



**schouten** specialist in  
plant-based protein

## Market Outlook

The nutritional truth about meat substitutes

## In this update:

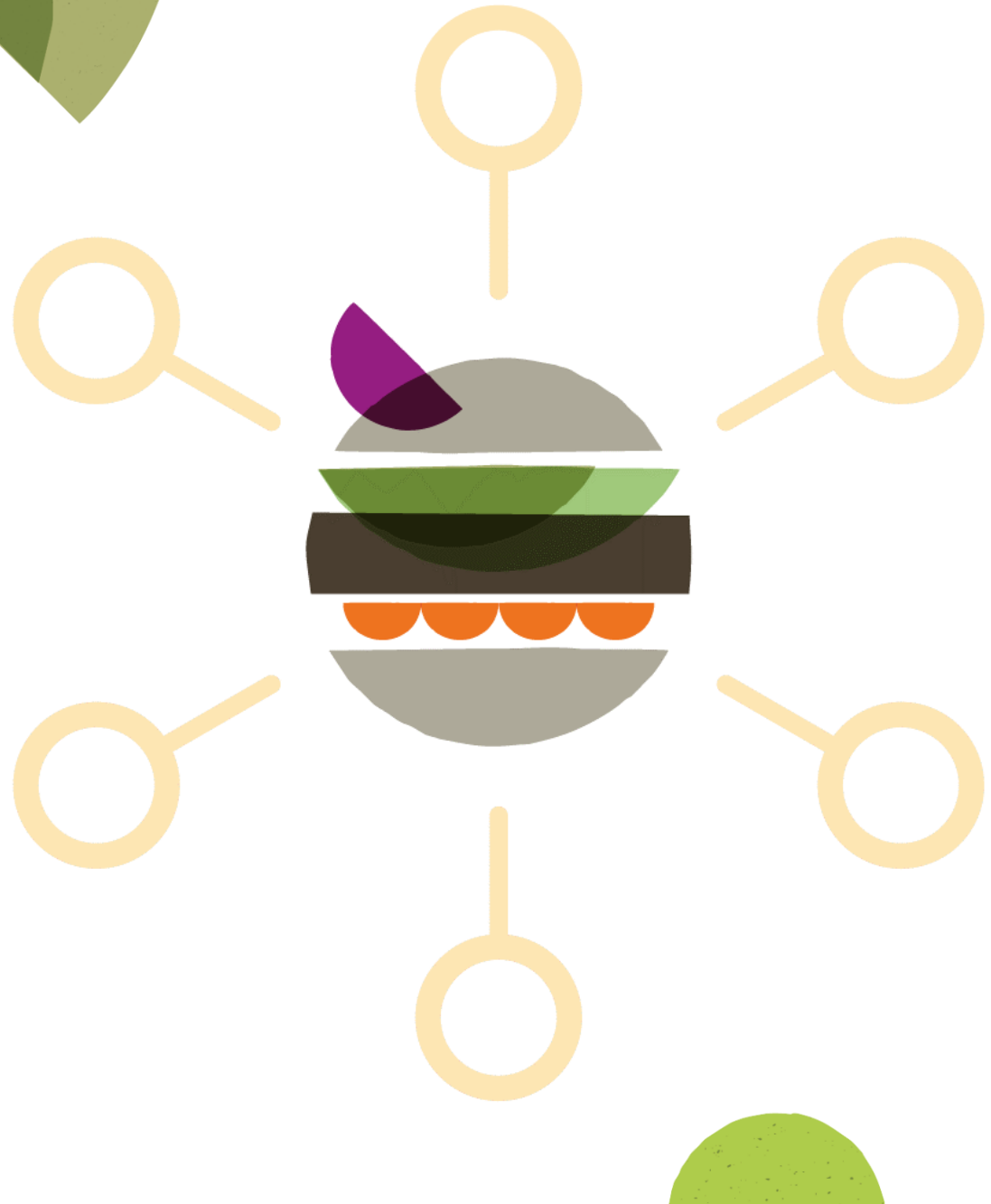
- We will discuss the perception that meat substitutes are unhealthy in nutritional terms.
- We will compare calories, fibers, proteins, saturated fats, sugar and salt in conventional meat and meat substitutes.
- We will look at market developments in the field of nutritional values of meat substitutes.

Source:

**gfi** / Europe

**schouten**

Market Outlook 03/2025







# In general

Studies show that replacing meat with plant-based meat substitutes can have health benefits:

- [Lowers](#) LDL cholesterol (bad cholesterol) and [thus](#) the risk of [heart disease](#), the leading cause of death in Europe.
- [Reduces](#) the risk of colon cancer, the second leading cause of cancer death in Europe.
- [Improves](#) gut health.
- [Helps](#) maintain a healthy weight.



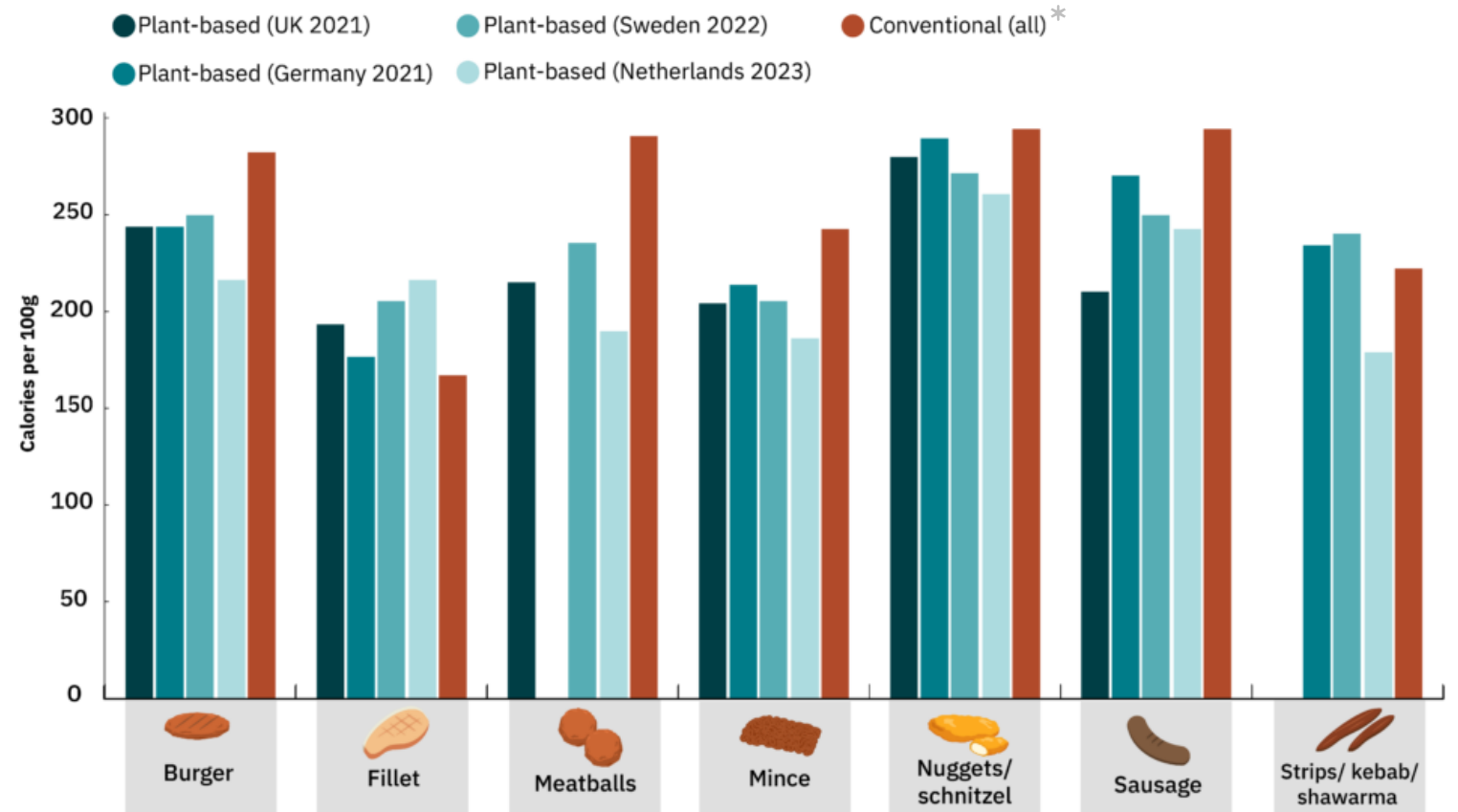
# Calories

- On average, plant-based meat substitutes contain comparable or fewer calories per 100 grams than their animal counterparts.



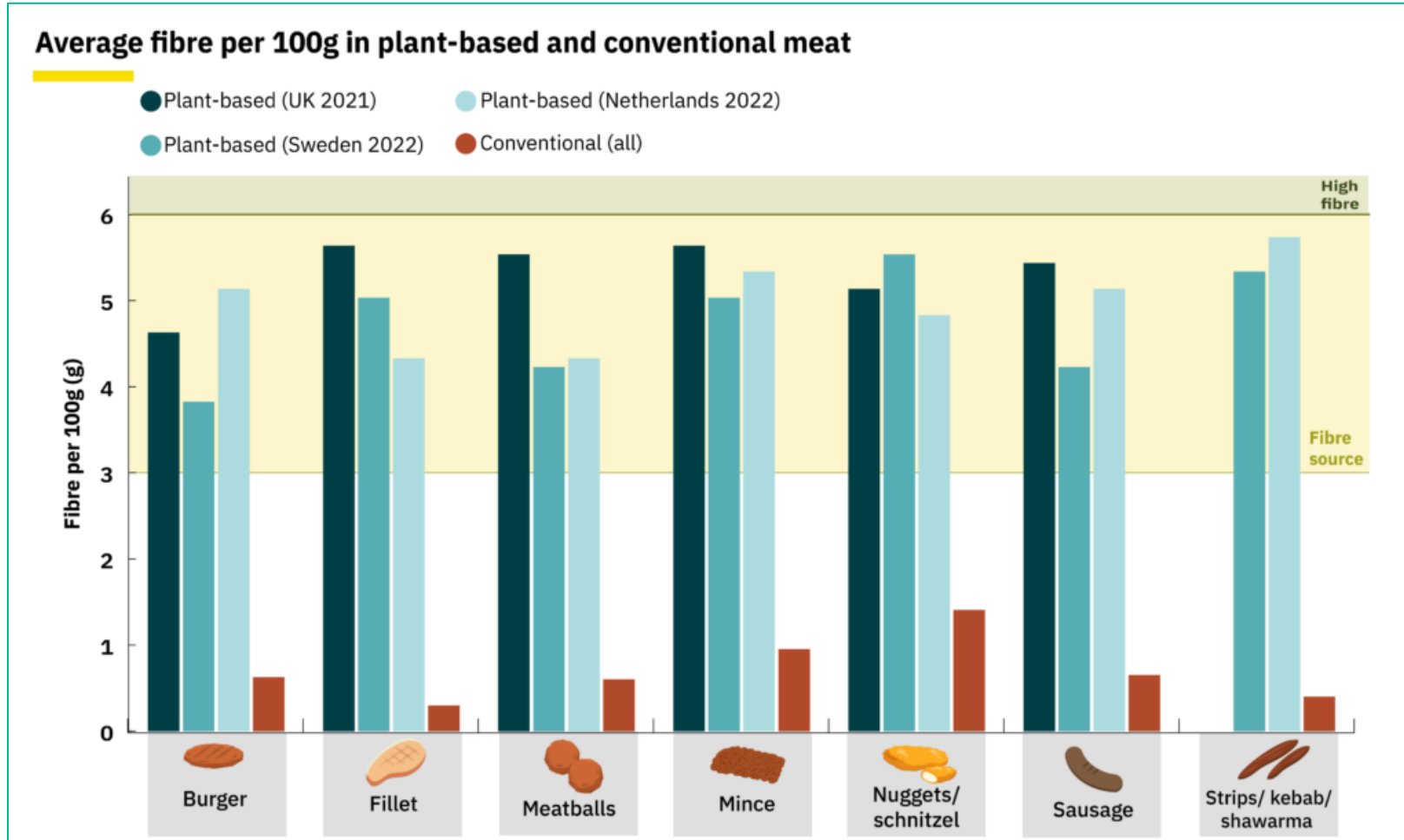
\*Conventional meat products are animal meat products that are produced in a traditional way, usually from livestock such as cattle, pigs and chickens. These products are usually obtained through the livestock farming and slaughter industry.

**Average calories per 100g in plant-based and conventional meat**



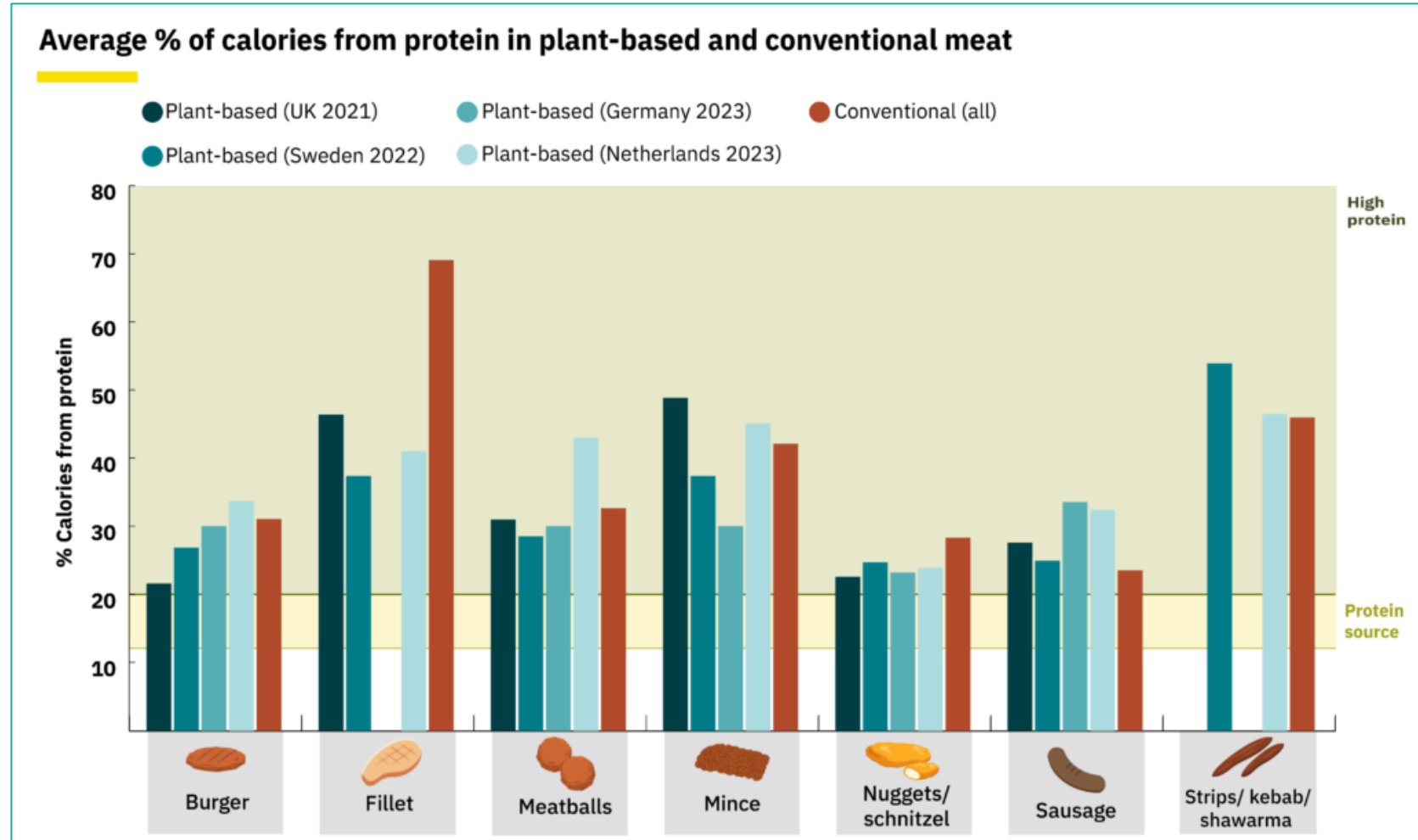
# Fibers

- A lot of research suggests that high fiber intake reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease and contributes to a healthy gut microbiome.
- Plant-based meat substitutes contain fiber, while meat does not naturally have it – any fiber in them comes from added plant ingredients.



# Protein

- Research into the health effects of a high-protein diet shows mixed results.
- Plant-based meat substitutes meet the EU standard for high-protein foods and, except for the fillet variants, contain about the same amount of protein as real meat.









# Total fat and saturated fat

- Fat provides the most energy, with nine calories per gram.
- Eating less saturated fat reduces the risk of heart attack and stroke in the long term.
- Plant-based meat substitutes contain less total fat and saturated fat on average than animal meat.



# Sugars

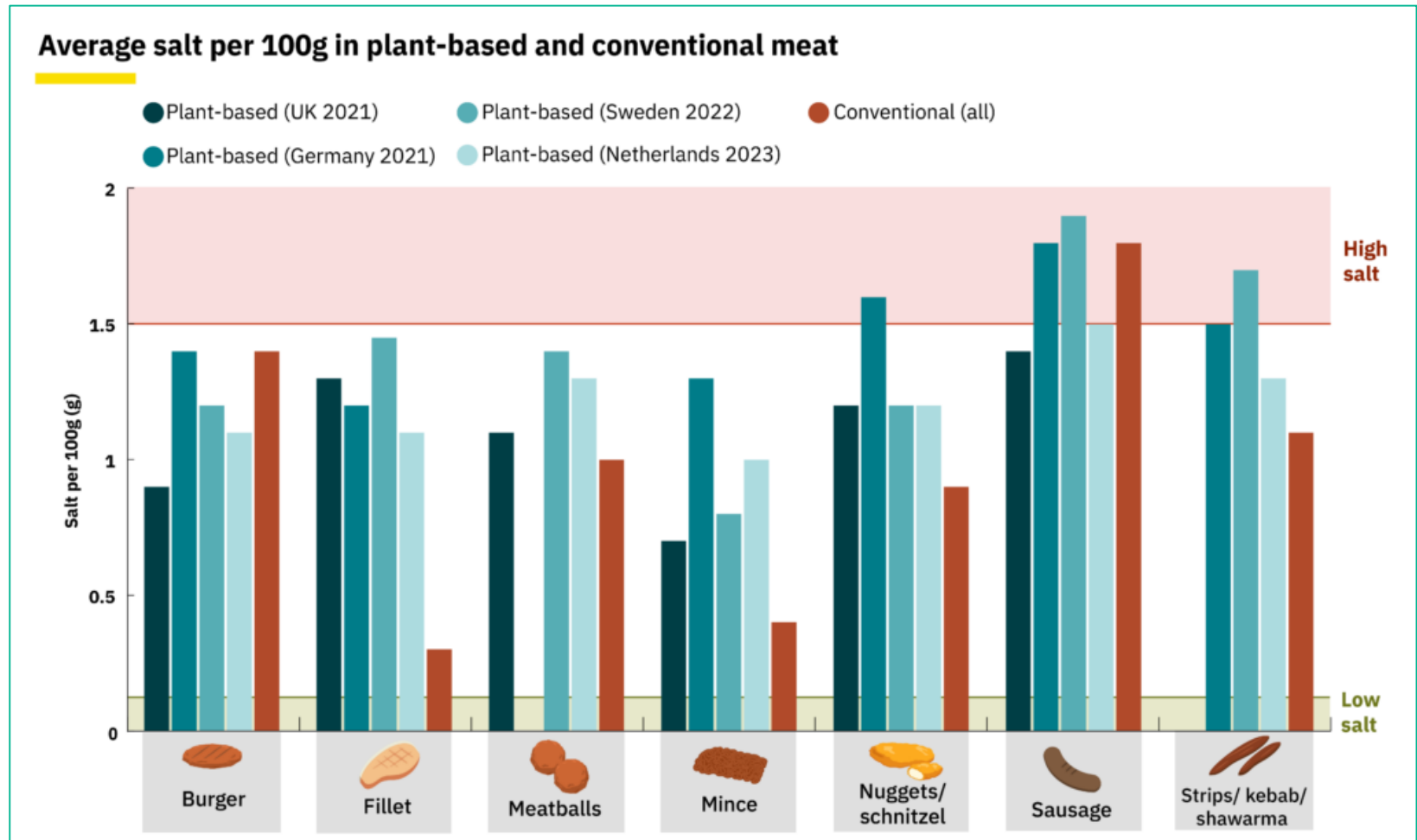
- Most people would benefit from a lower sugar intake.
- Both plant-based meat substitutes and meat contain little sugar on average (<5g per 100g).
- Although plant-based meat substitutes contain slightly more sugar, this remains well within the low-sugar threshold.





# Salt

- Too much salt contributes to health problems, and most people would do well to eat less salt.
- Plant-based meat substitutes usually contain as much or more salt than meat, but this varies by product and country.



# Nutritional improvements

- The Dutch Nutrition Centre stated that a large proportion of meat substitutes do not yet meet the 'Wheel of Five' criteria for a good plant-based choice.
- There is still a lot of potential to improve the nutritional value of meat substitutes.
- Producers and retailers are working hard on this.
- Lidl in The Netherlands [introduced](#) its new range of meat substitutes in February 2025, the majority of which fall within the 'Wheel of Five'.

## Retail & E-Commerce

### Lidl Netherlands Expands and Optimizes Meat Substitute Range


February 26, 2025



© Lidl

Lidl Netherlands announces that it has taken a further step in the protein transition with an improved range of meat substitutes. The taste and texture have been improved, and the nutritional values have been optimized. More than two-thirds of the meat substitutes now meet the "Schijf van Vijf" (Wheel of Five) criteria.

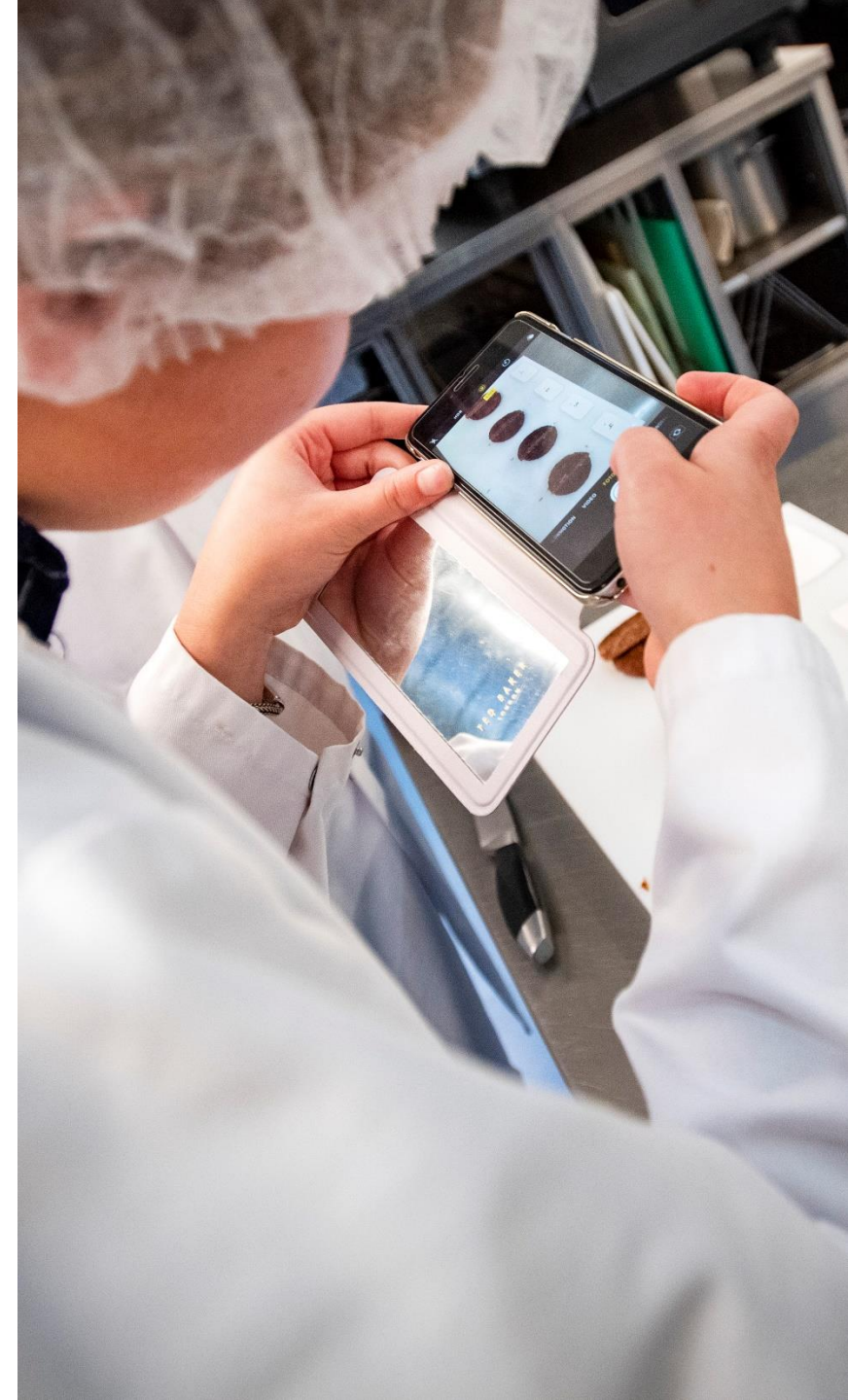


A woman with long brown hair, wearing a maroon top, is seated at a table in a restaurant. She is holding a fork and knife, with a small amount of food on the fork. The background is blurred, showing other tables and chairs. The scene is lit with warm, natural light. There are decorative graphic elements: a large green leaf-like shape in the top right corner, a smaller green leaf-like shape in the bottom left corner, and a teal leaf-like shape on the right side.

**Wrap-up**

# Wrap-up

- There are [studies](#) that show meat substitutes as 'unhealthy'. Usually, a few individual outliers are examined and the comparison with meat is lacking.
- However, several studies indicate that plant-based meat substitutes can have health benefits compared to comparable meat products.
- Most meat substitutes are [healthier](#) than the meat they replace.
- However, there is still a lot of room for improvement.
- Producers such as Schouten are actively working on healthier products without making concessions on taste and texture.





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Questions? Please feel free to contact me

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