

The nutrition profile of plant-based dairy alternatives (PBDA) in Europe and their role in sustainable healthy diets

In 2023, Medici et al. conducted a comprehensive review of the nutrition profiles of the European PBDA market. Subsequently, a second study utilising the key findings from this publication, explored the role of PBDA in promoting sustainable and healthy diets.

Why the research was undertaken

There is a pressing need to transition towards plant-based diets as a means to address the existing environmental challenges and promote better human health. The increased adoption of PBDA in Europe, thanks to their reduced environmental impact, integration into dietary recommendations, and wider accessibility, has become a notable trend. With the surge in their popularity, there is a heightened emphasis on ensuring their nutritional adequacy, particularly when substituting for traditional dairy products.

This research aimed

to investigate the nutritional profile of PBDA to support decision-making regarding their inclusion in sustainable food-based dietary guidelines (FBDG). As FBDG discourage the use of flavoured dairy and PBDA, the study's investigation focused on **plain, unflavoured plant-based drinks (PBD)** and **plant-based alternatives to yogurt (PBAY)** and how they compared to their dairy counterparts.



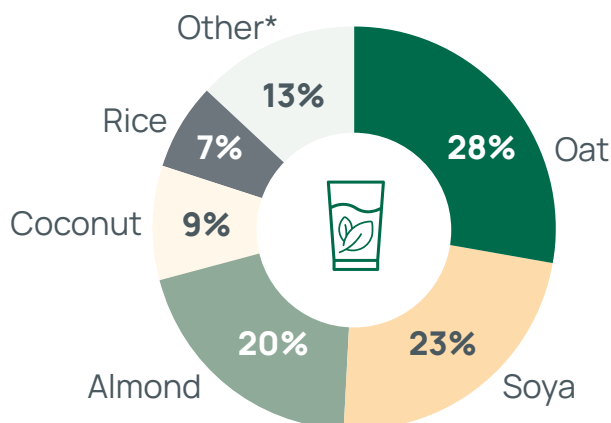
27 + 16
brands private
(retailer)



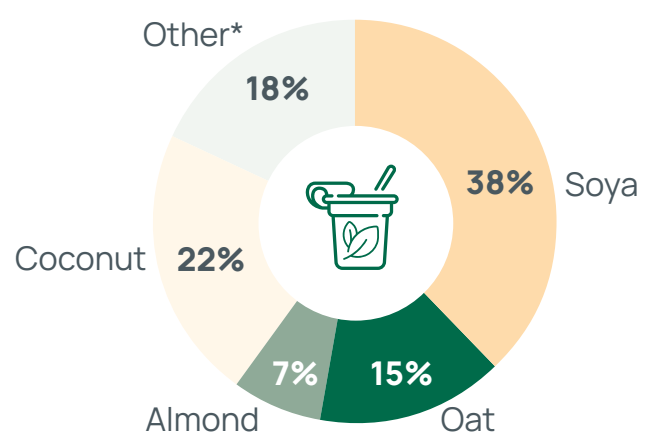
309
plain unflavoured
PBDA



249 PBD



60 PBAY (incl. 8 Greek-style)



* other single ingredients or a combination

European organic food regulations prohibit the fortification of PBDA with micronutrients

35%
organic

65%
non-organic

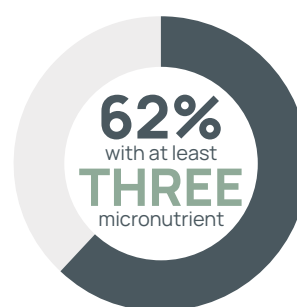
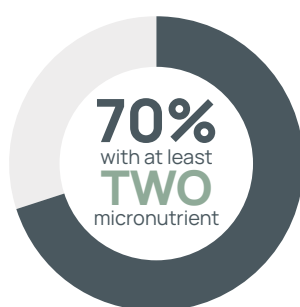
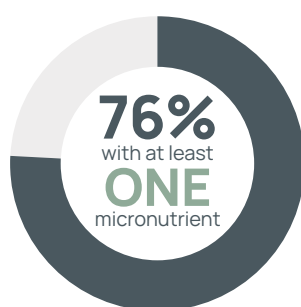
70%
unsweetened

30%
sweetened



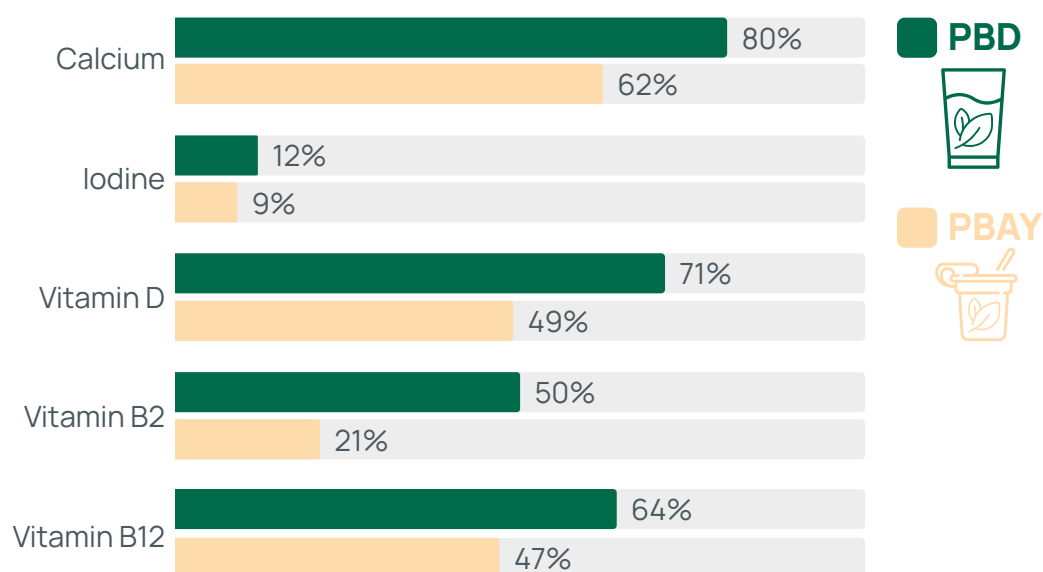
Micronutrients in non-organic varieties*

Percentage PBDA fortified



Micronutrients in non-organic PBDA

(number of products fortified in %)



* European organic food regulations do not permit fortification of organic plant-based dairy alternatives and therefore they have been excluded from our micronutrient analysis