

28 March 2025

European plant-based foods industry's reactive statement – ANSES' Opinion on isoflavones and soy-based foods

We believe the recent ANSES' recommendations to exclude soy-based products from mass canteens do not fully align with the broader scientific consensus. Various studies have consistently highlighted the nutritional benefits of soy-based foods as part of a varied and balanced diet. Plant-Based Foods Europe, EAPF, EUVEPRO and their members are committed to working collaboratively with the authorities to ensure that the dietary recommendations and agricultural practices ensure a fair and responsible use and consumption of all plant-based foods, included soy-based options.

Plant based foods, and more specifically soy foods, have been safely consumed around the world for centuries, with soy being a staple in Asian diets for generations. In Europe, soy-based foods have been enjoyed for over 40 years. Due to its beneficial nutritional profile, soy is a valuable addition to a varied and balanced diet, offering a good source of protein and healthy fats while remaining low in unhealthy fats, which supports normal blood cholesterol levels and helps reduce the risk of cardiovascular diseases¹. For women, there is evidence suggesting a positive impact of isoflavones on menopause-related hot flashes, and preliminary data showing lower recurrence in breast cancer². Some soy-based foods, like soy-based drinks or spreads, are also essential for meeting the nutritional needs of those who avoid dairy for medical, ethical, environmental, religious, or personal reasons.

Because of their significant nutritional and health benefits, soy-based foods are included in the dietary guidelines of various European countries, such as the Netherlands³, Belgium⁴ and the UK⁵. The EAT-Lancet Commission's reference diet⁶ also recommends consuming 0 to 50g soybeans per day to promote both human health and environmental sustainability.

Promoting healthy and sustainable diets means encouraging a diverse range of plant-based foods, including those made from soy, oats, peas and seeds. We believe that by expanding, rather than restricting, access to such nutrient-rich options, we can support citizens make well-informed dietary

¹ D. Dan Ramdath et al, 2017, Beyond the Cholesterol-Lowering Effect of Soy Protein: A Review of the Effects of Dietary Soy and Its Constituents on Risk Factors for Cardiovascular Disease ([link](#))

² M. Messina et al, 2021, Neither soyfoods nor isoflavones warrant classification as endocrine disruptors: a technical review of the observational and clinical data ([link](#))

³ Netherlands Nutrition Centre, 2016, Food-based dietary guidelines for the Netherlands ([link](#))

⁴ Belgian Superior Health Council, 2019, Dietary guidelines for the Belgian adult population ([link](#))

⁵ National Health Service (NHS), 2016, The Eatwell Guide ([link](#))

⁶ W. Willet et al, 2019, Food in the Anthropocene: the EAT–Lancet Commission on healthy diets from sustainable food systems ([link](#))



choices that support both their health and environmental sustainability. We remain unwavering in our commitment to maintaining the highest standards of health and safety for all our products, including soy-based options. Our commitment to consumer trust and product quality ensures that our members consistently provide safe, nutritious and reliable food options, supporting the health and wellbeing of our citizens.

About Plant-Based Foods Europe

Plant-Based Foods Europe represents the interests of plant-based food manufacturers in Europe. The association's members include European companies operating internationally, ranging from large corporations to medium-sized and small, family-owned businesses. Our members produce high-quality plant-based alternatives to animal food products. Since its establishment in 2003, Plant Based Foods Europe has been raising awareness about the role of plant-based diets in moving towards more sustainable and healthier food consumption patterns.

About EAPF

The European Alliance for Plant-Based Foods (EAPF) is a coalition of businesses, civil society organisations, and other stakeholders committed to accelerating the transition towards more plant-based sustainable food systems in Europe. Our mission is to ensure a more sustainable food system that supports climate goals, food security, and public health, while fostering innovation and economic opportunities for the plant-based food industry.

About EUVEPRO

EUVEPRO is the European Vegetable Protein Association, representing manufacturers of vegetable proteins for human consumption (food) in Europe. Founded in 1977, it is today recognised as the voice of the vegetable protein production and commercialisation industry and is valued as a reliable partner by both the EU institutions and stakeholders of related industries.