North America Free-From Food - Market Share Analysis, Industry Trends & Statistics, Growth Forecasts (2026 - 2031)

Market Report | 2026-01-16 | 120 pages | Mordor Intelligence

AVAILABLE LICENSES:

- Single User License $4750.00
- Team License (1-7 Users) $5250.00
- Site License $6500.00
- Corporate License $8750.00

Report description:

North America Free-From Food Market Analysis

The free-from foods market is expected to grow from USD 41.59 billion in 2025 to USD 45.09 billion in 2026 and is forecast to reach USD 67.52 billion by 2031 at 8.41% CAGR over 2026-2031. This outlook reflects sustained demand for products that eliminate specific allergens, animal ingredients, and artificial additives while delivering familiar taste and convenience. Regulatory modernization, precision-fermentation breakthroughs, and aggressive product innovation have broadened the consumer base beyond medically diagnosed allergy sufferers to mainstream shoppers seeking perceived wellness and sustainability advantages. Standardized allergen-labeling thresholds adopted by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in 2025 and Health Canada's expedited novel-protein review pathway have reduced compliance ambiguity, encouraging new entrants and faster line extensions. Precision-fermented proteins, now cleared for commercial use, allow manufacturers to mimic the sensory experience of conventional dairy and egg with fewer supply-chain risks. Meanwhile, social-media advocacy and celebrity endorsements amplify diet trends at minimal marketing cost, propelling rapid trial and repeat purchase.

North America Free-From Food Market Trends and Insights

Rising food allergies and intolerances

Growing consumer health concerns and regulatory advancements have transformed product safety requirements and market dynamics. According to Food Allergy Research & Education, approximately 33 million Americans, including many children with multiple food allergies, were affected by food allergies in 2024 . The FDA's 2025 allergen labeling requirements, which mandate clearer identification and expand recognized allergen definitions, have reduced cross-contamination incidents and increased consumer confidence in free-from products across retail and foodservice sectors. Health Canada's regulatory updates, particularly its efficient approval process for novel allergen-free ingredients, have enabled companies like Remilk to introduce precision fermentation-derived dairy proteins in 2024, eliminating risks associated with traditional dairy allergens and expanding options for allergic consumers. The improved regulatory framework reduces the risk of recalls due to undisclosed allergens. It encourages investment in new allergen-safe ingredients, allowing companies to justify premium pricing for verified allergen-free products. Market growth is further supported by expanded retail allergen-free sections, advocacy group education initiatives, and increased availability of free-from options in public institutions. The North American free-from food market continues to grow due to medical necessities and the industry's response through regulatory compliance and product development.

Mainstream adoption of "better-for-you" diets (gluten-free, dairy-free, low-sugar)

Rising consumer awareness and demand for healthier dietary options have reshaped product offerings across retail channels. Health-conscious consumers increasingly seek products with reduced sugar, sodium, and artificial ingredients. The 2024 IFIC Food & Health Survey indicates this shift, with 66% of consumers limiting sugar consumption compared to 61% in 2023. This change enables alternative products to compete effectively with conventional foods . The USDA's 2024 dietary guidelines support this trend by emphasizing plant-based proteins and reduced processed food consumption, influencing consumer and institutional purchasing decisions. Major companies are adapting to these changes. For example, Nestle launched Vital Pursuit, targeting GLP-1 medication users, demonstrating that alternative products now extend beyond allergen-free options. Widespread distribution channels and competitive pricing have made these alternatives readily accessible to consumers. Retail data shows significant growth in plant-based snacks and low-sugar cereals, reflecting the direct relationship between manufacturers' investment in cleaner formulations and increased consumer demand for transparency and health benefits. This expansion has led to increased product variety and availability, establishing alternative foods as standard options in modern diets. Consumer demand for simpler ingredients continues to influence product development, while institutional support in schools and workplaces reinforces healthier food choices, reflecting the integration of health awareness, product development, and market accessibility in the alternative food products industry.

Price premiums versus conventional products

Sustained price premiums create significant barriers as 2024's inflation drives production costs upward, affecting consumer purchasing behavior across income levels. Manufacturing limitations prevent cost optimization through economies of scale, while economic pressures force budget-conscious consumers to prioritize cost savings over dietary preferences. Operational complexities, including specialized ingredient sourcing and stringent quality controls, increase production expenses, making it difficult for manufacturers to achieve competitive pricing. The requirement for dedicated production facilities, comprehensive testing protocols, and elevated unit costs further compounds these challenges, particularly in product categories such as bread alternatives and dairy substitutes. While retail chains have developed cost-effective private label options, including Aldi's "Live Free" range, these products often struggle with quality perception compared to premium alternatives. Industry advancement requires substantial capital investment in product development and manufacturing innovation to deliver high-quality alternatives while optimizing cost structures. Consumer loyalty remains strong among health-conscious buyers, yet widespread adoption depends on achieving operational efficiencies and developing resilient supply chains capable of supporting increased production volumes. The combination of elevated production costs, manufacturing constraints, and price sensitivity continues to impact market expansion potential, despite consistent consumer demand. Success in addressing these operational challenges will determine the pace and extent of future growth opportunities.

Other drivers and restraints analyzed in the detailed report include:

Increasing popularity of vegan, plant-based, and paleo dietsInfluence of social media and advocacy groupsManufacturing complexity and certification against cross-contamination

For complete list of drivers and restraints, kindly check the Table Of Contents.

Segment Analysis

Meat-free alternatives are anticipated to achieve a strong growth trajectory with a 9.24% CAGR through 2031, driven by advancements in precision fermentation technology and expanded retail penetration that appeals to a broader consumer base beyond traditional vegetarians. In 2025, gluten-free products are expected to dominate the market with a 46.12% share, supported by robust distribution networks and consistent rates of celiac disease diagnoses. However, growth in this segment has moderated as the category reaches maturity. Dairy-free alternatives are capitalizing on increased consumer awareness of lactose intolerance and the widespread acceptance of plant-based milk products. Similarly, sugar-free formulations are gaining market traction, propelled by diabetes prevention efforts and compatibility with GLP-1 medications. The FDA's GRAS approvals for multiple precision fermentation proteins in 2024 have accelerated innovation in the meat-free segment, enabling companies like EVERY to secure patents for egg-white protein production methods that eliminate reliance on animal agriculture.

Other "free-from" categories, such as nut-free and soy-free alternatives, address niche medical needs but hold smaller market shares due to limited consumer awareness and higher production complexities. The competitive landscape increasingly favors businesses capable of developing products that address multiple dietary restrictions, as consumers seek convenient solutions that cater to diverse household dietary requirements. Innovations in protein extraction and purification technologies have facilitated the creation of advanced meat analogues that closely replicate the sensory attributes of traditional products, addressing the taste and texture limitations that previously hindered category adoption.

In 2025, bakery and confectionery products capture a 29.47% market share, owing to their expertise in gluten-free formulations and consumers' growing comfort with alternative flours and sweeteners. Dairy alternatives, led by the mainstream embrace of oat milk and cheese alternatives from precision fermentation that closely mimic traditional dairy, are set to grow the fastest at a 8.99% CAGR through 2031. Convenience-driven consumers, who value both time savings and dietary adherence, are turning to ready meals and meal kits. Meanwhile, snacks are riding the wave of portion control trends and the demand for on-the-go consumption. In 2024, Dr. Schar underscores this trend by launching 7 new gluten-free products, such as Marble Cake and Mini Honeygrams, highlighting how established brands are not only deepening their roots in familiar categories but also venturing into adjacent markets.

The meat substitutes segment is experiencing intensified competition as both traditional meat companies and specialized alternative protein manufacturers aggressively invest in product innovation and strategic marketing initiatives. These efforts aim to capture a larger share of the growing consumer base seeking sustainable and plant-based protein options. The beverages category, while mature due to the widespread acceptance of plant-based milk, continues to evolve with advancements in functional beverages. These innovations focus on combining free-from formulations with added nutritional benefits, such as enhanced vitamins, minerals, and probiotics, to cater to health-conscious consumers. Other product categories, including baby foods and condiments, address niche market demands but face limited growth potential. Regulatory complexities and conservative consumer preferences in these segments act as significant barriers, restricting the pace of innovation and market expansion.

The North American Free-From Foods Market Report is Segmented by Free-From Type (Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free/Lactose-Free, Meat-Free, and More), End Product (Bakery Products, Meat Substitutes, Dairy Alternatives, Beverages, and More), Nature (Conventional, Organic), Distribution Channel (On-Trade, Off-Trade), and Geography (United States, Canada, Mexico, Rest of North America). The Market Forecasts are Provided in Terms of Value (USD).

List of Companies Covered in this Report:

Conagra Brands Inc. The Hain Celestial Group General Mills Inc. Bob's Red Mill Natural Foods Kraft Heinz Company Kellanova Danone S.A. Blue Diamond Growers Oatly Group AB SunOpta Inc. Flowers Foods, Inc. Grupo Bimbo S.A.B. de C.V. Barilla G. e R. F.lli S.p.A. Nestle S.A. Dr. Schar AG/SPA Impossible Foods Inc. Beyond Better Foods Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc. Beyond Meat Inc. Amy's Kitchen Inc.

Additional Benefits:

 The market estimate (ME) sheet in Excel format
3 months of analyst support

Table of Contents:

5.1 By Free-From Type
5.1.1 Gluten-Free
5.1.2 Dairy-Free/Lactose-Free
5.1.3 Meat-Free (Plant-based)
5.1.4 Sugar-Free/Low-GI
5.1.5 Other Types
5.2 By End Product
5.2.1 Bakery and Confectionery Products
5.2.2 Meat Substitutes and Analogues
5.2.3 Dairy Alternatives
5.2.4 Beverages
5.2.5 Snacks
5.2.6 Ready Meals and Meal Kits
5.2.7 Other Products (Baby and Infant Foods, Sauces, Condiments)
5.3 By Nature
5.3.1 Conventional
5.3.2 Organic
5.4 By Distribution Channel
5.4.1 On-Trade
5.4.2 Off-Trade
5.4.2.1 Supermarkets/Hypermarkets
5.4.2.2 Specialty Stores
5.4.2.3 Convenience Stores
5.4.2.4 Online Retail Stores
5.4.2.5 Other Distribution Channels
5.5 By Country
5.5.1 United States
5.5.2 Canada
5.5.3 Mexico
5.5.4 Rest of North America

6 COMPETITIVE LANDSCAPE
6.1 Market Concentration
6.2 Strategic Moves
6.3 Market Share Analysis
6.4 Company Profiles (includes Global level Overview, Market level overview, Core Segments, Financials as available, Strategic Information, Market Rank/Share for key companies, Products & Services, and Recent Developments)
6.4.1 Conagra Brands Inc.
6.4.2 The Hain Celestial Group
6.4.3 General Mills Inc.
6.4.4 Bob's Red Mill Natural Foods
6.4.5 Kraft Heinz Company
6.4.6 Kellanova
6.4.7 Danone S.A.
6.4.8 Blue Diamond Growers
6.4.9 Oatly Group AB
6.4.10 SunOpta Inc.

North America Free-From Food - Market Share Analysis, Industry Trends & Statistics, Growth Forecasts (2026 - 2031)

Market Report | 2026-01-16 | 120 pages | Mordor Intelligence

To place an Order with Scotts International:
- - Print this form
- - Complete the relevant blank fields and sign
- - Send as a scanned email to support@scotts-international.com

ORDER FORM:

Select license	License	Price
	Single User License	$4750.00
	Team License (1-7 Users)	$5250.00
	Site License	$6500.00
	Corporate License	$8750.00
	VAT	
	Total	

*Please circle the relevant license option. For any questions please contact support@scotts-international.com or 0048 603 394 346.
** VAT will be added at 23% for Polish based companies, individuals and EU based companies who are unable to provide a valid EU Vat Numbers.

Email*		Phone*	
First Name*		Last Name*	
Job title*			
Company Name*		EU Vat / Tax ID / NIP number*	
Address*		City*	
Zip Code*		Country*	
		Date	2026-02-28
		Signature	

Scotts International. EU Vat number: PL 6772247784
tel. 0048 603 394 346 e-mail: support@scotts-international.com
www.scotts-international.com