

Consumer interest in plant-based alternatives

 naturalproductsinsider.com/foods/consumer-interest-plant-based-alternatives

Laurie Demeritt

December 4,
2019

With names like Impossible Foods, Beyond Meat and Memphis Meat, a new breed of food companies is focused on creating meat alternatives to meet consumers' increasing interest in protein. Carl's Jr.'s partnership with Beyond Meat to produce a meatless version of its classic Famous Star burger and White Castle's offering of Impossible Sliders is a harbinger of innovation in fast food burgers. Impossible Slider burgers (developed by Impossible Foods) are described as plant-based patties "that look, taste and 'bleed' just like real meat."

Consumer interest in plant-based foods has been gaining momentum for several years. The rise in consumer demand for meat analogues is being driven by three dynamic trends in food culture: health and wellness, sustainability and culinary engagement.

Health and wellness. Consumers are replacing refined carbohydrates with a wide range of proteins and fat-rich foods. They are also looking for a greater diversity of nutrient sources in their diets while expressing

concerns relating to the perceived health impacts of industrially processed red meat, notably chemicals (e.g., antibiotics and hormones).

Sustainability. Sustainability is playing a role in demand for meat substitutes; namely, in desires to promote animal welfare coupled with a growing awareness of the ecological impacts of meat eating. Underscoring such thinking, [The Hartman Group's Sustainability 2017 report](#) found 71% of consumers say that when making purchase decisions, "It is important that companies avoid inhumane treatment of animals."

Culinary engagement. As consumers broaden their culinary engagement through new food and beverage experiences, meat substitutes are proving fertile territory for experimentation and novelty in their diets. Culinary engagement is also creating greater exposure to and interest in vegetable-focused cuisines and traditions.

*To read this article in full, and for more on the plant-based revolution, check out [**INSIDER's** digital magazine](#).*

As CEO of [The Hartman Group](#), Laurie Demeritt drives the vision, strategy, operations and results-oriented culture for the company's associates as The Hartman Group furthers its offerings of tactical thinking, consumer and market intelligence, cultural competency and innovative intellectual capital to a global marketplace.