

# THE FLAVOR IS KEE

UNLOCKING MENU POTENTIAL



## VEGGIE-CURIOUS: THE FUTURE LOOKS DELICIOUS FOR PLANT-BASED EATING

As Americans reduce their meat and dairy consumption, adopting an “everything in moderation” mantra, interest in plant-based products is moving far beyond the ubiquitous veggie burger. Alternative chicken, pork and seafood offer increasingly sophisticated options, appealing to adventurous and wellness-focused diners alike.

KEE INSIGHT

# 60%

of global households now eat meat-free meals at least once a week, many enticed by the variety it brings to their diet!

### FASTEST-GROWING PLANT-BASED PROTEINS, 4-YEAR GROWTH<sup>2</sup>



Crumble  
**+274.8%**



Wing  
**+142.2%**



Meatball  
**+78.8%**



Patty  
**+47.0%**



Burger  
**+19.9%**

**FLEX-I-TAR-I-AN (noun)** – One whose primarily plant-based diet occasionally includes meat or seafood. This up-and-coming segment of consumers represents the largest growth opportunity.



### THE KEY TO TAPPING INTO THIS AMAZING POTENTIAL? FLAVOR, UMAMI AND SPICE.

You'll need to offer plant-based dishes that are as delicious and tempting as possible, and we can help. This newsletter will highlight some key insights and suggest several excellent ways to take advantage of one of the biggest trends we've seen yet.





**CHEF JET TILA**  
Celebrity Chef, Author, and  
Restauranteur

## CHEF TALK

**Q:** How do you see the Plant-Based trend evolving?

**Chef Jet:** Plant-based has evolved beyond a trend into a lifestyle. Eating less meat and more vegetables will increase on menus across all segments, from fast food to fine dining. The main solution when serving more plants is getting umami into food.

**Q:** What are some must-have pantry staples when cooking with plant-based and cultivated proteins? Any secret weapons or great tips you'd care to share?

**Chef Jet:** Seasonings are the key to successful plant-based cooking. Cooks must evolve past soy sauce, salt and pepper. Oyster sauce is my go-to, which adds incredible saltiness and savoriness. Also heat and garlic combinations in sauces. Roasted chili pastes, ones that are not just acidic, are great too. Chili crisp, sriracha and harissa are excellent ingredients to add to plant-based cooking.

**Q:** What's your best advice for an operator who is considering adding plant-based offerings to their menu?

**Chef Jet:** Walk before you run. Take high-selling items and find easy solutions with broad appeal. Burgers, entrées and appetizers that occupy a high percentage of sales are good candidates to test plant-based foods. Vegetarian offerings will be easier to execute than vegan ones.

**Q:** Anything you want to see more of (or less of) when it comes to plant-based menu offerings?

**Chef Jet:** I'd like to see a balance of grain, legumes and vegetables instead of highly processed plant-based meats. Thoughtful cooking with aggressive charring, roasting and baking really pulls flavors out of plants.

**Q:** What's your current favorite plant-based meal?

**Chef Jet:** Grain bowls with roasted vegetables, greens and fruit are great and healthy. And they keep me from getting menu fatigue.



## THE PLANT-BASED EATING BOOM: DIGGING DEEPER

The Plant-Based Foods Association reported that sales of plant-based foods/drinks intended to substitute for animal products reached \$7 billion in 2021, and recent data on plant-based menu items has skyrocketed over the last four years.

KEEP INSIGHT

**48%**

of consumers look for foods and drinks labeled "plant-based."<sup>3</sup>

### PLANT-BASED FOOD ON THE MENU<sup>4</sup>

Menu penetration:

**4.7%**

1-year growth:

**+35%**

4-year growth:

**+2,770%**

### FROM OMNIVORES TO HERBIVORES, AND EVERYTHING IN-BETWEEN

Who is the average plant-based food seeking consumer? Today, they're likely to be:

**CULINARILY ADVENTUROUS.<sup>5</sup>**



**69%**  
seek out new products to try.



**2 OUT OF 3**  
will pay more for gourmet offerings.



**8 OUT OF 10**  
will spend for unique tastes.



# MAKE PLANT-BASED AMAZING: FLAVOR, COMPLEXITY & SPICE IS EASY WITH OUR FAVORITE PRODUCTS

We're experts in umami-rich ingredients, which add a complex and irresistible "meaty" flavor to anything, especially plant-based food. Whether it's to boost classic vegetarian dishes, or to put a creative spin on the latest faux protein, Lee Kum Kee makes it simple and delicious.



**UMAMI**  
is found on 43%  
of Non-Ethnic  
Menus.<sup>6</sup>

## MUSHROOM BOUILLON POWDER

### WHY WE LOVE IT, AND HOW TO USE IT:

Preservative-free and made with premium dried mushrooms, this indispensable vegan ingredient is guaranteed to become your secret weapon for plant-based meats.

### THINK OUTSIDE THE WOK:



Seasoning for  
Plant-Based Burger



**UMAMI**  
has seen growth  
on menus by  
24% in the last  
4 years.<sup>7</sup>

## VEGETARIAN STIR-FRY SAUCE

### WHY WE LOVE IT, AND HOW TO USE IT:

Our vegetarian version of Oyster Flavored Sauce! This product is completely vegetarian and flavored with shiitake mushrooms that adds meaty umami appeal to dishes. It's the ingredient that makes a stir-fry a stir-fry!

### THINK OUTSIDE THE WOK:



Mushroom Philly  
"Cheesesteak"



**HOISIN SAUCE**  
has seen growth  
on menus by  
19% in the last  
4 years.<sup>8</sup>

## HOISIN SAUCE

### WHY WE LOVE IT, AND HOW TO USE IT:

When you need both sweetness and umami in a dish, it's the hands-down favorite. This popular vegan sauce is perfect for stir-fries, marinades and dips.

### THINK OUTSIDE THE WOK:



Hoisin  
Mole Taco



**SPICY**  
call-outs on Plant-  
Based Menu Items  
have grown, with  
a 90.3% increase  
in Casual Dining  
over the last  
4 years.<sup>9</sup>

## CHILI GARLIC SAUCE

### WHY WE LOVE IT, AND HOW TO USE IT:

Anything but "just" spicy, our sauce is loaded with big garlic flavor and the right amount of heat and vinegar for an all-around fantastic ingredient or condiment!

### THINK OUTSIDE THE WOK:



Vegetarian Pizza  
with Spicy Marinara



**GLUTEN-FREE**  
call outs on  
Plant-Based  
Menu Items  
have grown by  
+46.1%.<sup>10</sup>

## GLUTEN-FREE SOY SAUCE

### WHY WE LOVE IT, AND HOW TO USE IT:

Rich, savory and balanced with a hint of sweetness, our gluten-free soy sauce is made with only premium, non-GMO soybeans, is completely plant-based, and adds umami sparkle to everything.

### THINK OUTSIDE THE WOK:



Cauliflower Wings in  
a Ginger Soy Glaze



**37%**  
love or like  
Sesame Oil.<sup>11</sup>

## SESAME OIL

### WHY WE LOVE IT, AND HOW TO USE IT:

Only careful processing and gentle roasting can produce an oil with a strong, irresistibly nutty flavor. Sesame oil tastes amazing drizzled over dishes or added to a marinade or vinaigrette.

### THINK OUTSIDE THE WOK:



Plant-Based Fish Taco  
with Sesame Slaw

DISCOVER MORE EXCITING NEW TREND DATA [HERE!](#)

**SOURCES:**

<sup>1</sup>Food Ingredients 1st, October 2021.

<sup>2</sup>Datassential MenuTrends, 2022.

<sup>3,5</sup>IFT, August 2021.

<sup>4</sup>Datassential SNAP, 2022.

<sup>6,7,8,9,10,11</sup>Datassential SNAP & FLAVOR, 2022.