

Slideshow: Meat and dairy alternatives take center stage at Anuga  
New products introduced at the event showed an improved level of quality and sophistication.  
FoodBusinessNews.net, 10/20/2015  
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COLOGNE, GERMANY — Less than a week ago, Anuga, the world's largest food exhibition, broke records in both exhibitor and attendance numbers. Around 160,000 visitors from 192 countries attended the biennial exposition held in Cologne. Dominant themes at the show included convenience and clean label, as well as "free-from" concepts, most notably gluten-free and lactose-free. Vegan and vegetarian options were plentiful in every food category, and many innovations targeted the growing out-of-home and on-the-go consumer.



[Slideshow: Anuga vegan and vegetarian foods](#)

Most marketers of vegan and vegetarian products emphasized that their target consumer is not necessarily vegan or vegetarian, rather it's the consumer who for personal reasons chooses to avoid animal-derived products on a regular basis, also commonly referred to as a flexitarian.

Following a flexitarian diet simply means eating more plant-based meals and less meat. This is often done for nutritional reasons, such as trying to reduce consumption of saturated fat and cholesterol. Other times it is to assist with improving

animal welfare and reducing carbon footprint.

According to the 2015 Food Tribes Report published by *Nutrition Business Journal*, more than one-third of U.S. consumers prefer and use either dairy or meat alternatives, which is substantially more than those who claim to be vegan. These and other vegan products also appeal to vegetarians who are about 7% of the U.S. population, as well as flexitarians.

Data provided by New Hope Natural Media's NEXT Data & Insight division indicates that approximately one-fourth of consumers still associate vegan products with animal welfare, but that is no longer the leading association. Rather, health and wellness is driving consumers to choose vegan foods, with more than one-third of consumers citing this connection.

Veggie burgers and non-dairy milks have escaped the realm of substitutes primarily for people with dietary concerns and followers of vegetarian diets, said Jenny Zegler, global food and drink analyst, Mintel, Chicago,

"Instead, the growing ranks of novel protein sources and potential replacements appeal to the everyday consumer, foreshadowing a profoundly changed marketplace in which what was formerly 'alternative' could take over the mainstream," she wrote in the market research firm's Global Food and Drink Trends 2016 released this past week.

It is no wonder that there were hundreds of products at Anuga featuring a vegan or vegetarian claim. Of course, making such a claim on peanut butter-filled crackers is not extraordinary, but when it's on products designed to simulate dairy and meat, it's noteworthy.

A number of Taste 15 winners fit this description. Taste 15 is an accolade bestowed upon the best new products debuting at Anuga. This year, more than 830 companies applied to have their over 2,000 ideas included in the competition. In total, the jury selected 61 products and concepts that met the judge's criteria in terms of ideation, innovation and creative implementation.

Righi Srl, an Italian food company, was a Taste 15 winner for its line of vegan gelato. The frozen dessert comes in two-packs of 50-gram single-serve containers. Varieties include carrot and lemon sauce, pumpkin and balsamic vinegar sauce, and tomato and strawberry sauce.

Heinz Funken, a German manufacturer of such fresh convenience foods as single-serve salads, fruit-yogurt parfaits, pre-made sandwiches and salad bar offerings, introduced its first vegan dessert. Creamy like pudding, the winner is a blend of pumpkin and quinoa.

Lupin, a flowering plant in the legume plant, produces seeds with a protein content similar to soybeans but with less fat. Using a patented process, Prolupin of Germany ferments lupin with yogurt cultures to produce an alternative to yogurt that comes in three flavors: mango, natural and raspberry.

In the meals category, two ethnic recipes received Taste 2015 recognition. Germany's Meica Ammerlandische was a winner with Curry King Real Veggie, which combines barbecued vegetarian bratwurst with original Meica-brand curry sauce. The package includes a wooden fork for on-the-go convenience.

Vegetarian frozen meal specialist Vepura GmbH of Germany was recognized for its Sabz Miloni Hariyali. The heat-and-eat meal combines vegetables with a spicy spinach and cashew sauce, with the spinach functioning as the base for the Indian green (hariyali) curry.

To learn about additional vegan and vegetarian products that debuted at Anuga, view the accompanying slide show.

In addition, mark your calendar and plan early for the next Anuga, which will take place Oct. 7-11, 2017, in Cologne, Germany. For more information, [click here](#).