantages associated with plant-based products, according to consumer perceptions, is the high price. The current cost-of-living crisis exacerbates this issue, causing many consumers to abandon plant-based alternatives in favor of more affordable options. About 46% of respondents consider a vegan diet to be too expensive. Moreover, 41% of participants express concerns about possible nutritional deficiencies associated with plant-based diets, especially in the absence of proper planning. Essential nutrients such as iron, calcium, and vitamin B12, commonly found in animal-based foods, may be lacking in an unbalanced plant-based diet. However, these risks can be mitigated by careful food selection. Another negative aspect, mentioned by 27% of respondents, is the degree of processing of some plant-based products, which may contain added sugar, salt, or oil, thus deviating from their natural form.

The study also aimed to identify the main barriers to consuming plant-based products. Beyond price, considered the primary constraint, a significant obstacle is the taste and texture of these products, which differ from those of animal-based foods in terms of sensory profile and physicochemical properties. To support the continued development of this segment, technological advances are needed to produce plant-based products that are as close as possible to their animal-based counterparts, both in terms of taste and texture. Another major impediment is the lack of consumer awareness regarding the nutritional benefits of plant-based products and the proper ways to integrate them into a balanced diet. A lack of knowledge may cause reluctance in adopting a plant-based diet and reduce the diversity of food choices, contributing to consumer uncertainty in decision-making.

Overall, the results indicate a general openness among respondents to include plant-based foods in a balanced diet, though without the conviction that they should be consumed daily. Thus, 34% of participants believe these products should be consumed several times a week. On the other hand, 11% of respondents do not have a clear opinion on the optimal frequency of consumption, which either reflects a lack of information or some uncertainty regarding the role of these foods in a healthy diet. Respondents provided

varied answers regarding the extent to which plant-based foods replace animal products in their diet. A significant percentage, representing 79% of participants, indicated that they replace only certain types of animal products, highlighting a selective and balanced approach to dietary transition, possibly motivated by health, sustainability, or personal preferences. Only 16% stated that they do not eliminate animal products at all, which may reflect either a strong preference for them or resistance to changes in dietary habits. In contrast, five respondents mentioned following a fully plant-based diet, suggesting a deliberate food choice, possibly driven by ethical factors, ecological concerns, or perceptions regarding health benefits.

Regarding consultation with a nutrition specialist to establish an appropriate diet, over 40% of respondents stated that they have never consulted a nutritionist, while only 26% have sought such an expert, either occasionally or regularly. The rest of the participants expressed openness to potential consultations. These results highlight the need for access to personalized recommendations from specialists, considering that informed nutritional advice, tailored to age, lifestyle, and any medical conditions, is essential for preventing dietary imbalances and forming healthy, sustainable habits, as opposed to general information available online, which may be incomplete or erroneous.

The study highlights that social networks such as Instagram and TikTok represent the primary source of information for respondents regarding plant-based foods, significantly influencing food choices. Although the presence of specialists could combat misinformation, content on these platforms often comes from unauthorized sources. Following these are nutritionists, specialized blogs, friends, and family, while academic materials are rarely consulted. The results underline the need to promote accurate and scientifically grounded information.

Participants indicated that the main obstacle to more frequent adoption of plant-based products is the lack of information about their benefits, which highlights the need for well-targeted educational campaigns. Additionally, consumers believe that a more varied offer and better accessibility of these products on the Romanian market would encourage the transition to a flexitarian diet. Another aspect pursued was identifying respondents' opinions on the ability of plant-based products to provide all the essential nutrients the body needs, given the potential nutritional deficiencies generated by the consumption of plant-based products. According to the responses, the majority (59%) of them consider that plant-based products can only partially meet the nutrient requirements, and to complete this deficit, dietary supplements should be used. On the other hand, 18% of respondents believe that an exclusively plant-based diet can provide all the necessary nutrients for health, while 23% disagree with this statement.

About 44% of respondents see similar benefits in plant- and animal-based products, while 21% favor plant-based and 14% favor animal-based for nutritional value; 22% had no clear opinion. Over half would recommend a balanced plant-based diet, especially for health-conscious individuals, though 25% feel it isn't suitable for everyone, 14% are unsure, and 10% would recommend it unconditionally. A major concern is the lack of accessible, reliable information about plant-based diets—70% find it insufficient, only 11% view it as adequate. This information gap may hinder informed choices and industry growth, highlighting the need for better transparency and education from both authorities and producers.

The most widely supported measure to encourage the consumption of plant-based products is the organization of educational and awareness campaigns, mentioned by 61% of respondents, which reflects an acute need for clear and accessible information. Another important direction is the regulation of labeling and certification of these products, supported by 43% of participants, who believe that standardizing these elements would increase trust and reduce confusion regarding the composition and quality of plant-based products. Promoting such products in public institutions, including schools, is another proposed solution, considered relevant by 30% of respondents. This could include thematic campaigns, tastings, or collaborations with nutritionists to encourage acceptance and familiarity with plant-based alternatives. Although financial aspects remain relevant, only 26% of respondents believe that price subsidies should be a priority, which suggests that, in public perception, information and regulation are more effective in supporting consumption.

Regarding food preferences, respondents expressed a desire for a more diverse range of plant-based products, especially in stores and restaurants. Healthy snacks top the list of preferences, followed by plant-based pastries and desserts. There is also growing interest in plant-based dairy products such as milk and yogurt, followed by meat alternatives. A significant portion of participants would like more options for ready-to-eat meals and frozen plant-based products, highlighting an unmet potential in these market segments.

Following the calculation of Pearson correlation coefficients, it was found that two hypotheses were validated, while one was partially validated, as follows:

- **H1** was validated, revealing a strong positive correlation between monthly income level and the frequency of plant-based product consumption ($r = 0.9084$). Thus, individuals with higher incomes have easier access to these products, which may be more expensive.
- **H2** was partially validated, indicating a positive but moderate correlation ($r = 0.7060$) between consulting a specialist about the benefits of plant-based products and the consumers' positive perception of their nutritional value. This means that, generally, individuals who consult a specialist have a more favorable perception of the nutritional value of these products, although this may also be influenced by other factors.
- **H3** was validated, showing a moderate positive correlation between the level of education and the frequency of plant-based product consumption ($r = 0.7265$). Therefore, consumers with a higher level of education tend to regularly consume plant-based products.

Conclusions

The study conducted on the consumption habits of plant-based products provides a detailed overview of consumer behavior and perceptions in Romania. The analysis of the results reveals a significant openness toward plant-based alternatives, particularly in the case of dairy and meat substitutes, which are the most appreciated by participants. Although the majority of respondents are willing to include plant-based products in their diet, not all are convinced of the necessity of daily consumption.

Among the factors that could stimulate increased consumption of plant-based products, educational information and awareness campaigns are considered the most important. Many respondents believe that a plant-based diet should be balanced and diverse to avoid potential nutritional deficiencies. Furthermore, it is evident that a large portion of consumers lack clear and comprehensive information regarding the benefits and risks of such products, highlighting the need for a broader educational effort. Another key point identified in the study is the perception that plant-based products are more expensive than their animal-based counterparts, which represents a major barrier for some consumers. Although price remains a constant concern, there is an opportunity to reduce this gap through product subsidies or by regulating labeling and certification processes to increase consumer trust.

In terms of consumption habits, most participants prefer to replace certain animal-based products with plant-based alternatives, suggesting a balanced approach rather than a radical dietary change. However, in order to encourage wider adoption of plant-based products, they must be accessible, meet taste and texture expectations, and be available in a broader variety of forms (healthy snacks, pastries, etc.).

For plant-based products to gain a significant market share, both price and accessibility barriers must be addressed, along with educational challenges. Authorities and producers must play an active role in promoting these products through awareness campaigns and clearer regulations. The main limitation of the study is the small sample size, consisting of 100 questionnaires, which, although it does not allow for broad generalization of the results, provided a preliminary understanding of the researched topic and helped generate relevant directions for future studies. Another important limitation of the study lies in the homogeneity of the sample, determined by the sampling method used, which favored the participation of young individuals with a high level of education, thus reducing the diversity of perspectives and affecting the representativeness of the results. Possible future research directions include a more in-depth investigation of the cultural, economic, and informational factors that may influence positive perceptions of plant-based foods, as well as the ways in which educational and informational campaigns affect the attitudes and behaviors of Romanian consumers toward such products. Integrating extensive quantitative approaches with qualitative ones could offer a more nuanced perspective on how sustainable eating fits into the construction of individual identity and a responsible lifestyle.

References

- Alae-Carew, C., Green, R., Stewart, C., Cook, B., Dangour, A.D., Pauline F.D. and Scheelbeek, P.F.D., 2022. The role of plant-based alternative foods in sustainable and healthy food systems: Consumption

- trends in the UK. *Science of The Total Environment*, 807 (3), p.151041, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2021.151041>.
- Aschemann-Witzel, J., Gantriis, R.F., Fraga, P. and Perez-Cueto, F.J.A. , 2020. Plant-based food and protein trend from a business perspective: markets, consumers and the challenges and opportunities in the future. *Critical Reviews in Food Science and Nutrition*, 61(18), pp.3119–3128. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10408398.2020.1793730>.
- Bobe, M., Procopie, R. and Bucur, M., 2025. Young Consumers' Perception of Vegan Food: A New Ethic, a Trend or a Risk? *Amfiteatru Economic*, 27(69), pp.414–430. <https://doi.org/10.24818/EA/2025/69/414>.
- Dagevos, H. and Verbeke, W. , 2022. Meat consumption and flexitarianism in the Low Countries. *Meat Science*, 192, p. 108894. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.meatsci.2022.108894>.
- Eisen, M.B. and Brown, P.O., 2022. Rapid global phaseout of animal agriculture has the potential to stabilize greenhouse gas levels for 30 years and offset 68 percent of CO₂ emissions this century. *PLOS Climate*, 1(2). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pclm.0000010>.
- Euromonitor International, 2024. Plant-Based Dairy in Romania [online] Available at: <<https://0410v3iuv-y-https-www-portal-euromonitor-com.z.e-nformation.ro/Analysis/Tab>> [Accessed 10 March 2025].
- Euromonitor, 2025. Statistics, [online] Available at: <<https://0410v2pyv-y-https-www-portal-euromonitor-com.z.e-nformation.ro/magazine/homemain>> [Accessed 15 April 2025]
- Faber, I., Castellanos-Feijoo, N.A., Van de Sompel, L., Davydova, A. and Perez-Cueto, F.J.A., 2020. Attitudes and knowledge towards plant-based diets of young adults across four European countries. Exploratory survey. *Appetite*, 145, p. 104498. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2019.104498>.
- GFI Europe, 2023. *Europe plant-based food retail market insights*. [online] Available at: <<https://gfi-europe.org/market-insights-on-european-plant-based-sales-2020-2022/>> [Accessed 3 March 2025].
- Hopwood, C.J., Bleidorn, W., Schwaba, T. and Chen, S., 2020. Health, environmental, and animal rights motives for vegetarian eating. *PLOS One*, 2, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0230609>.
- Mambrini, S.P., Penzavecchia, C., Menichetti, F., Foppiani, A., Leone, A., Pellizzari, M., Sileo, F., Battezzati, A., Bertoli, S. and De Amicis, R., 2025. Plant-based and sustainable diet: A systematic review of its impact on obesity. *Obesity Reviews*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/obr.13901>.
- McEvoy, C.T., Temple, N. and Woodside, J.V., 2012. Vegetarian diets, low-meat diets and health: A review. *Public Health Nutrition*, 15(12), pp.2287–2294. doi:10.1017/S1368980012000936.
- Passiou E.K., Agapitou C., Rotsios K. and Folinas D., 2023. Plant-based Protein Food Products: Perceptions from the Greek Food Industry. *Economies of the Balkan and Eastern European Countries, KnE Social Sciences*, pages 119–137. DOI: 10.18502/kss.v8i1.12640.
- Rini, L., Bayudan, S., Faber, I., Frøst, M.B., Perez-Cueto, F.J.A., Guadarrama, E., Schouteten, J.J. and De Steur, H., 2025. Diverse dietary lifestyles within households increase purchase intentions for plant-based food. *Food Quality and Preference*, 127, p.105453. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodqual.2025.105453>.
- Statista, 2025. *Value of plant-based food sales in Romania from 2020 to 2022*. [online] Available at: <<https://0411g2pyi-y-https-www-statista-com.z.e-nformation.ro/statistics/1410739/romania-plant-based-food-sales-value/>> [Accessed 15 April 2025].
- Storz, M.A. ,2022. What makes a plant-based diet? A review of current concepts and proposal for a standardized plant-based dietary intervention checklist. *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 76, pp.789–800. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41430-021-01023-z>.
- Williams, K.A. and Patel, H. , 2017. Healthy plant-based diet: What does it really mean? *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*, 70(4), pp. 423–425. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jacc.2017.06.006>.