

SCOTTISH GROCER FEATURE SYNOPSIS

January 2026

Free-From & Plant-Based

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Deadline for editorial submission Monday 24th November 2025

- *We're keen to have opinions, thoughts and predictions on the following topical issues as well as general market information such as market share, market trends and details of brand activity.*
- *It's always very useful to receive images – 300 dpi if possible. Good images include product shots, pictures of people quoted in the copy, and pictures of advertising and marketing activity.*
- *And please feel free to provide anything else you think is relevant.*

With a recent survey by the Smart Protein Project revealing that flexitarians account for 30% of Europe's population, rising to 40% when vegetarians and pescatarians are included, plant-based food is becoming more sought after. More than a third of consumers are not primarily meat-eaters, and 57% wish to reduce meat in their diets over time, so offering an alternative can keep a customer in your store.

According to Worldpanel, the annual UK market for free-from food is now worth £4.2bn. Dairy-free and gluten-free are the most sought out foods, but nut-free and egg-free are also becoming popular.

In this feature, we will look at how c-store retailers can capitalise on the opportunity that free-from and plant-based options can offer. We would welcome comments on the following:

- How would you assess the performance of free-from and plant-based options in the convenience channel? Where are the areas for growth here? What are the key trends retailers should be aware of?
- Who are the kind of consumers purchasing free-from and plant-based options? What are the category demographics and how has this changed recently? How valuable are these customers to the sector as a whole?
- Is it better to go with premium, well-known brands or if a brand is smaller but still labelled as plant-based or free-from is it worth stocking? What ranging advice do you have for retailers with limited space in store?
- How can retailers reassure shoppers their free-from and plant-based ranges are affordable? How can c-stores help remove the stigma that own-brand supermarket options are considerably more expensive than their counterparts?
- Do you have any NPD or campaigns you want to shout about?