

## NEW PRODUCT TRENDS: HITTING THE SHELVES

### MOO-VE OVER!

Imbibe explores fast growth market for dairy alternative milks.

**DAIRY ALTERNATIVE MILKS** are the most popular plant-based products in beverage and they are expected to bring in \$2.7 billion by 2022 with a CAGR of 4.4%. Driving growth is the prevalence of lactose intolerance, increased adoption of veganism, and perception that plant-based products are healthier and more sustainable than their animal-based counterparts.

Imbibe, Niles, Ill., is a beverage development company focused on formulating and commercializing cutting-edge products across all beverage categories. Want-

ing to better understand the dynamics in dairy alternative milks, Imbibe created a “trendspotting” overview and identified three key beverage category trends.

#### PERSONALIZED PLANTS

Consumers have lots of choices when it comes to plant-based milks so they can pick and choose products that address their flavor preferences, sustainability concerns, allergen and nutritional needs, and usage occasion.

Milkadamia, Burr Ridge, Ill., says it uses macadamia nuts that are unadulterated so the health and taste of the product remain intact. Some of the macadamias used in the product are from the brand’s farm in Australia and are grown using regenerative methods that protect the environment. However, due to popularity of their products the brand has had to



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**MILKING IT! MILKADAMIA FINDS GROWING DEMAND FOR ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING ITS MACADAMIA MILK SUBSTITUTE.**

find additional sources of macadamias to keep up with demand.

Spinning Wheel Brands, Chicago, claims that its Hope & Sesame sesame

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milk is more sustainable than other plant-based options and is a delicious and nutritious replacement for milk in coffee, cereal and smoothies.

Canada's YoFiit, Vaughn, Ont., says its YoFiit Miyk10 Chickpea Milk offers abundant nutrition, is keto-friendly, is more clean label than other plant-based milks, and great for baking.

### THE OAT CRAZE

Oat milk is one of the most buzzed about plant-based milk products and it could eventually challenge almond milk as a market leader. According to Nielsen, oat milk sales grew by 50% from 2017 to 2018 while almond milk sales grew by only 11%.

Oatly, Malmo, Sweden, started the oat milk craze when it was introduced to U.S. coffee shops in 2016. It became so popular that there was an oat milk shortage, so the brand (now with offices in New York

City) opened a U.S. factory in April 2019 to boost production capacity.

This January saw Nestlé USA, Arlington, Va., jump on the plant-based bandwagon and expand its Coffee mate line with creamers and half and half under a new sub brand: "natural bliss." Included among the new items is an natural bliss Oat Milk creamer.

New York City's RISE Brewing Company was one of the first brands to launch a RTD latte with oat milk. Since the oat milk craze started in coffee shops, it was only a matter of time before it was incorporated into RTD products. This year, RISE used Natural Products Expo West to introduce a stand-alone Oat Milk beverage.

Oat milk is so popular that there already are dairy alternative products using it. For example, Danone North America created a So Delicious [brand] line of oat

milk frozen desserts. Halsia Foods, New York City, also offers drinkable Oatgurt.

### IN YOUR CUP OF JOE

Of course, coffee products represent of the most popular applications for plant-based milks. In fact, many plant-based milk brands have even launched barista blends designed to create a thick, frothy foams and that stay stable when added to highly acidic coffee.

Many dairy alternative brands launched plant-based creamer line extensions using ingredients like almond, coconut, macadamia, hemp, and oat. In this regard, Green Grass Foods, Bellevue, Wash., has developed Nut Pods as one of a handful of brands that exclusively sells plant-based creamers.

Bhakti Inc., Boulder Colo., launched RTD Bhakti Chai tea lattes with cashew milk last year and has sold out of several SKUs online. **pf**

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