

Global Lactic Acid Market Assessment, By Source [Synthetic, Bio-based], By Grade [Pharma Grade, Food Grade, Others] By Application [Food Additive, Antioxidant and Acidulant, Drug Formulation, Skin Care, Oral Care, Bioplastics Production, Solvent and Cleaning Agents, Metal Cleaning, Others], By End-User Industry [Food and Beverage, Pharmaceuticals, Personal Care, Industrial, Chemical, Agriculture, Others], By Region, Opportunities and Forecast, 2018-2032F

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Report description:

Global lactic acid market is projected to witness a CAGR of 8.56% during the forecast period 2025-2032, growing from USD 2.52 billion in 2025 to USD 4.86 billion in 2032. Global lactic acid market is growing at a robust growth rate due to its versatility. Lactic acid is used in various industries and applications as it is organic in nature. As the world is moving towards sustainable and eco-friendly solutions, lactic acid is gaining popularity. It is produced mostly through the fermentation of carbohydrates. It is mostly used for food preservation, flavoring, and acidity regulator for food and beverage products, in addition to its use in the manufacturing of biodegradable plastics and personal care products. Lactic acid is widely used in many food products where it plays a significant role. Some of the products where lactic acid is extensively used are yogurt, pickles and sauces. Formulating food applications from lactic acid has improved freshness and enhanced shelf life. Continued interest in the use of natural and organic ingredients has led to an increased application of lactic acid.

In the pharmaceutical sector, lactic acid is used in drug formulation as well as excipients. Due to the compatibility nature, it is successfully applied in the different application of medical sector such as tissue engineering and drug delivery systems. With the trend toward sustainability, the market for lactic acid has shown a notable shift. Increasing industrial interest in non-polluting nature has brought lactic acid to the forefront in the production of biodegradable plastics like polylactic acid, which is used in

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packaging, disposable cutlery, and other similar applications that are reflective of changes toward sustainable material.

Growing Demand for Sustainable and Biodegradable Products Drives Lactic Acid Market Expansion

Lactic acid is a naturally biodegradable compound, which sees rapid gains in the manufacturing of polylactic acid (PLA), which is a green substitute for non-biodegradable petroleum-based plastics. Along with the market pressure from the side of green material, with increasing environmental regulation needs, this, in its turn, has also increased demand for lactic acid in bioplastics. An increasing trend among consumers towards organic and natural, plant-derived food items also requires lactic acid as a food and beverage preservative and as a flavoring agent. The pharmaceutical and personal care sectors are also propelling the market forward, as lactic acid is employed in wound care, anti-aging products, and exfoliation solutions. The quick advancement of fermentation technology and implementation of sustainable production techniques are also fueling the growth of the market. For instance, in April 2024, SK Geo Centric announced the development of microbial fermentation technology. This technology will reduce production costs and increase chemical byproducts, which enhances the feasibility of lactic acid production. This increases the demand of lactic acid which in turn increases the potential of producing bio-based products, plastics like polylactic acid (PLA).

Lactic Acid Bacteria Paving the Way for Sustainable Vitamin B2 Production

One of the major factors of increasing lactic acid penetration in the food industry is due to the increasing demand for natural and sustainable solutions. It acts as an organic acid, which is used in preservation of food, biodegradable plastics and cosmetic formulations as it is eco-friendly in nature. Over the last few years, the trend of consumers in favor of clean-label products and sustainable solutions has contributed further to the growth of demand for lactic acid.

The market is increasing due to newer biotechnological processes. From a long-standing association with fermentation, the lactic acid bacteria groups currently hold a lot of positions of prominence in scientific innovation work. Scientists take these bacteria for developing innovative revolutionary solutions that may be low in cost, gentle on the environment, and very scalable.

For instance, in December 2024, Technical University of Denmark has revolutionized the production of vitamin B2, using the food grade lactic acid. The method of formation is heating the bacteria which will create a vast quantity of vitamin B2. This sustainable method is economical, does not rely on the complex purification process and feasible for the food-grade. With this successful process, it increases the potential of the lactic acid, taps the global challenges such as vitamin deficiencies in developing regions. The innovative use of lactic acid bacteria exemplifies the market's transformative role in enabling sustainable solutions, paving the way for future applications in food fortification and beyond.

Dominance of Food Additive Application

The most prominent use of lactic acid in the market remains the food additive because of a rise in demand from the food and beverage market for natural and renewable additives. Lactic acid is widely used as a preservative, flavoring, and pH adjuster in processed food, dairy, and beverages owing to its biocompatibility and biodegradability. Burgeoning demand for organic and clean-label foods has again favored the use of lactic acid as a natural food additive. Additionally, consumer awareness concerning food safety and shelf life has raised the use of lactic acid as a food ingredient.

Applications in food production aside, sustainable production methods and innovations into lactic acid have also brought life into the usage of this compound because it is now cost-effective and environmentally friendly. For instance, in August 2023, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) scientists engineered a new technique for producing lactic acid by utilizing discarded jackfruit seeds. This novel process is also cheaper and greener since it reduces chemical consumption, yields no by-products at all, and minimizes food waste. The NTU's new method stands out in the traditional industrial production processes that utilize fermentation of raw materials such as sugarcane, corn starch, and beetroot sugar, the cost of which is now getting too high with scarce land for agriculture and inflation raging the global sustainable development objectives of which it now aligns with. Such advancements are likely to further enhance the growth and adoption of lactic acid across industries, solidifying its dominance as a critical component in the food additive segment.

Asia-Pacific to Witness Highest Growth Rate in Lactic Acid Market

Asia-Pacific region is expected to grow at the faster rate during the forecast period. The demand is anticipated to increase at a rapid rate due to the increasing usage across the food and beverages, personal care, and pharmaceutical industries. The growth in the market is primarily led by countries such as China, India, and Japan because of biotechnological advancements and government policies toward green manufacturing. Additionally, increased demand for biodegradable plastics and bio-based chemicals has significantly supported the prospects of this market in the region. China is one of the major contributors to the

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Asia-Pacific lactic acid market, with significant improvements in production capacities. For instance, in April 2022, Qingdao Shengda Commercial & Trade Co., Ltd., the export and sales company of Zhucheng Xingmao Corn Developing Co., Ltd. (Xingmao Group), initiated L-lactic acid production at its Jingliang Longjiang Biotechnology Engineering Co., Ltd. factory in Suihua City, Heilongjiang Province. It boasts a production capacity of 50,000 tons per year. As such, the facility reiterates the determination of China towards the global demand for lactic acid on high quality and not only provides further support towards its industrial development but also further assists in enhancing regional market demand; thus, the Asia-Pacific shall maintain its place at the helm in terms of consumption and production in lactic acid.

Future Market Scenario (2025 - 2032F)

-□The demand for lactic acid is gaining higher customer demand for eco-friendly and biodegradable products. Lactic acid will play a more significant role in producing biodegradable material as industries move in their march to locate sustainable alternatives to traditional plastics.

-□Lactic acid is one of the most widely used preservatives and flavouring agents in food and beverages. The clean-label products and natural ingredients trend will have the manufacturers introduce lactic acid more often, making its market even larger.

-□Process innovations in fermentation and production should enhance the production efficiency of lactic acid. Such advances would reduce costs associated with producing this acid, leading to a high availability rate in several applications.

-□Lactic acid provides an opportunity for the pharmaceutical sector to create novel formulations and delivery methods. Due to its biocompatibility and biodegradability, it is especially appealing for creating innovative medical products, which will drive market expansion.

Key Players Landscape and Outlook

Global lactic acid market is relatively competitive and dominated by some major players that influence the dynamics of the market, providing improved solutions and investments in research to meet the increase in demand in various industries across the globe for lactic acid. The increase in applications across food and beverage, personal care, pharmaceutical, and bioplastic sectors propels the market further.

The outlook for the lactic acid market continues to be positive, as of now, with strong demand expected to rise because of an increasing preference for sustainable and bio-based products. Emerging applications of lactic acid in biodegradable plastics and green solvents can offer promising opportunities for market players. The market also remains driven by strategic collaborations, expansions, and technological advancements by major manufacturers.

For instance, in February 2024, NIZO Food Research B.V. announced a long-term contract manufacturing partnership with dsm-firmenich. Under this partnership, NIZO acquired the neighboring lactic acid facility from Vika Nutrition B.V. The strategic partnership below underlines NIZO's scientific expertise in food and health research and makes this company an important partner for dsm-firmenich in lactic acid supply and future R&D projects.

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*Companies mentioned above DO NOT hold any order as per market share and can be changed as per information available during research work.

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