



Plant Based World Returns to New York City

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After taking a hiatus in 2020, the Plant Based World Conference and Expo, the largest trade conference focused on plant-based foods, returned in December 2021 at the Javits Center in New York City.

Hosted by the Plant Based Foods Association, the conference featured more than 40 speakers ranging from plant-based chefs to food developers. The overriding message across the two-day event: Plant-based products have never been more popular. In her keynote address, Rachel Dreskin, CEO of PBFA, noted that plant-based food sales have increased 43 percent in the last two years. “I challenge you to find any industry that’s grown this much,” she said.

Nil Zacharias, host of the *Eat for the Planet* podcast, moderated a panel with Dreskin and executives from Kroger and the food-service industry on the market’s growth. The panelists cited health and [environmental concerns](#) as major drivers behind the public’s growing interest in plant-based products.

Unlike the [debut conference in 2019](#)—which was more consumer-facing, presenting health and nutrition information—this year’s show had a business-to-business focus, with an audience of retailers, food-service professionals, and suppliers.

“We created the Plant Based World Conference and Expo to serve the movement,” says Benjamin Davis, the conference’s vice president. “The most effective way to do that is to aid brands in getting their products on shelves and menus to make the whole plant-based movement more accessible to people everywhere.”

More than 3,000 attended the event, which took place Dec. 9–10, 2021, with all participants required to show proof of vaccination and wear masks. Each day began with a keynote address followed by presentations from leading chefs and food developers, including vegan restaurateur GW Chew (aka Chef Chew), who spoke about what motivates flexitarian consumers, and James Beard–award-winning chef Rocco DiSpirito, who spoke about turning meat eaters on to plant-based dishes.

A highlight of the show, however, was the expo floor, where over 200 exhibitors displayed their latest plant-based creations as well as products that won’t be available until 2022, most offering free samples.

The Plant Based World Conference and Expo will [return to the Javits Center](#) Sept. 8–9, 2022.

To learn more about a whole-food, plant-based diet, visit our [Plant-Based Primer](#). For meal-planning support, check out [Forks Meal Planner](#), FOK’s easy weekly meal-planning tool to keep you on a healthy plant-based path.