



PLANT-BASED
FOOD GRANT



Ministry of Food, Agriculture
and Fisheries of Denmark



Action-Plan 2026

Introduction

The Plant-Based Food Grant was established as part of the Agreement on the Green Transition of Danish Agriculture from October 2021.

The Food Grant's purpose is to contribute to the development of the plant-based food sector. It is thus one of several instruments supporting the transition of Danish agriculture towards meeting political targets for greenhouse gas reductions.

The Plant-Based Food Grant aims to strengthen the entire value chain within the plant-based food sector. A more plant-rich food system can help address multiple challenges simultaneously, including those related to the environment, health, the economy and, at present, security of supply.

Developing this sector is essential to ensure that our society can progress within the planetary boundaries established to safeguard sustainable development. Global food systems are the largest driver behind the transgression of five of the seven planetary boundaries already exceeded, accounting for around 30 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions.

The Food Grant can contribute positively to addressing climate challenges, as food production for human consumption is, in several respects, less climate- and environmentally intensive than animal-based production. At the same time, the Food Grant can help promote healthy dietary habits in line with the official Danish dietary guidelines, which emphasise

the importance of a diet rich in fruit, vegetables, nuts and pulses.

In addition to contributing to climate and environmental objectives, the Food Grant's efforts to promote more plant-based production must support the retention and development of Danish jobs, thereby fostering growth across the food sector. Such growth is an objective in its own right and a prerequisite for increasing the production and marketing of plant-based foods, whether crops, fungi, or aquaculture products such as macroalgae (seaweed) and microalgae. The political agreement further stipulates that organic production must play a central role in the Food Grant's work.

The Food Grant is led by an independent board appointed by the Minister following nominations from a broad range of organisations. Its work is guided by a strategy outlining the challenges and opportunities within which the Food Grant will operate in developing the sector in the coming years. The strategy also sets out the Food Grant's vision, three strategic development areas and six priority areas, forming the overall framework for the types of project activities eligible for funding from the Food Grant.

[Click here to read the strategy for the Plant-Based Food Grant](#) ►



The purpose of this action plan is to function as a supplement to the strategy and to zoom in on the specific action areas and project types that the Food Grant wants to support as part of its overall objective: to contribute to the development of the sector for plant-based foods in Denmark.

The Board of Directors (the Board) will use the action plan as an indicator of which areas will be prioritised during the current year. The action plan is therefore a tool to help target the Food Grant's resources at areas that the Board believes are of particular relevance or areas that can particularly benefit from the Food Grant's development support.

The Plant-Based Food Grant can provide funding under the Agricultural Block Exemption Regulation (ABER), the Fishery Block Exemption Regulation (FIBER) and the General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER). The Food Grant can also grant de minimis aid, which can be an advantage for applications for smaller amounts of funding. De minimis aid can be provided for the same categories of projects supported by the Plant-Based Food Grant under the block exemptions. However, it allows the Food Grant to offer a higher level of support for activities that would otherwise have limited aid under other state aid rules applicable to the Grant. Recipients of de minimis aid also have to meet fewer requirements in order to receive the aid. A separate guide to de minimis aid (in Danish) can be found on the Plant-Based Food Grant website, where you can also see what types of projects can benefit from de minimis aid, for example projects within processing or sales drives.

The state aid regulations for the Plant-Based Food Grant can be found in our guidelines on state aid regulations for 2025 (in Danish).

The Plant-Based Food Grant's resources are allocated as part of the Agreement on the Green Transition of Danish Agriculture from October 2021.

In 2024, the following additional funding was allocated for the grant in 2026: The agreement on implementation of a green Denmark (DKK 45 million), the agreement on partial allocation of the Green Fund (DKK 30 million) and the agreement on allocation of the research reserve fund 2026 (DKK 50 million).

Approximately DKK 195,7 million is expected to be allocated in 2026.

Overall targets of the Food Grant

The Plant-Based Food Grant has the following three overall targets:

50%

ECOLOGY

Because the legal framework underpinning the Food Grant stipulates that at least half of its resources are to be directed at projects and activities related to organic plant-based foods, this action plan aims to ensure that at least 50 pct. of Food Grant resources go towards organic projects.

60%

PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

At least 60 pct. of Food Grant resources will be allocated to partnership projects. This means that each individual project must have two independent participants from different parts of the value chain. This target applies to all projects across the Food Grant's three strategic development areas, and not just to projects with the specific objective of strengthening sectoral bridge-building or other types of value chain projects.

70%

OF PROJECTS MUST MEET TARGETS

The Food Grant also aims to have at least 70 pct. of the projects reach their specific project targets. This 70 pct. target is intended to enable a balance to be reached between a focus on results and a willingness to take risks in the pursuit of innovation. The Food Grant therefore accommodates the type of project that has a relatively high security of delivery and producing results, as well as projects that have a greater risk associated with project deliveries alongside greater innovative ambitions.

The Food Grant assesses all applications against two established minimum criteria relating to the legal basis of the Plant-Based Food Grant, as well as compliance with the application materials and call requirements. In addition, the Food Grant applies three professional assessment criteria – impact, relevance to

the sector and academic quality – against which all eligible applications are evaluated. It is therefore important that applicants describe their projects in a way that enables assessment against these criteria. See the 2026 call for applications for the Board's overall award criteria which will be published on the Plant-Based Food Grant website under 'Søg Tilskud'.

Focus areas of the Board of directors for 2026

In 2026, the Board will seek out ambitious projects with the potential to make an effective contribution to the development of the plant-based food sector. When selecting projects, the Board will place primary emphasis on the impact that the proposed initiatives are expected to achieve.



STIMULATING SUPPLY

The Board particularly welcomes applications focusing on primary producers or primary production. Projects relating to raw materials with the potential to reach significant volumes, thereby supporting the green development of Danish agriculture and aquaculture, are especially encouraged. This could include, for example, the development of new cultivation methods or skills development for producers. The Board also aims to strengthen the use of local, seasonal, plant-based ingredients, including fruits and vegetables. Within the broader scope of product development, projects creating new types of foods are relevant, but the Board is equally keen to see the further development and improvement of existing product types.



STIMULATING DEMAND

Within demand promotion, the Board particularly welcomes applications targeting the retail sector that experiment with initiatives, followed by committed implementation and national rollout of effective measures. Projects spanning multiple retail chains are especially encouraged, to ensure a wider selection of appealing, high-quality plant-based proteins on the market. For applications aimed at private consumers, emphasis is placed on initiatives that, based on a well-founded theory of change, are likely to become embedded in everyday habits once the project concludes. The Board also welcomes applications focused on skills development in professional kitchens and among other food professionals, primarily in the geographic areas or sectors where the need is greatest.



BUILDING SECTORAL BRIDGES

The Board also welcomes more applications within sector bridging, encouraging projects with partnerships representing different parts of the value chain – particularly partnerships with primary production and projects aimed at developing primary agriculture for the production of vegetables, fruits, nuts, legumes, or grains. Applicants are advised to ensure that partnership projects are not made more complex than necessary – in some cases, a strong cross-value-chain partnership is the right approach, while in others it may be more appropriate to focus in depth on primary production. For partnership projects, the names of all partners should be publicly available.

The Board wishes to see projects that can drive change across Denmark, with municipalities and regions playing a central role in effectively embedding impact at local level.

Applicants are encouraged to review existing projects in the field (including the Plant-Based Food Grant's commitments from previous years) to ensure that their applications contribute added value, innovation, and/or synergies.

DISTRIBUTION OF RESOURCES WITH A FOCUS ON IMPACT GENERATION

In 2026, the Food Grant continues to prioritise the connection between projects' immediate results and their broader societal impact.

The impact management model is a tool to create greater alignment between individual project activities and their contribution to the development of the plant-based food sector, as well as a means to monitor the Plant-Based Food Grant's overall impact. Impact measurement also provides the basis for future evaluations and allows the Board and Secretariat to continuously follow up on results and effects at project and grant level. The Plant-Based Food Grant operates with two impact objectives within which projects are expected to work:

- 1. CHANGING FOOD BEHAVIOUR**
- 2. ECONOMIC GROWTH IN THE PLANT-BASED FOOD SECTOR**

In addition, three primary barriers have been identified in relation to achieving the two overarching impact objectives.

Achieving these two primary impacts will help to break down the barriers identified for the development of the plant-based food sector. Applicants must therefore incorporate considerations of which critical barriers to economic growth and transformation in the plant-based food sector they aim to address through the project.



Primary barriers

1.

FOOD HABITS AND CULTURE

A major challenge for the development of the plant-based food sector is that demand among Danish consumers lags behind, particularly compared with other Northern European countries. Higher production of plant-based foods is not profitable if demand is lacking. It is therefore crucial to make it easier for people to choose more plant-rich options. At the same time, for demand to increase, a wide range of appealing, tasty, and practical plant-based foods must be available on the market for demand to increase. The time available for meeting the green transition goals is short, and although an increasing number of new plant-based products are being launched, demand is only rising slowly.

2.

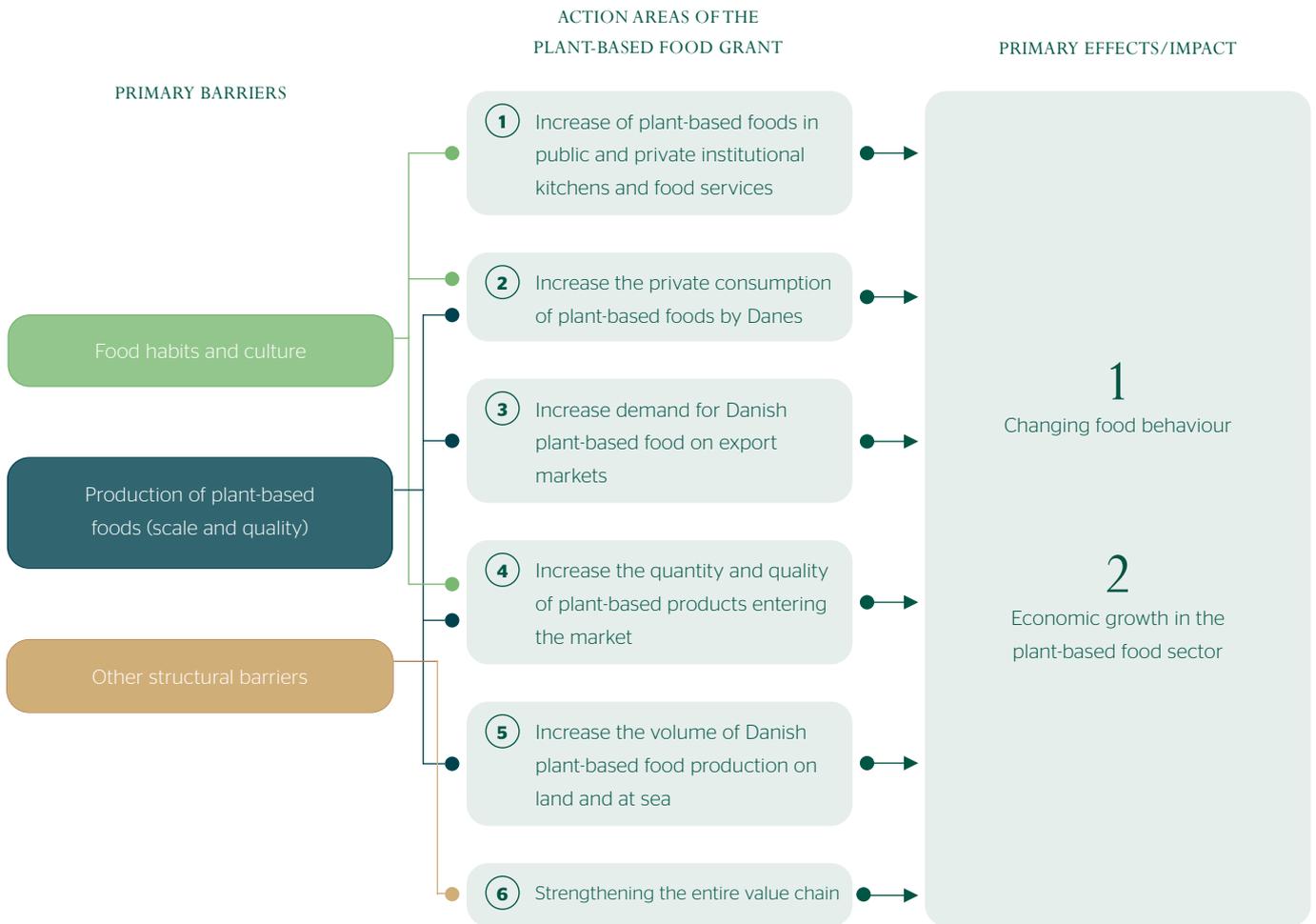
PRODUCTION OF PLANT- BASED FOODS (SCALE AND QUALITY)

When products fail to meet consumers' expectations for taste and quality it leads to disappointed customers who do not make repeat purchases. In addition, the supply is limited in several categories of plant-based foods, and in others, variety is restricted. For Danish production of plant-based foods to make a significant contribution to political targets, including climate reduction goals, much higher volumes are required than currently produced. To shift substantial percentages rather than just fractions of the population, Denmark must, as a pioneering country, demonstrate that it can create tasty, plant-rich meals that also help adjust our food culture toward more plant-based eating.

3.

OTHER STRUCTURAL BARRIERS

The Danish food sector is characterised by a strong animal-based value chain. It requires courage and commitment to overcome structural barriers and, for example, to initiate investments and initiatives in a new area such as plant-based foods. Regulatory and market conditions can make it difficult for a company working with animal products to transition to plant-based production. For many established food companies, this may require gradual technological steps – such as developing plant-based ingredients that can be combined with animal-based ingredients – to participate in the green transition and build experience that can later be applied to fully plant-based solutions. Changing education for food professionals is also not an overnight task. This affects how food is prepared and, consequently, which raw materials are used at scale. Plant-Based Food Grant projects must help drive change within the current framework while also addressing structural barriers.



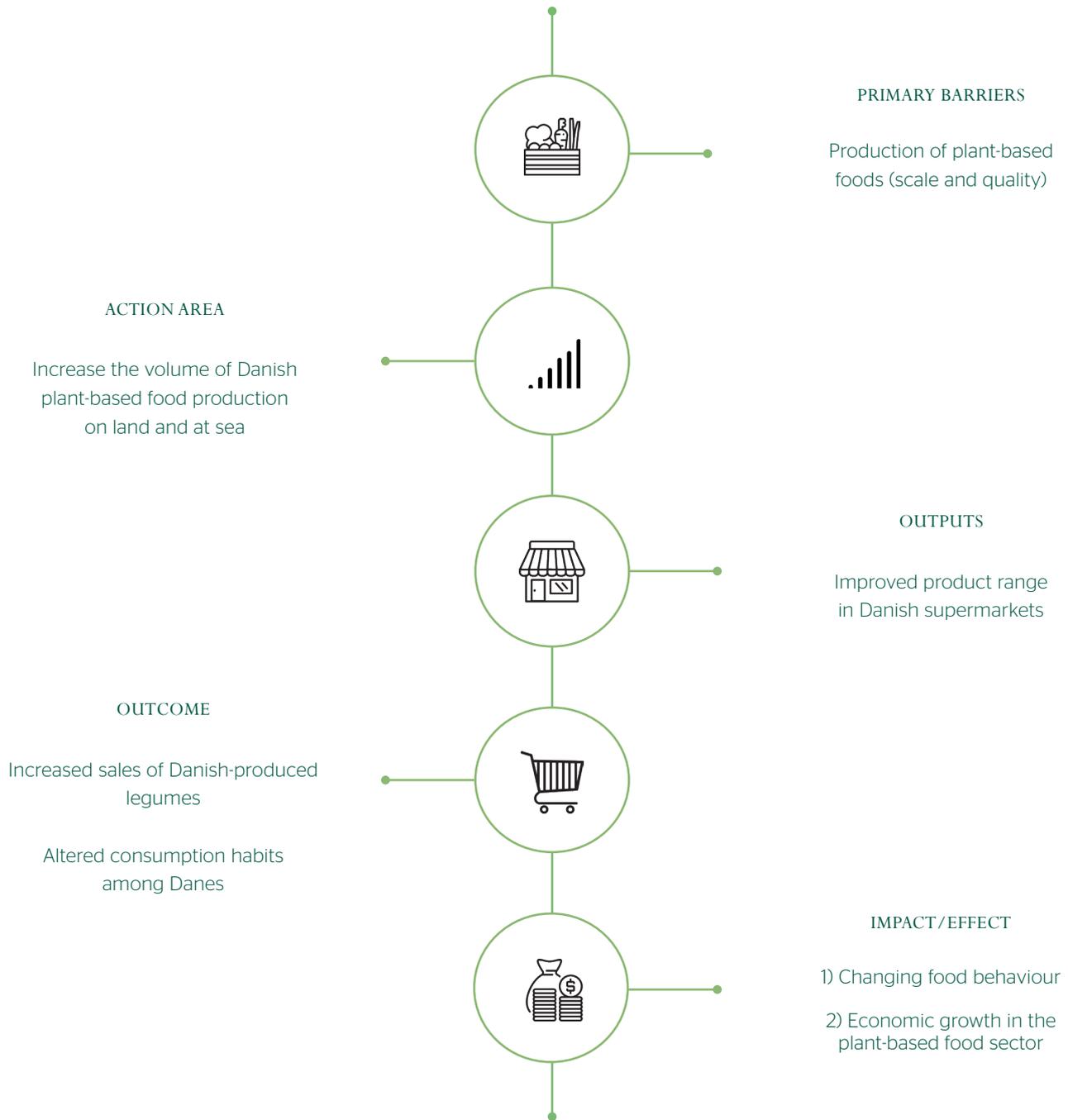
To ensure the desired societal impact, it is also important that projects focus on outputs and outcomes within the Plant-Based Food Grant's priority areas and describe how they intend to measure them.

Outputs are the most immediately measurable results directly linked to completed project activities, while outcomes are typically assessed over a longer period, as they represent the

desired effects of the immediate outputs. The model therefore measures both the direct project results (outputs) and the subsequent societal impact, such as changes in attitudes or behaviour (outcomes), within the Plant-Based Food Grant's six priority areas.

For example, a project aiming to promote the sale of Danish legume varieties would fall under priority area 4:

Example of project within action area 4:



See the table below for specific examples of project types and their respective outputs and outcomes.

For examples of designing and planning the measurement of outputs and outcomes, **see the Plant-Based Food Grant's guide on impact generation and measurement (in Danish)**



1 Plant-based food in public and private institutional kitchens and food services

STIMULATING DEMAND

ACTION AREAS FOR THE FOOD GRANT

The Plant-Based Food Grant seeks to support a stronger focus on, and increased demand for, plant-based foods wherever meals are prepared and served in large-scale kitchens for many people. This may lead to a tangible increase in the volume of demand for plant-based ingredients.

At the same time, plant-rich meals served in canteens can inspire guests, giving them the confidence and desire to incorporate more plant-based options into their everyday cooking.

This also applies to children and young people. In the same way, the Plant-Based Food Grant aims to help strengthen the focus on plant-based cooking in nurseries, schools, educational institutions, and other settings where children and young people spend time, eat, develop, and learn new things that they carry with them into later life.

**EXAMPLES OF PROJECT TYPES
THE FOOD GRANT WANTS TO SUPPORT**

Projects that experiment with high-quality, plant-rich meals in canteens and other large-scale kitchens, and that actively involve users. Advisory services, information initiatives, and training for kitchen staff in public and private kitchens preparing food for adults, young people, and children.

Development of teaching materials, etc., aimed at kitchen staff in public and private kitchens, including nurseries, schools, educational institutions, and restaurants, with particular emphasis on good taste.

Development of teaching materials for cookery schools, with particular emphasis on good taste. Other projects relating to food and dining culture, with a focus on plant-rich meals in public and private large-scale kitchens.

Many projects may beneficially be carried out in partnerships between different stakeholders, for example food producers and foodservice providers/public kitchens, etc.

PROJECT EXAMPLE

▷ Promote the use of high-value edible grains in plant-rich meals.

EXAMPLE OF OUTPUT

- ▷ Recipes and guidelines for the use of whole grains in professional meals.
- ▷ More chefs trained in the plant-based kitchen.

EXAMPLES OF OUTCOMES

- ▷ The Danish acreage of high-value edible grains is increasing.
- ▷ The supply of local grain varieties with high culinary quality is increasing.



2 Food culture and Danes as consumers of plant-based foods

STIMULATING DEMAND

ACTION AREAS OF THE FOOD GRANT

The Plant-Based Food Grant aims to make it increasingly attractive and easy for consumers to choose more plant-rich foods. This requires attention to Danish local products, as the tools and products that are considered “appealing” will vary depending on the target audience.

At the same time, it is important to work purposefully to remove or reduce the barriers people face when choosing plant-rich options in their daily lives.

The Plant-Based Food Grant emphasises that consumer-focused efforts must take into account the diverse values and preferences influencing food choices, in order to realise the Food Grant’s vision of fostering greater interest in plant-rich eating across the population in the coming years.

For a plant-rich diet to win widespread appeal, taste must be central. Yet taste is both individual and not the only decisive factor for what goes into the shopping basket. For some, whether a product is organic, locally produced, or climate-friendly matters most. For others, price, convenience, familiarity with the taste of meat and dairy alternatives, or how easily new products fit into traditional Danish dishes is key. For yet others, the degree of processing may be crucial. For the Plant-Based Food Grant, it is essential to support foods that align with dietary guidelines and are not unnecessarily processed. The Food Grant also supports products that fit into everyday Danish habits, such as convenience or on-the-go options, as healthy and sustainable food must be accessible and practical for everyone.

EXAMPLES OF PROJECT TYPES
THE FOOD GRANT WANTS TO SUPPORT

Consumer exposure to appealing and easy plant-rich foods as a means to increase consumption, for example through food events, development of catering options, campaigns, and social media. Projects that build on existing knowledge of sales-promoting activities and manage to embed such initiatives on a larger scale in retail, restaurants, eateries, canteens, and similar settings are particularly encouraged.

Demand-focused projects anchored in retail at a national level, for instance projects testing and promoting new ways to make plant-rich foods more attractive to consumers at the point of purchase.

National consumer-oriented campaigns aimed at enhancing skills and changing behaviour. Training of professional groups relevant to developing food culture among different population groups, including health professionals. Development of teaching materials, etc., for primary schools and other parts of the education system where children, adolescents, and students are taught cooking.

Projects that promote knowledge of the health benefits of plants, nuts, algae, and fungi, for example through upskilling of health professionals such as general practitioners, nurses, and other public health staff in national and municipal settings.

Other projects relating to food and eating culture among both adults and children, for example practical programmes such as school gardens, providing hands-on experiences in growing one’s own ingredients in nature.

PROJECT EXAMPLE

▷ Educational programmes in aquaculture: Cultivation of seaweed along the Danish coasts

EXAMPLE OF OUTPUTS

▷ Increased knowledge of cultivation methods, seaweed varieties, nutritional content, and preparation

EXAMPLES OF OUTCOMES

▷ Increased consumption of Danish-produced seaweed
▷ Expanded area for Danish seaweed production



3 Large-scale demand for Danish plant-based foods in Denmark and abroad

STIMULATING DEMAND

ACTION AREAS OF THE FOOD GRANT

The plant-based food sector holds significant growth potential for the benefit of the Danish economy and jobs, contributing to the desired green transition of the Danish food sector.

The vast majority of Danish fruits and vegetables are sold domestically, but exports of fresh Danish vegetables are increasing – particularly organic products. The Plant-Based Food Grant seeks to support this development in demand for Danish plant-based foods by funding activities that promote and strengthen not only domestic but also international demand for Danish crops and products, including for processed foods at an industrial scale. Increased foreign demand can play a key role in expanding overall production volumes in Denmark.

At this stage, the task goes beyond simply promoting products. The plant-based market needs to be created, requiring a coordinated effort with actors from multiple parts of the value chain. For this reason, the Plant-Based Food Grant prefers sales-promotion initiatives carried out by consortia, potentially including companies with relevant experience in the field. In such cases, the names of all partners should be publicly available.

**EXAMPLES OF PROJECT TYPES
THE FOOD GRANT WANTS TO SUPPORT**

Participation in trade fairs at home and abroad, as well as other sales-promotion activities, including through existing sales channels for Danish organic products etc. This could, for example, involve a Danish presence at major international fairs such as Fruit Logistica in Berlin, Fruit Attraction in Madrid, and Anuga in Cologne, among others.

Projects providing concrete tools to promote the export and marketing of Danish plant-based primary products and ingredients.

Consortia carrying out targeted export initiatives in individual countries or larger markets, such as Europe – covering both primary products and ingredients.

Broader export initiatives linked to relevant agendas in other countries, for example sustainability, health, and similar themes.

Projects can be effectively implemented as partnerships between different actors and companies, ensuring they promote the sector as a whole rather than individual businesses.

PROJECT EXAMPLE

- ▷ Export of plant-based products, made from Danish raw materials, to the food service sector in Germany

EXAMPLES OF OUTPUTS

- ▷ New knowledge on the export of plant-based foods to Germany
- ▷ Increased sales of plant-based products through promotional activities

EXAMPLES OF OUTCOMES

- ▷ More international buyers of Danish plant-based products
- ▷ Economic growth for Danish producers



4 Price, variety, quality and sustainability in crop and product supply

STIMULATING SUPPLY

ACTION AREAS OF THE FOOD GRANT

The Food Grant aims to support activities that help ensure a broad and varied supply of Danish-produced crops and products that are both appealing to consumers and aligned with demand from the Danish food industry and international markets.

There is also a need for research and development across areas such as the protein and nutrient content of varieties and products, resilience, and agricultural practices related to cultivation techniques, technology, environmental sustainability, and adaptation of future crops to the Danish climate.

Research and development can also focus on health aspects, such as low salt, saturated fat, and sugar content. Healthy, plant-rich foods, whether processed or unprocessed, can help reduce the risk of chronic diseases.

EXAMPLES OF PROJECT TYPES
THE FOOD GRANT WANTS TO SUPPORT

Skills development for primary producers, as well as innovation, research, and development projects linked to primary production, such as variety development, creation of new sustainable cultivation methods, and testing of new technology.

Projects involving multiple retail chains that promote a broader selection of plant-based products in supermarkets.

Innovation, research, and development in processing can include both new and improved products, as well as optimisation of taste, texture, nutrient absorption, and shelf life. The Food Grant can also cover research into process improvements and the purchase of necessary technology and equipment.

In addition, projects that help food service and the food industry deliver raw materials of the right quality and quantity can receive support, for example through practical tests, new packaging solutions, trial production, or collaborations with local organic producers.

Development and refinement of fungi and aquaculture plants such as macroalgae (seaweed) and microalgae, which can provide alternative crops and protein-rich or particularly nutrient-dense ingredients for new types of foods.

PROJECT EXAMPLE

- ▷ Study of the preventive and health-promoting effects of a more plant-rich diet on larger, relevant population groups

EXAMPLE OF OUTPUT

- ▷ Evidence of the health-promoting aspects of a more plant-rich diet

EXAMPLES OF OUTCOMES

- ▷ Health improvement in larger population groups
- ▷ Increased consumption of plant-based foods



5 Increased volume of Danish plant-based food production on land and at sea

STIMULATING SUPPLY

ACTION AREAS OF THE FOOD GRANT

The transition to plant-based production is central to the green transition and requires shifting more agricultural land from animal production to crops for human consumption.

Meanwhile, the number of fruit and vegetable growers is declining, and Denmark is losing its ability to supply fresh, local produce. The Plant-Based Food Grant therefore supports primary producers seeking to develop Danish fruit and vegetable production, legumes, nuts, and other crops for human consumption.

Strengthening collaboration across the value chain is particularly important to secure outlets in processing, retail, food service, and distribution. Closer cooperation between growers and buyers can reduce risk and encourage investment. Producers also need updated knowledge on crop varieties, cultivation, climate adaptation, and market opportunities.

Fruit and vegetable production is further challenged by high labour costs and limited technology to replace manual work, making new investment-ready technological solutions essential.

**EXAMPLES OF PROJECT TYPES
THE FOOD GRANT WANTS TO SUPPORT**

Projects involving research and development in the scaling up of production, including new technology and machinery, as well as projects that link fruit and vegetable growers more closely with the retail sector.

Partnership projects that strengthen collaboration and knowledge sharing across all relevant parts of the value chain within the Danish plant-based food sector.

Advisory support may be provided for scaling up, transition processes, cultivation guidelines, and market access, and primary producers may receive guidance or assistance with processing. Workforce development can also be supported, for example through teaching materials at agricultural colleges.

The Plant-Based Food Grant seeks to promote innovation and efficiency through projects that test and disseminate new technology adapted to local production conditions. This may also include AI solutions for harvesting, yield optimisation, biodiversity monitoring, or weed control.

PROJECT EXAMPLE

- ▶ Trial production of new legume varieties

EXAMPLES OF OUTPUTS

- ▶ Cultivation guidelines and recommendations for the most promising species, along with established collaboration between producers, wholesalers, and retailers.
- ▶ Completed consumer and market tests documenting consumer acceptance of and interest in the new products.

EXAMPLES OF OUTCOMES

- ▶ Strengthened competitiveness and innovation capacity in the Danish vegetable sector, along with an established knowledge base for breeding and development projects.
- ▶ Increased consumption of legumes and scaling up of production.



6 Strengthening the entire value chain

BUILDING SECTORAL BRIDGES

ACTION AREAS OF THE FOOD GRANT

The production of plant-based foods in Denmark is not anchored in a strong, unified sector in the same way as many other branches of Danish agriculture, which have a long historical tradition rooted in the cooperative movement, supported by well-established interest representation and more favourable funding frameworks.

If the production of plant-based foods in Denmark is to be strengthened in both quality and scale, there is a need to support the development of a coherent value chain for the sector.

Primary producers, manufacturing and processing companies, and sales channels developing and marketing new types of food products must think innovatively and be willing to take risks.

The Plant-Based Food Grant seeks to help strengthen the value chain itself by developing and establishing currently weak links and by connecting existing actors more closely.

Comprehensive scaling across all relevant stakeholders depends on greater mutual awareness, increased knowledge sharing about shared challenges and opportunities, and much stronger practical collaboration, resulting in more binding agreements across production, distribution, and sales.

EXAMPLES OF PROJECT TYPES
THE FOOD GRANT WANTS TO SUPPORT

Data collection and analysis projects in which multiple actors collaborate on annual market analyses repeated over several consecutive years.

Value chain development projects involving many parts of the value chain, for example agriculture (primary production), research (knowledge), companies (commercial potential), retail (consumer sales), organisations (cross-sector collaboration, knowledge sharing, campaigns), and others.

Network projects providing support for skills development and facilitating professional dialogue and peer exchange across value chain actors.

Knowledge-sharing projects or partnerships in which different actors in the value chain meet, document, and exchange experience and insights on key development areas and challenges, for example universities, farmers, companies, and others.

PROJECT EXAMPLE

▷ From farm to fork: Value chain project for fava beans

EXAMPLES OF OUTPUTS

- ▷ Increased transdisciplinary collaboration
- ▷ Knowledge sharing of challenges and opportunities

EXAMPLE OF OUTCOME

▷ Scaling up and strengthening the value chain for Danish fava beans, from research and development through production to market distribution



**The Plant-Based Food Grant
Action plan 2026**

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