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PRESS RELEASE

One in four consumers supports a ban on meat-related names for vegetarian products

One in four consumers believes vegetarian products should not be allowed to have meat-related names like sausage or burger, a survey has found.

Specialist PR agency Ingredient Communications commissioned polling experts Surveygoo to explore attitudes to the way meat-free products are named. Nearly 1,000 consumers were surveyed (499 in the UK and 484 in the US). The sample included vegetarians, vegans, pescatarians and meat-eaters.

Across all groups, 25% of respondents said manufacturers of vegetarian products should not be permitted to use meat-related names like sausage, burger or steak. Vegetarians were the least likely to disapprove of meat-related names, with only 18% supporting a ban. By contrast, 33% of vegans and 26% of meat-eaters said vegetarian products should not be allowed to have meat-related names.

Richard Clarke, Managing Director of Ingredient Communications, said: "It's no secret that many in the meat industry want to stop what they see as the misrepresentation of vegetarian products. What is perhaps surprising is that so many consumers also seem to support a ban. With interest in plant-based diets increasing, and a backlash from the meat industry under way, it is time for a debate about the way vegetarian and vegan products are presented."

The survey also revealed a significant difference between vegetarians and vegans when it came to purchasing decisions. Nearly half of the vegetarians surveyed (49%) said they were more likely to buy a meat-free product if it was labelled with a word such as sausage, burger or steak. However, only 19% of vegans said the same, with 57% saying they were *less* likely to buy a product if it carried a meat-related name.

Neil Cary, Managing Director of Surveygoo, said: "One of the most interesting findings from this research is the extent of the difference between vegetarians and vegans. Vegetarians seem to prefer products that mimic traditional meat formats, but this is a turn-off for many vegans. The obvious lesson for manufacturers and marketers of plant-based products is that vegetarians and vegans are distinct consumer categories, with vastly different purchasing preferences."

The way meat-free products are presented has become a political issue in both Europe and the US. In 2017, the European Court of Justice prohibited dairy product names for non-dairy products, such as milk. Last year, France passed legislation prohibiting vegetarian products from being labelled in the same way as traditional animal products. And in the US, companies in Missouri are now prohibited from “misrepresenting a product as meat” if it is not derived from livestock or poultry.

Among survey respondents who approved of vegetarian products with meat-related names the most common reason was that “it describes the nature and format of the product accurately”, a view held by 58% of all respondents and 65% of vegetarians. However, 60% of those who disapproved believed that meat-related names are misleading.

The respondents were also asked to pick their preferred terms for vegetarian products if meat-related names were banned. The top name for sausages was “rolls”, the top name for burgers was “patties”, and the most popular name for vegetarian steaks was “portions”.

View a breakdown of the survey findings at <https://data.surveymoo.com/@surveygoo/food-followup/>

View an accompanying blog at <https://www.ingredientcommunications.com/can-you-call-it-a-sausage-roll-if-theres-no-meat-in-it/>

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About Ingredient Communications

Based near London, Ingredient Communications specialises in global PR & communications for suppliers of ingredients to the food, beverage, dietary supplement and personal care sectors. To find out more, visit www.ingredientcommunications.com .

About SurveyGoo

Surveygoo are market research consultants, specialising in online quantitative surveys. They design, programme and run online surveys using proprietary tools, and operate panels in the UK and Asia-Pacific. They work with small and large enterprises, with a strong track record helping Marketing and PR agencies. Surveygoo is owned by Asia Opinions Ltd, a provider of online surveys and panel services in Asia-Pacific. Find out more at www.surveymoo.com .