

October 22, 2025

“When shoppers choose pricier lactose free dairy milk over lower cost plant-based options in an inflationary market where most shoppers are concerned about rising food costs, its not just about inflation—it’s about trust. Ingredient overload and weak protein profiles are driving consumers away. If plant-based milk manufacturers want compete in this market, they need to clean up their labels and deliver real nutritional value.”



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The takeaway...

- Plant-based milk has systemic issues beyond just price that are driving loss
- Shopper retention strategies are failing to preserve the most important plant-based milk buyers
- Pricy lactose free dairy milk is growing because shoppers will pay for trusted nutrition

Your next move...

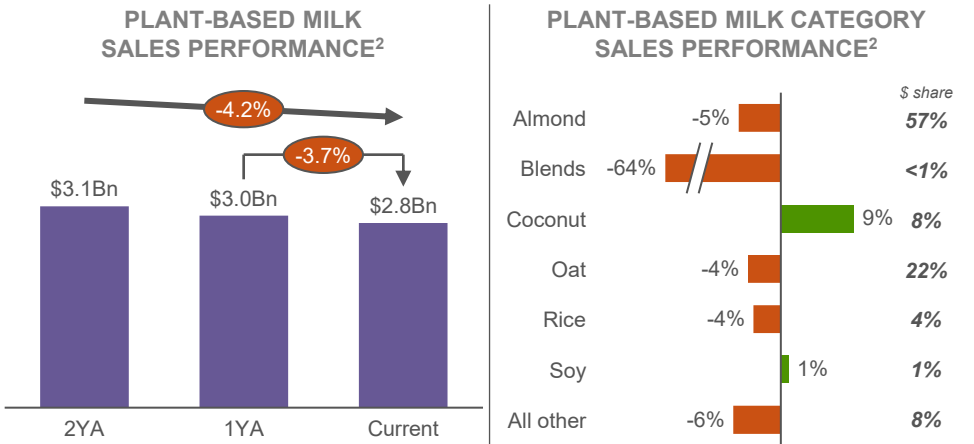
- Invest in holistic innovation that addresses underlying consumer dissatisfaction in taste, texture, nutrition, and ingredients to restore growth
- Focus on high-value buyers with bold marketing campaigns, targeted incentives, and experiential activations
- Clean up the ingredient panel and bolster the nutritional profile to compete with dairy milk

Price isn’t plant-based milk’s only problem

Implications for the dairy industry

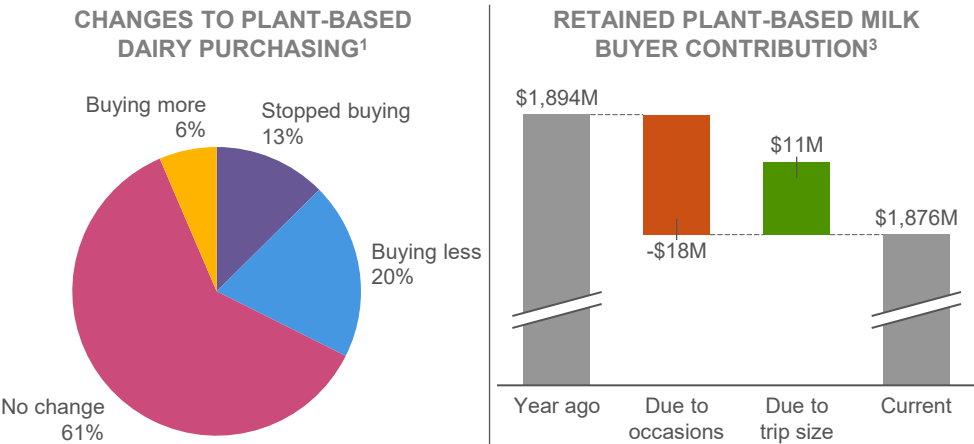
The plant-based plateau will shape tomorrow’s dairy aisle

The plant-based milk boom is fizzling—almond milk is dragging the category down, and even oat milk’s once-hot appeal is cooling. For dairy milk manufacturers, this is the moment to strike and reclaim lost ground; while plant-based players need to urgently diagnose the decline and reengineer relevance before the category becomes a cautionary tale.



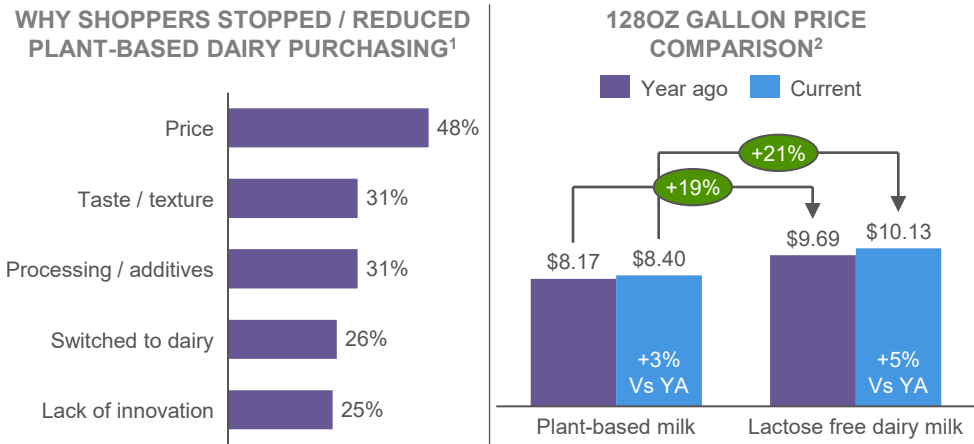
Buyers are walking away from plant-based dairy

Nearly a third of plant-based dairy buyers are pulling back—and even the category’s most loyal consumers are cutting occasions. Manufacturers must urgently double down on shopper retention and activation, using bold, value-packed promotions that reignite trips, re-engage lapsed buyers, and restore momentum to a once booming category.



Lactose free dairy milk is winning, but not on price

Consumers say price is the problem—but the data says otherwise. Despite higher prices and steeper increases, lactose-free dairy is surging (+15.6%) while plant-based milk is slipping (-3.7%). If manufacturers want to win back shoppers, it’s time to look beyond price and fix the value equation—starting with taste, nutrition, and trust.



Industry Analysis Sources: ¹NIQ, BASES Quick Question Artificial Ingredient Survey, October 2025, n=1,025; ²NIQ, Retail Measurement Services, Total US Full View, 52 Weeks Ending 10/11/2025; ³NIQ, Omnishopper Panel On Demand, Total Outlets, 52 Weeks Ending 9/6/2025
Note: Dairy Milk = Cow Milk + Lactose Free/Reduced Milk; Plant-Based Milk = Almond Milk + Blends + Coconut Milk + Oat Milk + Rice Milk + Soy Milk + Remaining Milk Alternatives
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