

Innovation and Plant-Based Food: A Bibliometric Analysis of Young Consumers' Acceptance

Roxana Procopie¹, Mihaela Bucur², Magdalena Bobe³, Lelia Voinea⁴ and Mihai Felea⁵

¹⁾²⁾³⁾⁴⁾⁵⁾ *Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Bucharest, Romania.*

E-mail: roxana.procopie@com.ase.ro; E-mail: mihaela.bucur@com.ase.ro;

E-mail: magdalena.bobe@com.ase.ro; E-mail: lelia.voinea@gmail.com;

E-mail: mihai.felea@com.ase.ro

Please cite this paper as:

Procopie, R., Bucur, M., Bobe, M., Voinea, L., & Felea, M. (2026). Innovation and Plant-Based Food: A Bibliometric Analysis of Young Consumers' Acceptance. In C. Vasiliu, D.-C. Dabijsa, A. Tziner, D. Pleşea, & V. Dinu (Eds.), *Proceedings of BASIQ International Conference on New Trends in Sustainable Business and Consumption, 12th Edition* (pp. 469-476). Editura ASE.

DOI 10.24818/BASIQ/2026/12/075

Abstract

This study maps the scientific evolution of research on young consumers' acceptance of plant-based food innovation, integrating bibliometric evidence with key theoretical dimensions of acceptance from the literature. A bibliometric analysis of 40 Web of Science Core Collection articles (2000–2025) was conducted using Bibliometrix (R) and Callon's strategic diagram, enabling the systematic mapping of thematic clusters, intellectual structures, and publication dynamics in the field. The Web of Science Core Collection was selected for its extensive coverage of high-impact journals across food science, consumer behavior, and sustainability, offering a coherent database for tracing the development of research on young consumers' dietary transition toward plant-based alternatives. The results identify consumer behavior, particularly TPB-based studies, and plant-based food innovation as motor themes, while the literature is further structured around health, sensory, and economic determinants of acceptance. The analysis reveals a strong geographical concentration of research in North-Western Europe and a limited presence of studies from Eastern Europe, indicating a potential regional imbalance in the literature. By integrating bibliometric mapping with a multidimensional conceptual synthesis (health–sensory–economic), the paper provides a more comprehensive understanding of plant-based food acceptance among young consumers. The findings contribute to the refinement of sustainable business strategies, product formulation, retail positioning, and public policy design aimed at accelerating dietary transitions.

Keywords

Food innovation; plant-based food; young consumers; consumer acceptance; bibliometric analysis; Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

DOI: 10.24818/BASIQ/2026/12/075

Introduction

Recent transformations of the global food system are shaped by climate change, resource constraints, health concerns, and changing consumer values (de Boer & Aiking, 2018). In this context, reducing reliance on animal-based proteins and expanding plant-based alternatives has become a key strategy for dietary transition and sustainability (de Boer & Aiking, 2019; Willett et al., 2019).

In this framework, plant-based foods must be understood not merely as an emerging product category, but as part of a broader paradigm shift where food innovation, consumer behavior, and sustainability policy intersect (Hartmann & Siegrist, 2017). Young consumers, particularly Generation Z and Millennials, represent a strategically important segment due to higher exposure to sustainability discourse, health awareness, and willingness to experiment with novel foods (Graça et al., 2015; Hoek et al., 2017).

However, despite positive attitudes, behavioral adoption remains inconsistent. The persistence of the attitude–behavior gap highlights the complexity of dietary decision-making processes and underscores the relevance of the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) in explaining intention–behavior inconsistencies.

Our research aims to provide a bibliometric mapping of the scientific literature on plant-based food innovation and young consumers' acceptance, with the objective of identifying the main research streams, thematic structures, and intellectual evolution of the field over the period 2000–2025. The study addresses three research questions: (RQ1) How has scientific production evolved between 2000 and 2025? (RQ2) What are the dominant intellectual structures in the field? (RQ3) What thematic and geographical gaps persist, particularly in Eastern Europe?

The paper is structured as follows: after the Introduction, Section 1 reviews the theoretical framework, Section 2 provides details on the applied research methodology, while Section 3 discusses the findings and highlights the study's main implications. The final section summarizes the results, emphasizes the limitations and proposes future research directions.

1. Literature Review

1.1. Innovation in Alternative Protein Development: Challenges of Extensive Formulation

Food innovation includes product reformulation, novel processing technologies, and alternative protein development. Plant-based foods are currently among the fastest-growing innovation segments, driven by sustainability concerns and demand for healthier diets (Onwezen et al., 2021). This development reflects the protein transition framework, which describes the shift from animal- to plant-based protein consumption due to environmental, health, and economic considerations (de Boer & Aiking, 2019).

However, scientific literature emphasizes that the “plant-based” label does not automatically indicate a healthy or “natural” product. According to the NOVA classification (Monteiro et al., 2018), many plant-based alternatives, especially meat analogues, are categorized as ultra-processed foods (UPF) because of the extensive formulation needed to replicate animal products, including synthetic micronutrients and food additives that enhance sensory properties (Tso & Forde, 2021).

Research shows that this industrial complexity often conflicts with consumers' perceptions of “naturalness,” an important determinant of food acceptance. Products perceived as “artificial” or “unnatural” can trigger negative emotional responses and create psychological barriers to adoption (Siegrist & Hartmann, 2020). Consequently, the plant-based sector must balance technological innovation for sensory and nutritional parity with the growing demand for minimally processed ingredients. The following paragraphs synthesize the main determinants of plant-based food acceptance identified in the literature.

1.2 The Health Dimension of Plant-Based Food Acceptance

Nutritional attributes and perceived health benefits, including bioactive compounds, metabolic regulation, and chronic disease prevention, are primary drivers of plant-based food acceptance (Willett et al., 2019; Siegrist & Hartmann, 2019). Plant-based diets are associated with high intake of fiber, vitamins (A, C, E, folate), minerals (potassium, magnesium), and unsaturated fatty acids (Botnaru et al., 2025). Epidemiological evidence links these dietary patterns to improved cardiovascular health, reduced LDL cholesterol, better glycemic control, and lower risk of obesity and type 2 diabetes (Wang et al., 2023). However, nutritional constraints remain. Deficiencies in vitamin B12, vitamin D, iron, zinc, iodine, calcium, and omega-3 fatty acids are frequently reported in restrictive plant-based diets (Neufingerl & Eilander, 2021; White, 2022).

Despite these concerns, consumers, including younger populations, tend to perceive plant-based diets favorably, associating them with superior well-being and long-term vitality (Siegrist & Hartmann, 2019; McInnes et al., 2023).

1.3 Sensory Determinants of Acceptance

Sensory attributes, such as taste, texture, aroma, and visual appeal, are one of the most influential determinants of food choice (Köster, 2009). Empirical evidence consistently demonstrates that when plant-based alternatives deliver a satisfying hedonic experience, especially driven by the immediate pleasure of taste, significantly strengthens consumer acceptance (Bryant, 2019; Mustapa et al., 2024). This relationship is particularly evident among younger consumers, where the hedonic gratification derived from plant-based products can often overshadow the environmental motivations in the decision-making process (Li et al., 2022).

Beyond these general drivers, a sensory-affective rejection stems from the anticipation of negative attributes, such as "off-flavors" (beany, grassy), unappealing colors, or bitterness, which remain primary sources of consumer skepticism (Laureati, 2024; Liu et al., 2024). These sensory barriers are reinforced in Western contexts where meat consumption is deeply embedded in traditional patterns and cultural identity (Gibbs & Cappuccio, 2022). Therefore, when consumers engage in a comparative evaluation of plant-based products with their animal-based counterparts, even a slight perceptible discrepancy in taste or texture can trigger a form of "food neophobia", overriding purchase intentions despite the consumer's positive attitude (Pasqualone, 2022; Hoek et al., 2011).

1.4 Economic Dimensions of Acceptance

Economic factors significantly shape consumer adoption behavior. Retail environment structure influences consumer choice architecture, where product placement affects visibility and accessibility (Panzone et al., 2021). High cognitive effort associated with label reading increases decision costs (Nystrand & Olsen, 2020). Additionally, lack of culinary skills and time constraints reduce adoption likelihood (Schösler et al., 2012). Price remains a major barrier, with plant-based products often perceived as premium goods (Masset et al., 2014). This reinforces perceptions of inequality and limits adoption among price-sensitive consumers (Neuhofer & Lusk, 2021). Industrial constraints and agricultural subsidies favor animal-based products, maintaining price distortions (Fehér et al., 2020). However, technological innovations such as 3D food printing and extrusion technologies may reduce production costs and improve scalability (Singh et al., 2024; Pais et al., 2024).

2. Methodology

The study employed a bibliometric analysis of scientific literature indexed in the Web of Science Core Collection, with data extracted on 20 April 2026. The search strategy targeted terms related to plant-based foods, food innovation, young consumers, consumer acceptance, focusing on studies addressing behavioral aspects. After applying inclusion and exclusion criteria based on thematic relevance, a final sample of 40 articles (2000–2025) was retained. The dataset was used to map the intellectual structure and thematic development of the field, identifying dominant research streams and emerging topics. Bibliometric analysis is appropriate for emerging fields, as it enables systematic and reproducible mapping of scientific development, including publication trends, thematic structures, and geographical imbalances (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017). The analysis was conducted using Bibliometrix (R 4.3) and included performance analysis, keyword co-occurrence, and thematic mapping based on Callon's centrality–density framework. These techniques allow the identification of the field's intellectual structure and thematic positioning, while also capturing its evolution toward more complex explanatory models (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; Onwezen et al., 2021). The methods were aligned with the research questions as follows: performance analysis addresses RQ1, thematic mapping and keyword co-occurrence address RQ2, and geographic distribution analysis identifies regional gaps related to RQ3.

3. Results and discussion

3.1 Scientific Production Trends

Scientific production was limited before 2013, followed by gradual growth and a clear acceleration after 2018 and peaks in 2019 and 2021. This trend aligns with broader developments in the plant-based food market and the increasing visibility of alternative protein sources in both academic and public discourse (de Boer & Aiking, 2018, 2019; Onwezen et al., 2021). Publication patterns indicate a transition from an emergent phase to a consolidation phase in the later part of the period analyzed (approximately 2018–2025), during which research on consumer acceptance and behavioral intention became more systematically developed. The growing attention given to Millennials and Generation Z further reflects the increasing relevance of younger consumers in shaping plant-based consumption trends (GlobeScan, 2025; Trellis, 2024). These findings address RQ1 by illustrating the temporal evolution of scientific production in the field between 2000 and 2025.

3.2 Leading Journals

The bibliometric analysis indicates that the field is primarily dominated by journals such as *Appetite* and *Food Quality and Preference*, followed by sustainability- and policy-oriented outlets including *Sustainability* and *Food Policy*. This distribution reflects the interdisciplinary nature of research on plant-based foods, which is simultaneously approached from psychological, sensory, and policy perspectives (Hartmann & Siegrist, 2017; Onwezen et al., 2021). Rather than being treated as a purely technological

issue, plant-based food innovation emerges as a complex phenomenon situated at the intersection of food science, marketing, and consumer studies (de Boer & Aiking, 2019). Studies published in the later phase of the analyzed period (2018–2025), particularly in journals such as *Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems* and *Foods*, further reinforce this perspective by emphasizing the role of sensory properties, consumer acceptance, and younger generations' adoption behavior as central themes in the literature (Appiani et al., 2023; Raptou et al., 2024).

3.3 Geographic Distribution

The geographic distribution of publications shows a strong concentration in North-Western Europe, particularly in the Netherlands, Germany, and Belgium (de Boer & Aiking, 2019; Onwezen et al., 2021). This reflects the higher maturity of plant-based food markets and greater consumer awareness in these countries. In contrast, Eastern Europe is significantly underrepresented in both scientific output and market-related studies, indicating an important research gap. This imbalance is relevant because food preference and acceptance of alternative proteins are shaped by cultural traditions, income levels, and institutional contexts (de Boer & Aiking, 2019), limiting the generalizability of findings across regions. Overall, European evidence confirms the dominance of countries such as Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, France, and Spain, while Eastern Europe remains comparatively less visible (Gebhardt & Hadwiger, 2020; SMART Protein, 2021; GFI Europe, 2025). This result responds to RQ3, highlighting significant geographical imbalances, particularly the underrepresentation of Eastern European research contexts.

3.4 Keyword Co-occurrence Network

The keyword co-occurrence network identifies five main thematic clusters: (1) plant-based food innovation, (2) consumer acceptance, (3) young consumers, (4) sustainability and health, and (5) methodological frameworks such as the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and PLS-SEM. This structure suggests that the field is organized around a relatively consolidated core, dominated by the interaction between product innovation and consumer behavior. The strongest co-occurrence links indicate that research in the later phase of the analyzed period (2000–2025), particularly after 2018, increasingly focuses on explaining acceptance through psychological, social, and behavioral determinants. Overall, the network highlights a gradual shift from descriptive studies of plant-based products toward more explanatory models of consumer behavior. At the same time, it confirms that the field remains anchored in consumer behavior research while retaining a strong innovation-oriented component, suggesting an ongoing transition toward more integrated theoretical frameworks (Hartmann & Siegrist, 2017; Graça et al., 2015; Onwezen et al., 2021; Appiani et al., 2023; Raptou et al., 2024; Moussaoui et al., 2026).

This thematic structure addresses RQ2 by identifying the dominant intellectual and conceptual structures within the field. In Figure no. 1., the keyword co-occurrence network illustrates the conceptual relationships between the main terms in the literature. Node density and link strength indicate the most established and frequently co-occurring research themes (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017). The keyword co-occurrence network is dominated by three high-frequency hubs - “plant-based food,” “consumer acceptance,” and “young consumers”- which account for the most densely connected part of the sample (N = 40 articles). The strongest conceptual linkages are observed between “plant-based food” and “food innovation,” as well as between “consumer acceptance” and “purchase intention,” indicating a tight association between product-level innovation and intention-based behavioral models.

In Figure no. 2., the thematic map is based on centrality and density measures, allowing the classification of research themes according to their level of development and relevance within the field (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017). The thematic map identifies two motor themes, “Behavior, consumption & TPB” and “Plant-based food & innovation,” with approximately n = 8 and n = 16 documents, respectively, confirming their central role in the field. “Health & nutrition” appears as a dense but more specialized niche theme (n = 6), while “Sustainability & environment” and “Young consumers & demography” occupy intermediate positions, suggesting partial thematic maturation.

4. Discussion and managerial implications

Within the analyzed sample, two main streams appear to be dominant: consumer behavior research, largely grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior, and studies on plant-based food innovation, although the boundary between these streams may be partially shaped by the bibliometric method and database structure rather than by substantive differences in the literature. While both domains are well represented, they remain conceptually fragmented. Consumer behavior studies are largely grounded in the Theory of Planned

Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), whereas food innovation research focuses on product development, reformulation, and technological optimization (Hartmann & Siegrist, 2017; Onwezen et al., 2021).

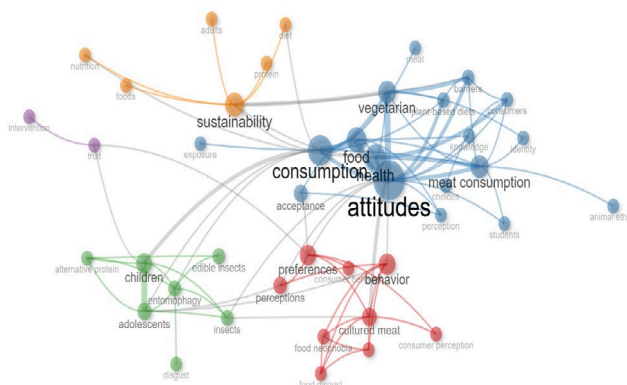


Figure no. 1. Keyword Co-occurrence Network: Plant-Based Food & Young Consumers
(WoS 2000–2025)

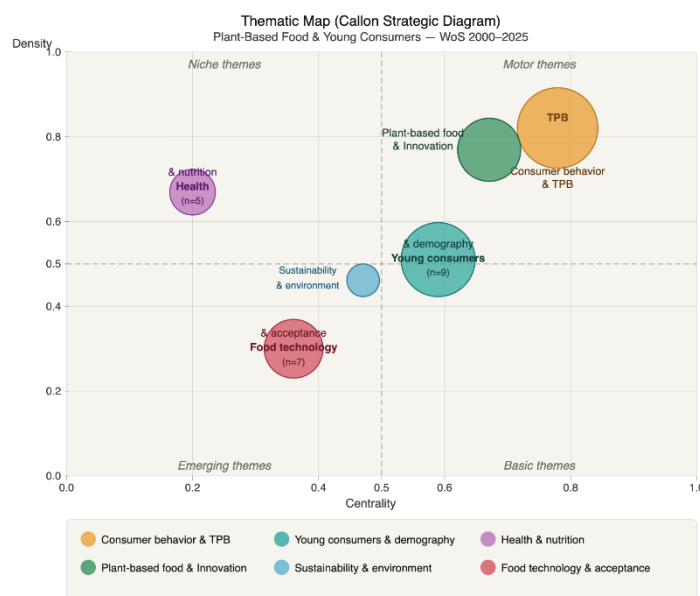


Figure no. 2. Thematic Map: Plant-Based Food & Young Consumers (WoS 2000–2025)

Although widely used, TPB alone is insufficient to fully explain dietary behavior in the context of plant-based food consumption. Acceptance is shaped not only by cognitive factors such as attitudes and intentions, but also by sensory experience, identity, familiarity, and economic constraints (Graça et al., 2015; Hartmann & Siegrist, 2017). This indicates a gradual shift toward more integrated models combining rational and affective determinants of food choice. From an innovation perspective, sensory performance remains a key barrier. Taste, texture, and familiarity strongly influence acceptance, especially when plant-based products are directly compared with animal-based alternatives (Köster, 2009; Mustapa et al., 2024; Li et al., 2022). In addition, perceptions of “naturalness” are relevant, as many plant-based meat analogues are classified as ultra-processed foods, which can reduce consumer trust (Monteiro et al., 2018; Siegrist & Hartmann, 2020).

From a market perspective, the sector is still in an early diffusion phase, where adoption barriers are mainly related to sensory quality, price, and accessibility. Therefore, innovation strategies must balance technological improvement with cost efficiency, not only nutritional or environmental claims (de Boer & Aiking, 2019; Hartmann & Siegrist, 2017). For younger consumers, communication based on health, energy, and lifestyle tends to be more effective than abstract sustainability messages (Graça et al., 2015; McInnes et al., 2023).

The study answers the three research questions as follows: RQ1 is reflected in the rapid post-2018 growth of publications; RQ2 is addressed through the identification of five dominant thematic clusters centered on

TPB and food innovation; and RQ3 reveals a strong Western European concentration of research activity, with significant gaps in Eastern Europe.

Three managerial implications emerge. First, sensory optimization is essential, as adoption depends primarily on taste and texture parity with conventional products (Köster, 2009; Mustapa et al., 2024). Second, marketing communication should focus on functional benefits such as health, performance, and affordability rather than purely environmental narratives (Hoek et al., 2017; McInnes et al., 2023). Third, pricing and distribution remain critical, as even well-developed products may remain niche without affordability and retail accessibility (Panzone et al., 2021; Pais et al., 2024).

From an applied perspective, the transition toward sustainable diets depends on aligning food innovation, sensory quality, consumer communication, and economic accessibility. Together, these factors shape the mass-market adoption of plant-based foods among young consumers through perceived value and effective positioning in everyday consumption contexts (Moussaoui et al., 2026; Ipsos & PBFIA, 2026).

Conclusions, limitations and future research

This bibliometric analysis provides an overview of research on plant-based food acceptance among young consumers, highlighting growing scientific interest alongside persistent conceptual fragmentation and geographical imbalance. The field is mainly structured around consumer behavior (Theory of Planned Behavior) and plant-based food innovation. Although TPB remains the dominant framework, it is insufficient on its own to explain the complexity of food choice behavior in plant-based consumption. Acceptance is increasingly understood as a multidimensional phenomenon shaped by sensory, social, identity-related, and contextual factors. This highlights the need for more integrated models combining cognitive and affective determinants of behavior. Also, the apparent separation between consumer behavior and food innovation emerged in part from the bibliometric method and the Web of Science structure, suggesting that this divide may be more methodological than grounded in the substantive content of the articles. A key finding is the strong geographical concentration of research in Northwestern Europe, with limited evidence from Eastern Europe. This limits the generalizability of findings, particularly in culturally and economically different contexts. Future studies should therefore prioritize cross-cultural comparisons to better capture regional variation.

This study has several limitations. First, it relies exclusively on the Web of Science Core Collection, which may exclude relevant studies from other databases. Second, the relatively small sample restricts generalizability, positioning the results as a mapping of a specific research niche. Third, bibliometric methods are descriptive and do not capture deeper behavioral mechanisms.

Future research should expand data sources and include broader datasets. Longitudinal studies are needed to understand changes in consumer behavior over time. Cross-cultural comparisons, especially between Western and Eastern Europe (including Romania), are strongly recommended. Further research should also integrate interdisciplinary approaches such as sensory science, neuromarketing, social media analysis, and policy studies.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) usage statement:

ChatGPT (version 5.0) was responsibly used for language improvement. After this process, the authors reviewed and edited the content as needed and take full responsibility for the content of the present article.

References

- Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50(2), 179–211. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978\(91\)90020-T](https://doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978(91)90020-T).
- Appiani, M., Cattaneo, C., & Laureati, M. (2023). Sensory properties and consumer acceptance of plant-based meat, dairy, fish and eggs analogs: A systematic review. *Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems*, 7, 1268068. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fsufs.2023.1268068>.
- Aria, M., & Cuccurullo, C. (2017). Bibliometrix: An r-tool for comprehensive science mapping analysis. *Journal of Informetrics*, 11(4), 959–975. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joi.2017.08.007>.
- Botnaru, A. A., Lupu, A., Morariu, P. C., Pop, O. L., Nedelcu, A. H., Morariu, B. A., Cioancă, O., Di Gioia, M. L., Lupu, V. V., Avasilcai, L., Dragostin, O. M., Vieriu, M., & Morariu, I. D. (2025). Balancing health and sustainability: Assessing the benefits of plant-based diets and the risk of pesticide residues. *Nutrients*, 17(4), 727. <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu17040727>.

- Bryant, C. J. (2019). We can't keep meat-eating like this: Attitudes towards vegetarian and vegan diets in the United Kingdom. *Sustainability*, 11(23), 6844. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11236844>.
- De Boer, J., & Aiking, H. (2018). Prospects for pro-environmental protein consumption in Europe: Cultural, culinary, economic and psychological factors. *Appetite*, 121, 29–40. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2017.10.042>.
- De Boer, J., & Aiking, H. (2019). Strategies towards healthy and sustainable protein consumption: A transition framework at the levels of diets, dishes, and dish ingredients. *Food Quality and Preference*, 73, 171–181. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodqual.2018.11.012>.
- Fehér, A., Gazdecki, M., Véha, M., Szakály, M., & Szakály, Z. (2020). A comprehensive review of the benefits of and the barriers to the switch to a plant-based diet. *Sustainability*, 12(10), 4136. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12104136>.
- Gebhardt, B., & Hadwiger, K. (2020). *Plant-based foods for future: Results of consumer and professional expert interviews in five European countries* (Working paper No. 29). University of Hohenheim, Institute of Agricultural Policy and Markets.
- GFI Europe. (2025, June 9). *European plant-based sales data*. The Good Food Institute Europe. <https://gfi-europe.org/european-plant-based-sales-data/>.
- Gibbs, J., & Cappuccio, F. P. (2022). Plant-based dietary patterns for human and planetary health. *Nutrients*, 14(8), 1614. <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu14081614>.
- GlobeScan. (2025, February 5). *Millennials most interested in eating plant-based*. <https://globeScan.com/2025/02/06/insight-of-the-week-millennials-most-interested-in-eating-plant-based/>.
- Graça, J., Calheiros, M. M., & Oliveira, A. (2015). Attached to meat? (Un)Willingness and intentions to adopt a more plant-based diet. *Appetite*, 95, 113–125. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2015.06.024>.
- Hartmann, C., & Siegrist, M. (2017). Consumer perception and behaviour regarding sustainable protein consumption: A systematic review. *Trends in Food Science & Technology*, 61, 11–25. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tifs.2016.12.006>.
- Hoek, A. C., Pearson, D., James, S. W., Lawrence, M. A., & Friel, S. (2017). Shrinking the food-print: A qualitative study into consumer perceptions, experiences and attitudes towards healthy and environmentally friendly food behaviours. *Appetite*, 108, 117–131. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2016.09.030>.
- Hoek, A. C., Luning, P. A., Weijzen, P., Engels, W., Kok, F. J., & De Graaf, C. (2011). Replacement of meat by meat substitutes. A survey on person- and product-related factors in consumer acceptance. *Appetite*, 56(3), 662–673. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2011.02.001>.
- Köster, E. P. (2009). Diversity in the determinants of food choice: A psychological perspective. *Food Quality and Preference*, 20(2), 70–82. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodqual.2007.11.002>.
- Ipsos, & Plant Based Foods Industry Association. (2026). *Gen Z and the plant-powered plate: Trends and insights*. Retrieved January 9, 2026, from <https://www.ipsos.com/en-in/gen-z-and-plant-powered-plate-trends-and-insights>.
- Laureati, M., De Boni, A., Saba, A., Lamy, E., Minervini, F., Delgado, A. M., & Sinesio, F. (2024). Determinants of consumers' acceptance and adoption of novel food in view of more resilient and sustainable food systems in the EU: A systematic literature review. *Foods*, 13(10), 1534. <https://doi.org/10.3390/foods13101534>.
- Li, T., Wang, D., & Yang, Z. (2022). Inspiration or risk? How social media marketing of plant-based meat affects young people's purchase intention. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 971107. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.971107>.
- Liu, Y., Aimutis, W. R., & Drake, M. (2024). Dairy, plant, and novel proteins: Scientific and technological aspects. *Foods*, 13(7), 1010. <https://doi.org/10.3390/foods13071010>.
- McInnes, C., Carstairs, S. A., & Cecil, J. E. (2023). A qualitative study of young people's thoughts and attitudes to follow a more plant-based diet. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, 1196142. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1196142>.
- Monteiro, C. A. (2009). Nutrition and health. The issue is not food, nor nutrients, so much as processing. *Public Health Nutrition*, 12(5), 729–731. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1368980009005291>.
- Mustapa, M. A. C., Kallas, Z., Silande, C., Gagnaire, V., Jan, G., López-Mas, L., & Aguiló-Aguayo, I. (2024). From taste to purchase: Understanding the influence of sensory perceptions and informed tasting on plant-based product purchases - An extension of the theory of planned behavior. *Journal of Agriculture and Food Research*, 16, 101188. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jafr.2024.101188>.

- Moussaoui, D., Banovic, M., Tarrega, A., & Chaya, C. (2026). Understanding young consumers' attitudes towards plant-based products: A structural equation modelling analysis approach. *Food Quality and Preference*, 135, 105702. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodqual.2025.105702>.
- Neufingerl, N., & Eilander, A. (2021). Nutrient intake and status in adults consuming plant-based diets compared to meat-eaters: A systematic review. *Nutrients*, 14(1), 29. <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu14010029>.
- Neuhofer, Z. T., & Lusk, J. L. (2022). Most plant-based meat alternative buyers also buy meat: An analysis of household demographics, habit formation, and buying behavior among meat alternative buyers. *Scientific Reports*, 12(1), 13062. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-022-16996-5>.
- Gaby, J. M., & Tepper, B. J. (2020). A comparison of hedonic and emotional responses to common odors delivered by qPODs (Portable olfactive devices) and traditional sniff jars. *Food Quality and Preference*, 80, 103804. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodqual.2019.103804>.
- Nystrand, B. T., & Olsen, S. O. (2020). Consumers' attitudes and intentions toward consuming plant-based meat substitutes: Antecedents and moderating effects. *Food Quality and Preference*, 80, 103804.
- Onwezen, M. C., Bouwman, E. P., Reinders, M. J., & Dagevos, H. (2021). A systematic review on consumer acceptance of alternative proteins: Pulses, algae, insects, plant-based meat alternatives, and cultured meat. *Appetite*, 159, 105058. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2020.105058>.
- Pais, D. F., Marques, A. C., & Fuinhas, J. A. (2022). The cost of healthier and more sustainable food choices: Do plant-based consumers spend more on food? *Agricultural and Food Economics*, 10(1), 18. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40100-022-00224-9>.
- Panzone, L. A., Ulph, A., Hilton, D., Gortemaker, I., & Tajudeen, I. A. (2021). Sustainable by design: Choice architecture and the carbon footprint of grocery shopping. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 40(4), 463–486. <https://doi.org/10.1177/07439156211008898>.
- Pasqualone, A. (2022). Balancing innovation and neophobia in the production of food for plant-based diets. *Foods*, 11(12), 1702. <https://doi.org/10.3390/foods11121702>.
- Raptou, E., Tsiami, A., Negro, G., Ghuriani, V., Baweja, P., Smaoui, S., & Varzakas, T. (2024). Gen z's willingness to adopt plant-based diets: Empirical evidence from Greece, India, and the UK. *Foods*, 13(13), 2076. <https://doi.org/10.3390/foods13132076>.
- Siegrist, M., & Hartmann, C. (2020). Consumer acceptance of novel food technologies. *Nature Food*, 1(6), 343–350. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s43016-020-0094-x>.
- Siegrist, M., & Hartmann, C. (2019). Impact of sustainability perception on consumption of organic meat and meat substitutes. *Appetite*, 132, 196–202. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2018.09.016>.
- Singh, A. K., Elango, D., Raigne, J., Van Der Laan, L., Rairdin, A., Soregaon, C., & Singh, A. (2025). Plant-based protein crops and their improvement: Current status and future perspectives. *Crop Science*, 65(1), e21389. <https://doi.org/10.1002/csc2.21389>.
- Smart Protein Project. (2023). *Evolving appetites: An in-depth look at European attitudes towards plant-based eating*. Retrieved January 9, 2026, from https://smartproteinproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/Smart-Protein-European-Consumer-Survey_2023.pdf.
- Trellis. (2024, June 12). *Study: Younger generations drive consumption of plant-based food while baby boomers lag behind*. Retrieved January 9, 2026, from <https://trellis.net/article/study-younger-generations-drive-consumption-plant-based-food-while-baby-boomers-lag-behind/>.
- Tso, R., & Forde, C. G. (2021). Unintended consequences: Nutritional impact and potential pitfalls of switching from animal- to plant-based foods. *Nutrients*, 13(8), 2527. <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu13082527>.
- Wang, Y., Liu, B., Han, H., Hu, Y., Zhu, L., Rimm, E. B., Hu, F. B., & Sun, Q. (2023). Associations between plant-based dietary patterns and risks of type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer, and mortality – a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Nutrition Journal*, 22(1), 46. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12937-023-00877-2>.
- White, N. D. (2022). Vitamin b12 and plant-predominant diets. *American Journal of Lifestyle Medicine*, 16(3), 295–297. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15598276221076102>.
- Willett, W., Rockström, J., Loken, B., et al., (2019). Food in the Anthropocene: The EAT–Lancet Commission on healthy diets from sustainable food systems. *The Lancet*, 393(10170), 447–492. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(18\)31788-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(18)31788-4).