

4 January 2024

PRESS RELEASE

Vegetarians can't get no satisfaction, research shows

The number of vegetarians satisfied with the choice of food products available to them has suffered a dramatic decline, according to the findings of new research commissioned by Ingredient Communications.

The online poll of 1,000 consumers in the USA and UK¹ found that the net satisfaction rate² among vegetarians was +8%. This was a significant fall on 2018, when the same survey recorded net satisfaction among vegetarians at +47%.

In the US, net satisfaction among vegetarians has slumped from +38% in 2018 to -10% now, a negative swing of 48%.

In the UK, meanwhile, net satisfaction among vegetarians has suffered a negative swing of 35%, from +55% in 2018 to +20% in the latest survey.

In stark contrast, net satisfaction among vegans has risen from +2% in 2018 to +17% today. Net satisfaction among US vegans now stands at -3%, versus -9% in 2018. Among UK vegans, net satisfaction is +25%, compared with +28% five years earlier.

Plant-based is more appealing to vegans

The survey was conducted in September 2023 by market research experts at SurveyGoo, who also asked respondents about their perceptions of specific plant-based products. The findings offer some possible clues as to why dissatisfaction levels among vegetarians are trending higher.

When asked to rate how appealing they found plant-based meat products, 95% of vegan respondents said they looked tasty, compared with 56% of vegetarians. Meanwhile, 91% of vegans said they found alt-dairy products appealing, compared with 60% of vegetarians.

Richard Clarke, Managing Director of Ingredient Communications, commented: "High levels of dissatisfaction and declining net satisfaction rates among vegetarians indicate a concerning trend that needs further scrutiny. Of particular interest is that fewer vegetarians find plant-based meat and dairy products appealing. This might help to explain why net satisfaction levels are so much lower among these consumers."

¹ SurveyGoo, September 2023

² Net satisfaction = % dissatisfied subtracted from % satisfied

He added: “There are many benefits to a vegan lifestyle, and there are lots of great products out there to cater for the needs of vegans. But the question has to be asked: in the rush to go 100% plant-based, have brands and retailers neglected the needs of vegetarians, who are usually happy to eat dairy and egg ingredients? If so, are more hybrid products the answer?”

He concluded: “In any case, the findings of our survey reinforce the golden rule of food manufacturing: that it’s essential to use the very best ingredients to deliver an excellent eating experience. The days have long gone when vegans and veggies were simply grateful to have something – anything – they could eat. They want and expect the best.”

ENDS

For more information, please contact:

Richard Clarke, Ingredient Communications

richard@ingredientcommunications.com | +44 7766 256176

About Ingredient Communications

Ingredient Communications specialises in global PR & communications for suppliers of ingredients to the food, beverage, dietary supplement and personal care sectors. To find out more, visit www.ingredientcommunications.com.

About SurveyGoo

SurveyGoo are market research consultants, specialising in the creation and delivery of PR surveys and polls. They design, programme and run online surveys using proprietary tools, and operate panels in the UK and Asia-Pacific. They work with small and large enterprises, with a strong track record helping Marketing and PR agencies. Find out more at www.surveego.com.