

Plant-Based Foods and the ProTerra Standard



The ProTerra Foundation

The ProTerra Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation which works with businesses across the food and feed supply chains towards a more sustainable agriculture. Working together to create a more equitable, ethical and sustainable future.

Our Standards



The ProTerra Foundation is the owner of the ProTerra Certification Standard (which has several Interpretations) and aims to ensure best practice in sustainable and socially responsible farming.



Foster good agricultural practices;



Secure the supply of sustainably produced, fully traceable, non-GMO ingredients for feed and food;



Protect the environment, and



Promote that workers and communities are treated with dignity and respect.

Doing our part for a more sustainable world.



Plant-based foods good for people and planet

The recent trend in increased consumption of plant-based foods, whether for health or sustainability-driven reasons, looks set to stay. Plant-based protein alternatives, such as legumes and non-dairy milk, used to be seen as specialist products, mostly targeted towards consumers following specific diets. But now they are more mainstream, and the market has grown and diversified to meet demand. The food sector should ensure that its products live up to the hype and guarantee sustainability and ethical production.

What's driving the plant-based foods trend?

Plant-based diets are on the rise - including vegetarian, vegan and so-called “flexitarian” diets (diets which are based around foods derived from plants, such as fruit, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts and seeds, while avoiding or minimising - but not necessarily cutting out all together - animal products such as meat, dairy and eggs). Many meat eaters are also boosting their consumption of plant-based foods, while continuing to consume animal products.



Health



Several studies have shown that a plant-based diet has numerous health benefits, including:

1. Reduced risk of chronic diseases: such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, certain types of cancer, and obesity.
2. Improved heart health
3. Reduced cholesterol levels
4. Weight loss
5. Improved gut health
6. Reduced inflammation
7. Improved cognitive function

Animal welfare



Ethical concerns over the treatment of animals, especially intensive farming practices, are the motivation for many people to turn to vegetarian/vegan diets.

Climate change



Plant-based alternatives often have a much lower carbon footprint and require fewer resources to produce.

Environmental concerns



Traditional, intensive agricultural systems can take a heavy toll on soil health and are resource-intensive. Plant-based alternatives - if those plants are grown in a sustainable way which does not lead to deforestation or soil degradation - can be a way to lessen agriculture's impact on the planet.

Transparency and traceability

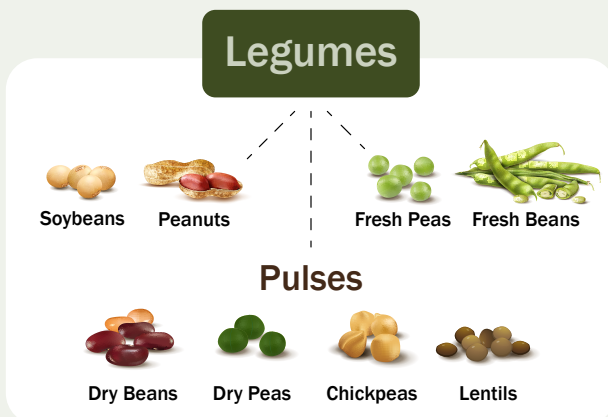


Increasingly consumers want to understand more about the provenance of their food. They like to know where it was grown and what that means for the environment.

Some key plant-based foods

Legumes

Pulses (such as lentils and chickpeas), beans (like fresh peas and fresh beans) and soybeans and peanuts.



Milk alternatives

Milk alternatives, such as soya milk, oat and almond milk have seen a boom in recent years, with many brands becoming fridge staples.



Meat substitutes

It is increasingly easy to find meat alternatives, such as vegan burgers, sausages, and other products both in restaurants and on supermarket shelves. These may be made from tofu, beans, chickpeas, peas or other legumes. There has also been a rise in "lab-grown" plant-based alternatives to meat which replicate the texture and taste of meat.

Does plant-based = green?

Plant-based food equals sustainability is not such a simple equation! Not all agriculture and growing, for example, of legumes is done in a way which respects people and planet.

A simple switch to eating more plant-based food is not necessarily always a sustainable choice.

What are the risks to sustainable plant-based foods?

- Deforestation and land conversion
- Use of pesticides and other chemicals
- Poor soil management
- Degradation of the local environment and biodiversity
- Presence of GMOs in food
- Illegal, unclear origin

A sustainability seal of approval

By ensuring traceability, the ProTerra Standard can ensure that the growing of plant-based foods is fully sustainable, environmentally friendly and ethical.

The ProTerra standard can certify at the agricultural or industrial level, the growing of crops or seeds by certifying the farm that it is grown on, or the production of the food, for example, a crushing plant or a food product manufacturer. This means that the ProTerra Standard can cover raw materials, like beans, food ingredients or the final product, such as soy milk or plant-based meat.

The ProTerra seal is a stamp of quality showing consumers and stakeholders that products are produced in a sustainable and traceable way.



The ProTerra Standard and Plant-Based Foods

Those in the food value chain – from food producers to retailers – have to show consumers that their sustainability claims are solid. Boosting the production of plant-based foods, without the necessary sustainability credentials, could lead to a loss of consumer trust.

Using sustainability schemes, like the ProTerra Standard, is the seal of approval customers want to see. It allows transparency and traceability, giving confidence in knowing that the food has been sustainably and ethically produced – respecting the environment, as well as workers and communities.



ProTerra - a Global Standard & Global Network



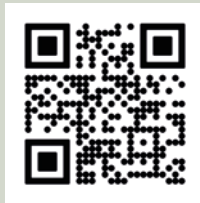
Organisations that share ProTerra Foundation's vision and mission are welcome to become part of the ProTerra Network™ to work together in making sustainable food supply chains a reality.

To go a step further and be ProTerra Standard-certified, retailers, customers and shoppers alike will have the reassurance of knowing that – from the field to the supermarket shelf - their food has been sustainably and ethically grown, protecting our fragile environment. It is also guaranteed to be Non-GMO and to not have contributed to deforestation or land conversion.



Have questions or want to learn more?

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