



Lever VC Insights

2022 Sales Data and New Category Forecasts for the Plant-Based Meat and Dairy Sector

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Summary

2022 sales data for the plant-based meat and dairy sector in the United States and Europe **shows strong 6-7% growth in retail sales in both regions, with growth in nearly every subcategory in nearly every country and over \$800 million in additional topline sales.**

Globally, across retail and food service the plant-based meat category grew 8% in 2022, adding \$450 million in additional topline sales, while sales volumes increased 5%. In the U.S. total plant-based meat sales grew 2%.¹

Meanwhile in Q1 2023 investment banks and consultancies including UBS, JP Morgan, Citi, Nomura Greentech, Ernst & Young and Boston Consulting Group released updated projections for the category, forecasting it will grow at a 10-20% CAGR and reach 5-10% of global category share over the next decade.

2022 Retail Sales Data

In the United States, **plant-based meat and dairy retail sales grew 7% in 2022, adding over half a billion dollars in additional topline sales.** Standout categories included plant-based creamers (up 12%), plant-based butter (up 15%), plant-based ready to drink beverages (up 17%) and plant-based eggs (up 14%).² Retail plant-based meat sales were flat, and retail volumes were down slightly, but that reflects a trend across the broader meat category—conventional animal meat retail volumes dropped nearly 4% in 2022, on top of a 6% drop in volume in 2021. **Plant-based meat outperformed similarly-priced conventional animal meat at US retail in 2022.**^{3,4}

In Europe, **plant-based meat and dairy retail sales grew 6% in 2022, adding around \$300 million in additional topline sales.** Sales of plant-based meat increased in Europe, as did sales in every plant-based dairy category. **Total plant-based category sales increased in every European country measured.** Standout subsectors included plant-based meals (up 20%), plant-based seafood (up 60%), plant-based cheese (up 13%), plant-based spreads (up 23%) and plant-based desserts (up 17%).⁵

¹ <https://gfi.org/blog/2023-outlook-the-state-of-the-plant-based-meat-category/> (Data sourced from Euromonitor, Nielsen, SPINS)

² <https://gfi.org/marketresearch> (Data sourced from SPINS)

³ Roerink, Anne-Marke. "Another Record Year for the Meat Department." IRI Worldwide and 210 Analytics, January 2023.

⁴ Roerink, Anne-Marke. "Meat Alternatives Had a Tough 2022 Despite Level Prices." IRI Worldwide and 210 Analytics, January 2023.

⁵ <https://gfieurope.org/market-insights-on-european-plant-based-sales-2020-2022> (Data sourced from Nielsen)

New Category Forecasts

JP Morgan — In a new report from February 2023, [The Future of Food is Coming Fast](#), JP Morgan projects the meat alternative category will grow at a 16% CAGR through 2030, reaching \$50 billion in market size:

“The alternative meats industry is much younger, and it accounts for less than 1% of global meat demand. The market could be worth \$50 billion by 2030, indicating a 16% CAGR.”

UBS — In a new report from January 2023, [Future of Farming: Will We Grow Enough Food?](#), UBS projects that the alternative protein category will grow at a 16% CAGR over the coming decade and beyond.

Citi — In a new report from January 2023, [Meat Meets Tech: The Future Of Meat Is Likely To Be Driven By New Technology](#), Citi projects the meat alternative category will continue to grow and the price of cultivated meat will drop below that of conventional meat:

“We think non-animal meats are likely to return to growth, thanks to three new technologies: precision fermentation, mycelium, and cultivated meat... It is still likely that in the next few years, cultivated meat will first match the price of the traditional variety, and then become significantly cheaper...Solar power is now growing at about 25% p.a. Alternative proteins might end up growing faster, simply because their price is falling more rapidly.”

Ernst & Young — In a new report from March 2023, [How Alternative Proteins are Reshaping Meat Industries](#), Ernst & Young projects meat alternatives will double by 2025 and reach 5-10% global market share by the 2030s:

“The current alternative is on the verge of becoming an integral part of the new normal...We estimate the global plant-based meat market will grow from an estimated US\$4.9b (less than 1% of the overall meat market) in 2021, to roughly double by 2025. By the 2030s, the percentage of plant-based meat in the overall global meat market should grow toward or beyond 5%-10%.”

Boston Consulting Group — In a new report from February 2023, [Taking Alternative Protein Mainstream](#), BCG projects the alternative protein category will grow from its current 2% global market share to 8% by 2030:

“In our 2021 Food for Thought report, we wrote that 8% of all meat, seafood, eggs, and dairy eaten around the globe is likely to be alternative by 2030. We stand by that prediction... The overall trajectory for alternative proteins in the US, as indicated by 2022 retail performance, shows significant and continued growth...Nearly half of all restaurants in the US offer plant-based options today, and four times as many operators plan to add plant-based meat to their menu as plan to drop it from the menu in 2023.”

Nomura Greentech — In a new report from February 2023, [AgTech & Sustainable Food Market Update](#), investment bank Nomura Greentech notes the alt protein and food tech market is at peak opportunity for investment:

“We are at ‘Peak Opportunity’ today... Many companies have already entered the ‘Slope of Enlightenment’. They have reached critical value inflection points, are focused on long-term sustainable growth, and are building momentum to take advantage of opportunities when the markets turn.”