



schouten specialist in
plant-based protein

Market Outlook Q1 2026

Discover the trends shaping the
meat alternatives category today

Introduction

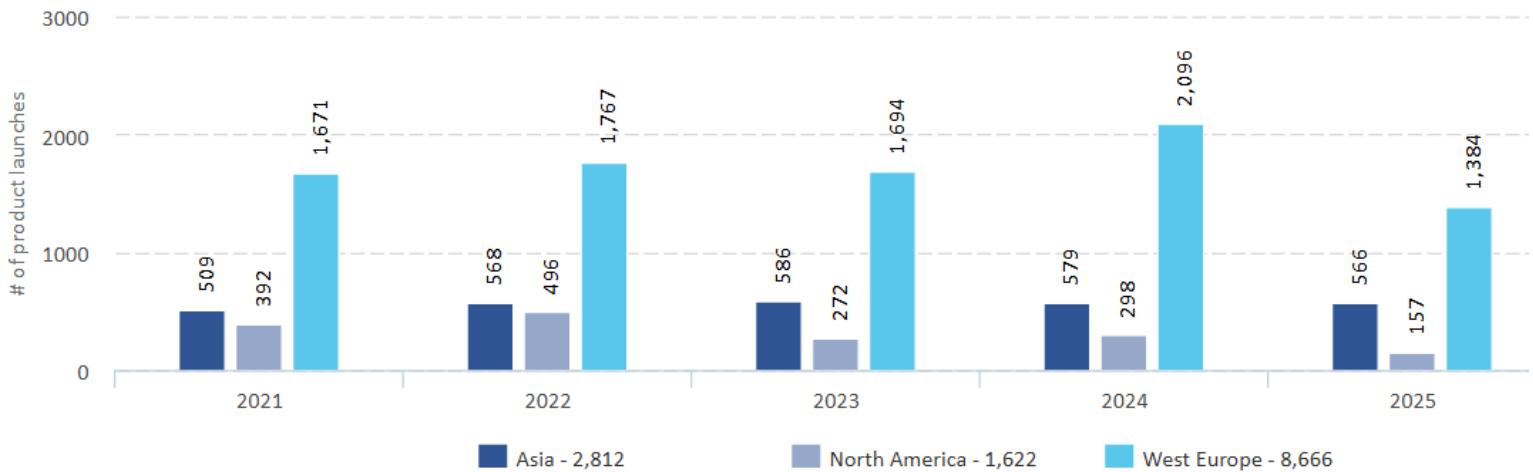
- Innova Market Insights recently unveiled its Top 10 Trends for 2026.
- This presentation focuses on the trends most relevant to the meat alternatives category, including examples of market product launches.





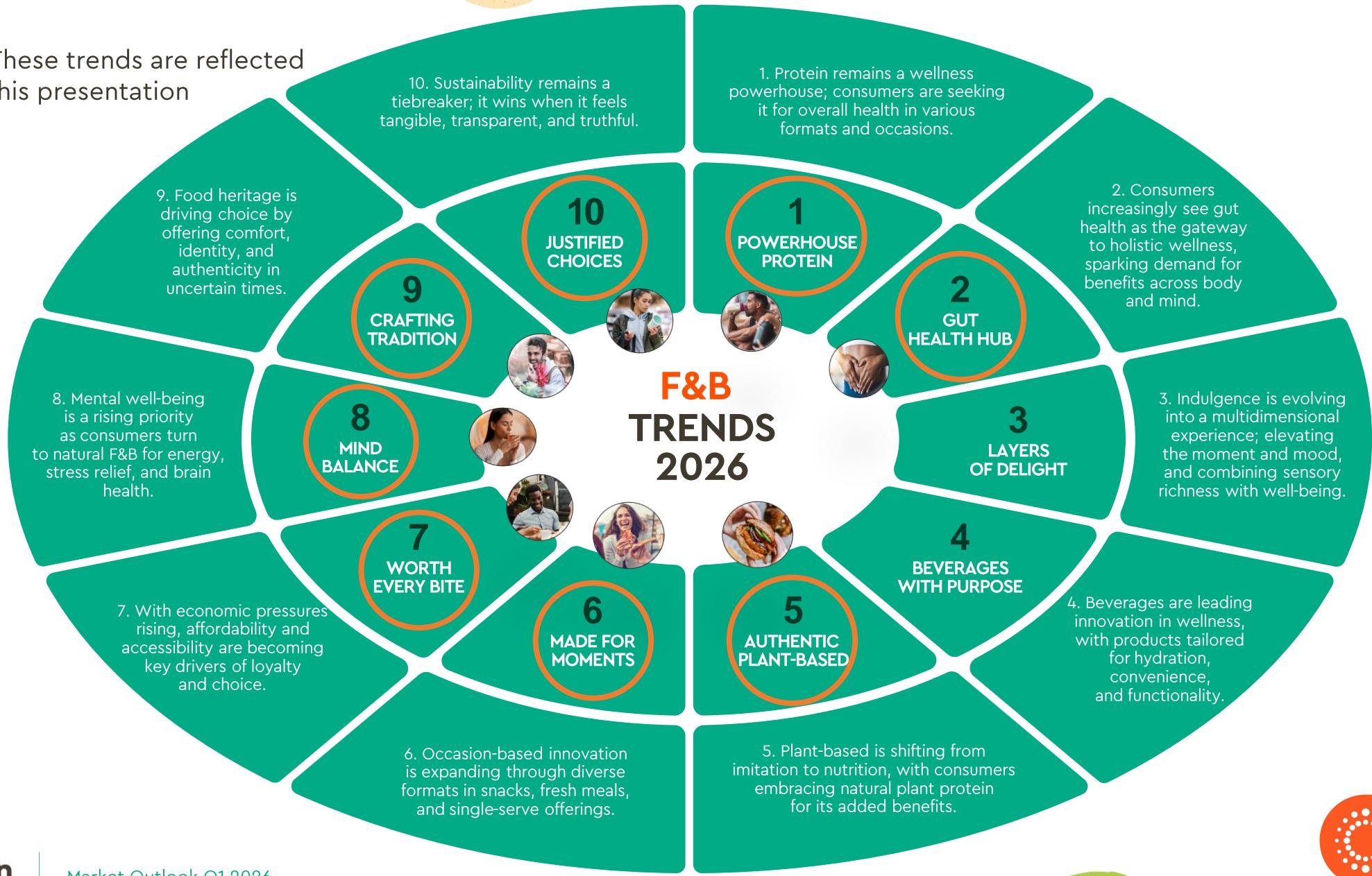
Top 3 regions for meat alternatives product launches

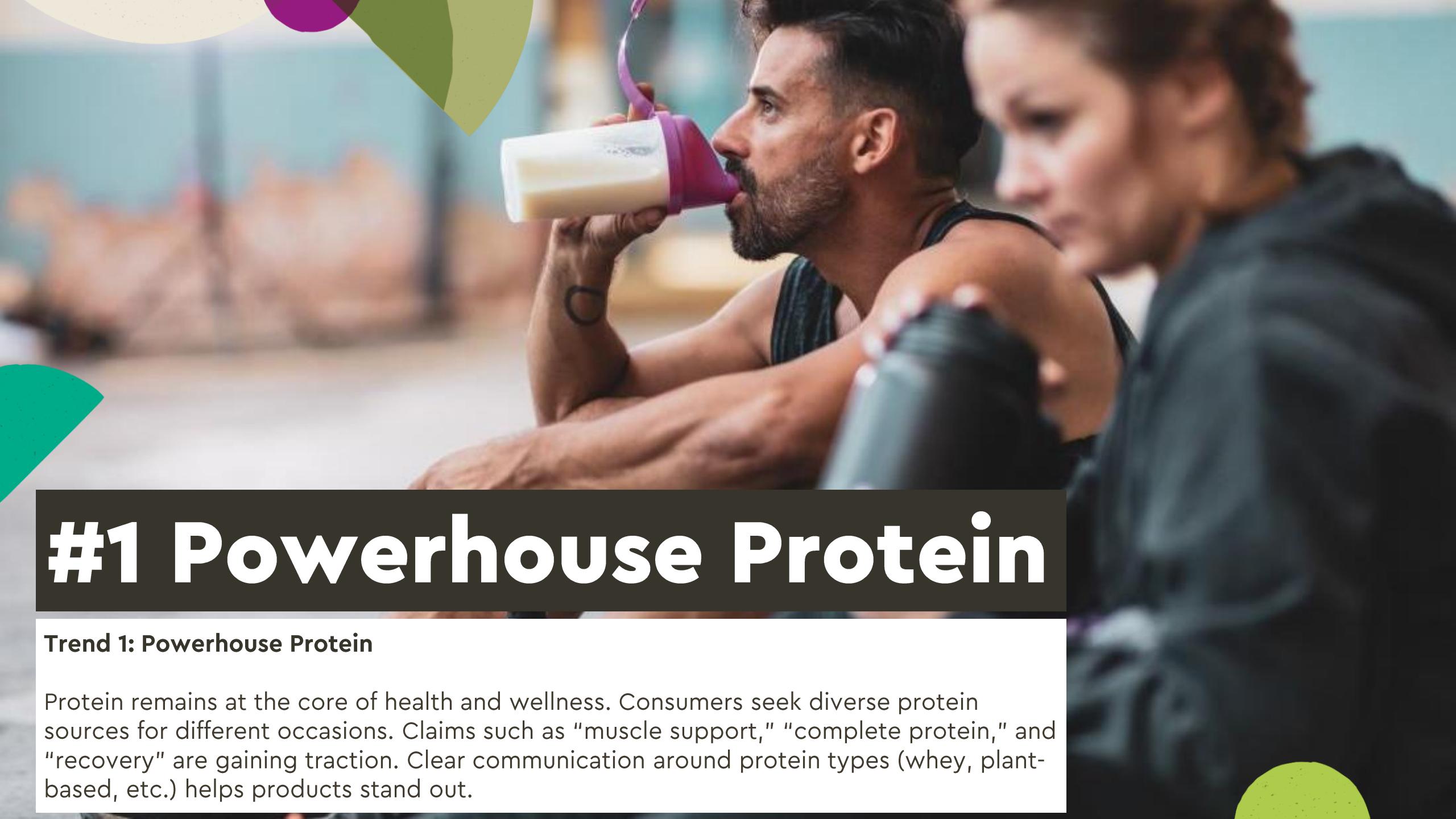
- As in previous years, the majority of product launches in 2025 took place in Western Europe.



#

= These trends are reflected in this presentation



A photograph of a man with a beard and a tattoo on his hand, wearing a black tank top, drinking from a white protein shaker bottle with a purple cap. A woman in a black tank top is visible behind him, looking towards the camera. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with colorful umbrellas.

#1 Powerhouse Protein

Trend 1: Powerhouse Protein

Protein remains at the core of health and wellness. Consumers seek diverse protein sources for different occasions. Claims such as "muscle support," "complete protein," and "recovery" are gaining traction. Clear communication around protein types (whey, plant-based, etc.) helps products stand out.

Ongoing focus on high protein content

This is also seen in meat and across many other categories



Veganes Hack - "Hoher Protein Gehalt"
Lidl - Germany – January 2026



Burger Patties - "Hoher Protein Gehalt"
REWE - Germany - December 2025



"High Protein"
Bio Tofu Smokey
COOP - Switzerland - December 2025



#2 Gut Health Hub

Trend # 2: Gut Health Hub

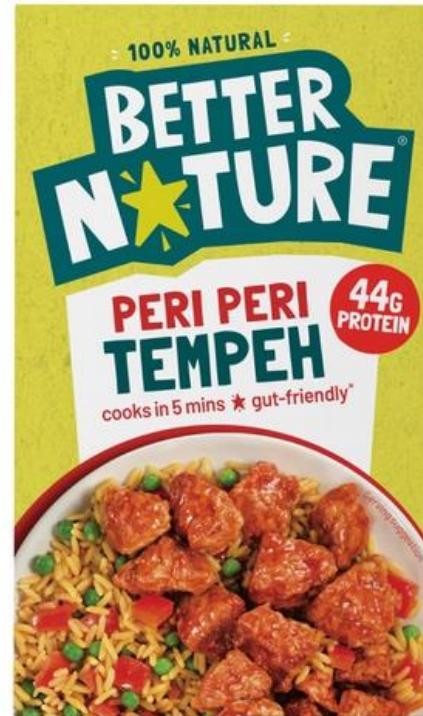
Digestive health is viewed as the foundation of overall well-being. Products with probiotics and prebiotics are growing, with more transparent communication about how they work and tangible benefits like less bloating, better energy, and improved immunity.

Growing focus on fiber and gut health

A clear USP versus meat: meat alternatives contain significantly more fiber



Soy-based burger
"Ricchi di Fibre" (High in fiber)
COOP - Italy - January 2026



"Gut-friendly" Piri Piri Tempeh
TESCO - United Kingdom
- January 2026



"Excellent Source of Fibre"
Mexican style Burgers
Australia - December 2025

#5 Authentic Plant-Based

Plant-based foods are evolving from imitation to authenticity. Consumers value products that stand on their own and use natural, minimally processed protein sources like legumes, grains, and vegetables.



Wide variety of vegetables and legumes used

Strong focus on pure, natural and minimally processed foods



"Pure Plant"
Spinach Balls
Fotex - Denmark
- January 2026



"All Plants" Sweet Potato
and Black Bean Burger
TESCO - United Kingdom -
December 2025



Crispy Mushroom
Mini Burgers
Albert Heijn - The Netherlands
- December 2025

Moving away from comparisons with meat

Tofu remains popular, with manufacturers introducing an increasing variety of flavor options



Quinoa Bites
REWE - Germany
- December 2025



Tofu "Mushroom & Truffle Flavoured"
Woolworths - South Africa -
December 2025



The Super Greens Veggie Burger
Real Canadian Superstore - Canada
- November 2025



#6 Made for Moments

Trend 6: Made for Moments

Food formats are increasingly tailored to specific occasions. Brands innovate with single-serve snacks, convenient meal formats, and packaging designed for on-the-go or at-home enjoyment.

Increased focus on consumption occasions

Such as Veganuary, as well as a wide range of specific BBQ and grill products



"Veganuary" çiğ köfte
DM Drogerie Markt - Duitsland
- September 2025



Plant-Based Grill Box
Billa - Oostenrijk
- December 2025



BBQ Tofu & Tempeh Kebabs
Woolworths - Zuid-Afrika
- November 2025

Christmas: an important moment for retailers and manufacturers

Many oven-based applications and mini products for gourmet dining



Plant-Based Turkey Roast
Waitrose - United Kingdom -
December 2025



Plant-based Christmas roulade
with sun-dried tomato
Albert Heijn - The Netherlands -
December 2025



Vegetarian Mini Christmas
Star for Gourmet
JUMBO - The Netherlands -
December 2025

Special days and seasonal items

Often positioned as a "Limited Edition" or "Limited Time Offer"



Halloween Spooky Bites
"Limited Edition"
Germany - October 2025



Green Pea Falafel
"Summer Edition"
TESCO - United Kingdom -
September 2025



Hey Summerday
Frikadelle "Limitierte edition"
Rossmann - Germany
- May 2025



#7 Worth Every Bite

Trend 7: Worth Every Bite

Affordability and value matter more than ever. Consumers want simple, honest products made with natural ingredients. "Value for money" now means trustworthy, nutritious, and accessible food.

Large pack formats are used to respond to this trend

Clear, uncomplicated concepts at a competitive price



XXL pack
Plain Tofu Block
Lidl - Germany
- November 2025



Large pack
"Veganes Hack"
EDEKA - Germany -
December 2025



Symplicity Burgers
United Kingdom
- December 2025

#8 Mind Balance

Trend 8: Mind Balance

Mental well-being takes center stage. Products that support relaxation, focus, and energy – featuring adaptogens or functional ingredients – appeal especially to younger generations.

Also reflected in the meat alternatives category

A good balance can serve as a positive communication hook in many ways



Tikka Veggie Patties
United States - January 2026



Better Balance Burger
Spain - November 2025



Mindful Foods - Pulled Seitan
Ekoplaza - The Netherlands
- October 2025



#9 Crafting Tradition

Trend 9: Crafting Tradition

In uncertain times, tradition provides comfort and authenticity. Consumers value products rooted in cultural heritage, local ingredients, and traditional preparation methods like fermentation.

Classic meat products, made plant-based

The consumer does not need to think about how to use the product



Streaky Bacon
Sainsbury's - United Kingdom -
June 2025



Vegan meat-style sausage
ALDI Süd - Germany -
December 2025



Vegetarian smoked sausage
The Netherlands - August 2025

#10 Justified Choices

Trend 10: Justified Choices

Sustainability must be tangible and transparent. Supporting local farms, regenerative agriculture, and small producers builds trust. Consumers prefer brands that clearly link their mission to real benefits for people and the planet.

Local and climate-friendly ingredients

With attention to a sustainable supply chain



"Planet Friendly"
Sliced Tomato and Chili
K Ruoka - Finland - November 2025



Plant-Based Salmon
"better for the oceans and the planet"
France - November 2025



Naturland Bio Tofu
"we support the commitment of organic
farmers towards greater biodiversity"
ALDI Nord - Germany - October 2025



Turning trends
into action

What did we observe?

- Recent launches within the meat alternatives category show how market trends are translated into concrete propositions.
- From innovative concepts to products that build on tradition and nature conservation.



What does this mean for you as a professional?

- **Make a clear choice**

Go for innovation or familiarity. Focus creates strength.

- **Quality at the right price**

Taste and texture, supported by a strong price-quality ratio.

- **Your sustainability story must be right**

Credible, relevant and easy to understand

- **From trend to product**

Quickly translating insights into launches creates an advantage.





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Questions? Please feel free to contact me

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