



# THE FUTURE OF PLANT BASED FOOD

AN EXPLORATION OF FOOD  
INDUSTRY OPPORTUNITIES

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Food for Thought: An exploration of Food Industry opportunities

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# The Future of Food – R&D

The future of the food industry is undoubtedly going to be driven by more technology and advancements to it. Research and development into innovation will be essential, to create solutions into friendlier products for both the environment and consumer health, two growing trends. In this report we'll delve into consumer sentiment and desires for the future, to help companies take advantage of potential opportunities.

## Awareness of Environmental Impacts

Consumers are becoming increasingly aware of the environmental impact of their purchases. Though not a priority for many at a time of increasing costs, ignoring concerns around this could be detrimental for businesses looking to maintain future growth.



# The Future of Food – R&D

## Technology in Food – the Plant-based Industry

The plant-based industry is already making strides by utilising technology to develop unique products that replicate the nutrients of mainly meat and dairy, without the disadvantages that come with these natural products.

**Have you ever tried a dairy alternative? (e.g. a plant-based milk, yoghurt, cheese, etc)**

Yes

67.26%

No

32.74%

Sent to National Representative Sample

## Plant-based Dairy Consumption Growing

An example is the plant-based dairy alternative market, which has been growing speedily recently and is believed to have much more potential in the future.

**Grocery Gazette Report**

**Got milk? Why plant-based alternatives are shaking up the dairy sector**

Already, as of February 2023, 67% of consumers have tried a dairy alternative.



# The Future of Food – R&D

## Plant-based Dairy Consumption Growing (continued)

We asked consumers why they purchase dairy alternatives.

Nearly 37% of consumers buy them as they like the taste. Also, 35% think they're healthier than the dairy alternatives, and 23% purchase them for environmental reasons / animal welfare.

Additionally, other traditionally dairy-based products are also developing alternatives, such as chocolate confectionary.

Right now, 52% of our nationally representative sample said they've tried such products, and though a fair amount liked them, they could taste the lack of 'creaminess' especially in milk chocolate alternatives. This means there is more room for R&D to be done here to improve consumer experiences.

**Why do you buy dairy alternatives? (e.g almond / oat / soy milk etc) (select all that apply)**

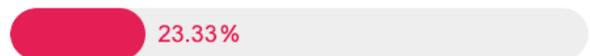
**I like the taste**



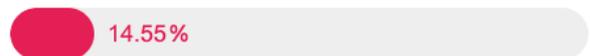
**They're healthier**



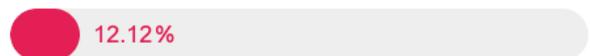
**For the environment / animal welfare**



**They last longer / more shelf life**



**I'm lactose intolerant / dairy doesn't suit me**



# The Future of Food – R&D

## Plant-based Meat Growing

Just like dairy alternatives, consumers are trying more and more products that are replicating the taste and textures of meat, aided – or perhaps fuelled – by the convenient ‘boom’ in such products hitting the market.

As of February 2023, 67% of consumers have already tried a plant-based meat alternative.

Interestingly, there are differences between age groups here – 79% of our younger audience aged 18-35 have tried such products compared to just 42% of those over 65 – which could indicate that some demographics are more set in their habits and will need more convincing.

### Have you ever tried a plant-based meat alternative?

Yes

67.12%

No

32.88%

Sent to National Representative Sample

We asked consumers why they purchase plant-based meat alternatives.

In comparison to reasons for purchasing plant-based dairy, the most popular reason here was that 37% simply like to try new items. Additionally, 31% are purchasing them for the environment / animal welfare, and nearly 29% because they believe they're healthier than their animal alternatives.

The meat and dairy industry can expect to see more people adopting such products, especially if they're promoting additional health and environmental benefits. Getting new consumers onboard, especially those who are more reluctant to trying new things, will always be a challenge, however one made easier with frequent research involving a company's respective target audience(s).

### Why do you buy plant-based alternatives? (select all that apply)

I like to try new things

37.35%

For the environment / animal welfare

31.63%

They're healthier

28.92%

I like the taste

25.9%

I like the texture

14.16%

They're better value / cheaper

10.84%

# Demand for Plant-based Options

Along with meat and dairy alternatives, we've seen consumer demands for Vegan meal products, especially those that use plants in innovative ways to create tasty dishes – whether that's meal components or ready-made meals.

When we targeted research at non-vegan/vegetarian groups (committed carnivores, omnivores, and meat reducers), we found that 33% are somewhat interested in trying plant-based food.

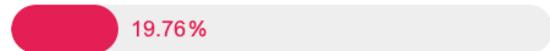
This is a very positive sign as it means there is a larger audience to promote products to and a real chance for this sector to keep growing. 18% are very interested, and 12% say they already buy these products.

## How interested are you in trying plant-based food?

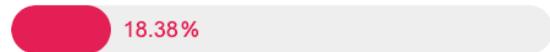
### Somewhat interested



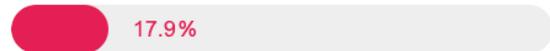
### Not at all interested



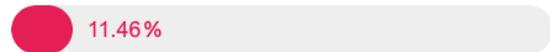
### Very interested



### Somewhat not interested



### I already buy these products



Sent to National Representative Sample

When we filtered the results further, we found that most of the people who voted 'Not at all interested' or 'Somewhat not interested' were predictably the committed carnivore group. We followed up to see what would make them more interested in trying plant-based, and found the following:

- More interesting options and flavours
- Less processed food, especially in meat alternative products
- Clearer ingredient labelling and quality sourcing
- More recipe ideas

# Appetite for More than ‘Meat’ & ‘Dairy’

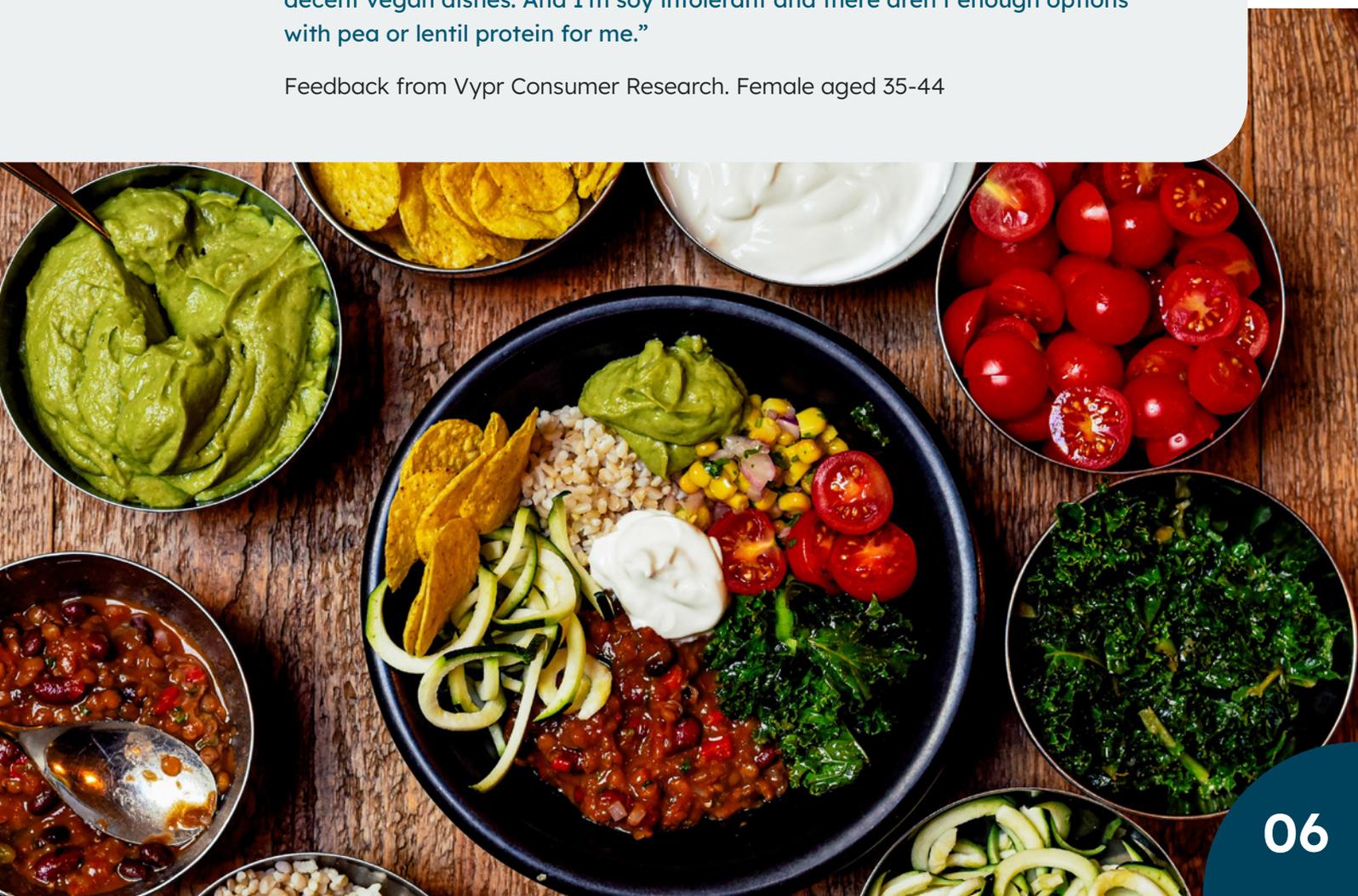
As discovered in Vypr research, groups that currently eat meat often do not view vegan/vegetarian food as appealing. Companies can grab their interest with other ideas such as new and unique recipes, instead of only focusing on emulating meat options, as plant-based can mean so much more.

Vegans / vegetarians also want to see new products, especially around seasonal holidays where there are not enough options. As one consumer identified below, there are plenty of options for meat alternatives, but it seems enough products have not explored the extensive opportunity of the desire for natural alternative ingredients.



“There are plenty of sausages, burgers and fake meat. Not every vegan wants fake meat. I’d like decent vegan options for lasagne, moussaka, pizza and shepherds pie that don’t rely on emulating the meat version. Lentils, beans and vegetables are perfect substitutes. I have to avoid most of what’s available because they add in the awful fake cheese which completely ruins otherwise decent vegan dishes. And I’m soy intolerant and there aren’t enough options with pea or lentil protein for me.”

Feedback from Vypr Consumer Research. Female aged 35-44



# Appetite for More than 'Meat' & 'Dairy'

## Additional Feedback



“One thing lacking in the supermarkets is vegan sandwiches mix, for example vegan sweetcorn and tuna and Mayo mix ready so people can make a quick sandwich”

Male aged 45-54

“More interesting dishes that are not just versions of meat products. Also at Christmas more availability as it's rubbish trying to find something good as a Christmas main course”



Male aged 35-44



“More crisps with no milk, more budget oven pizza options, more seitan options, cheaper tofu, cheaper and nicer chocolate options.”

Female aged 25-34

# Appetite for More than ‘Meat’ & ‘Dairy’

## Indy Kaur, Founder and CEO of Plant Futures

Vypr spoke to Indy Kaur as part of The Innovate Podcast, who emphasised this point – many people are not just looking for meat-mimics, especially vegetarians that have never eaten meat. Other groups of consumers that want to try plant-based foods also don’t want to try the meat alternatives as they just want the more veggie options, showing there is a demand for these innovations.

Watch the Podcast Episode

The Future of the Plant-Based Industry, with Indy Kaur



“We can look at innovation as being the food tech side of innovation... getting to the closest versions of animal-based proteins or dairy, but we could also keep innovation really simple in terms of lets just talk about veg”

“I’m hearing people who are omnivores who don’t really want to shop for plant-based alternatives – they want to eat meat when they want to eat meat, but then they want to explore new plant-based food but they just want it from plants”

- Indy Kaur, Founder and CEO of Plant Futures, sourced from the Innovate Podcast.

Lorem ipsum

# As Supply Chains Shift, so does the Future of Food

Not only will consumer preferences shift food choices, but also any unavoidable changes or shortages in supply chains. We've already seen this happen in 2022, where due to a shortage of eggs consumers were forced to switch to alternative ingredients, mainly where egg is used as an ingredient, like in baking.

In this way, R&D can help companies innovate to develop products using alternative ingredients that help solve consumer needs.

For example, look at what consumers are using as egg alternatives in the graphic on this page. From December 2022 when we first ran this research to February 2023, we've already seen an increase in those using buttermilk – from 11% to 16%.

In this way, research can help companies develop easy-to-use and convenient products that offer ready-made egg replacements, marketed specifically for this purpose to make it easy for consumers. Innovative solutions, combined with well-tested messaging, stand to gain a positive image with consumers, which can already be seen on shelves.

Technology is not only useful to adapt to a changing environment, it's also essential to creating new and unique methods for our future.

## If you were baking but couldn't buy eggs, what alternative would you buy?

### I would not bake it

34.9%

### Buttermilk

16.08%

### Yoghurt

12.94%

### Banana

12.16%

### Oil

10.59%

### Apple sauce

4.9%

### Aquafaba

10.00%

### Other

4.71%

Sent to National Representative Sample

# Cultivated Meat – Forward-looking or Freaky?

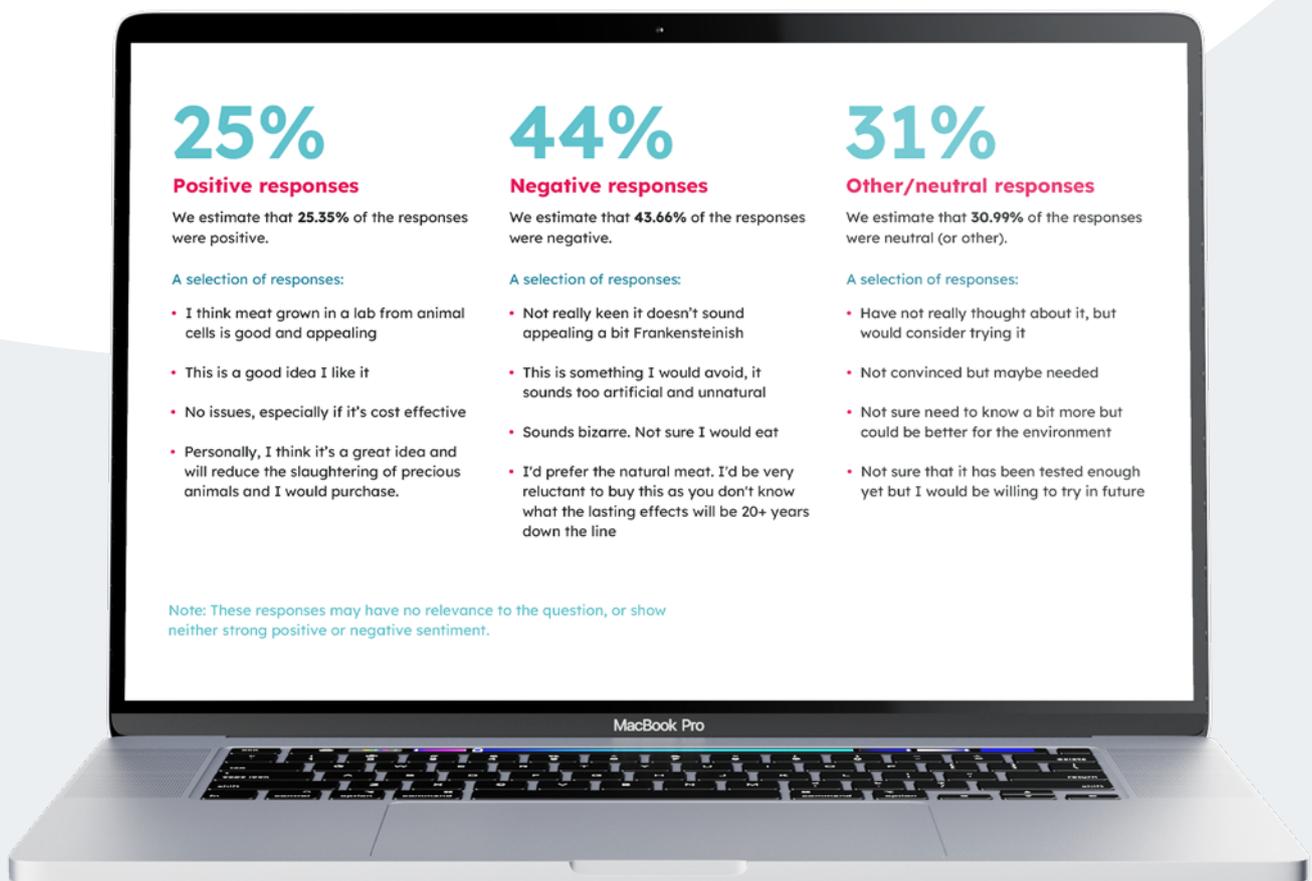
One such use of technology has already been in-the-works for a while – ‘cultivated meat’. It’ll be no surprise to see these products in the future. They involve the use of animal cells to ‘grow’ meat in a lab without the traditional animal farming and slaughtering processes that are questioned by many.

## Good Food Institute Report

## The science of cultivated meat

We asked consumers what they thought of such meat products, and received, as perhaps expected, a real mix of responses.

### What are your thoughts on meat grown in a lab from animal cells?



Overall, consumers are fairly open to consuming food products made using lab technology, with some understandable concerns. Read their thoughts in the quotes below.

# Lab-grown products – any concerns?



“None because I think it’s a smarter way to adapt food to be better for our bodies” - Female aged 25-34

“No I don’t worry about this, in fact it’s the future. Isn’t Quorn such a food product?” - Female aged 55-64

“Not really as long as they have been passed as safe by the food standards agency or preferably the EU food standards” - Male aged 65+

“Yes, what are the food products actually being made out of eg. what products, chemicals, substances will/do they contain?” - Female aged 55-64

“Yes it would be synthetic and so I’d be concerned about the manufacturing process” - Female aged 45-54

“I do because it alters the molecules and genetical makeup of foods. Our bodies are not equipped for it. We will suffer long term.” - Male aged 35-44

Cultivated meat grown from animal cells







All in all, technology will continue to drive growth through much more than just meat and dairy alternatives that are ruling the plant-based industry currently.

Investing in R&D is essential to creating innovative, fun, and functional products that help consumers in their everyday lives, whilst reducing the pressure on traditional systems that have large impacts on the environment.

# Our product intelligence platform makes it easy to get these insights.



Vypr is an online self-service platform that allows you to run research with consumers, whenever you need it.

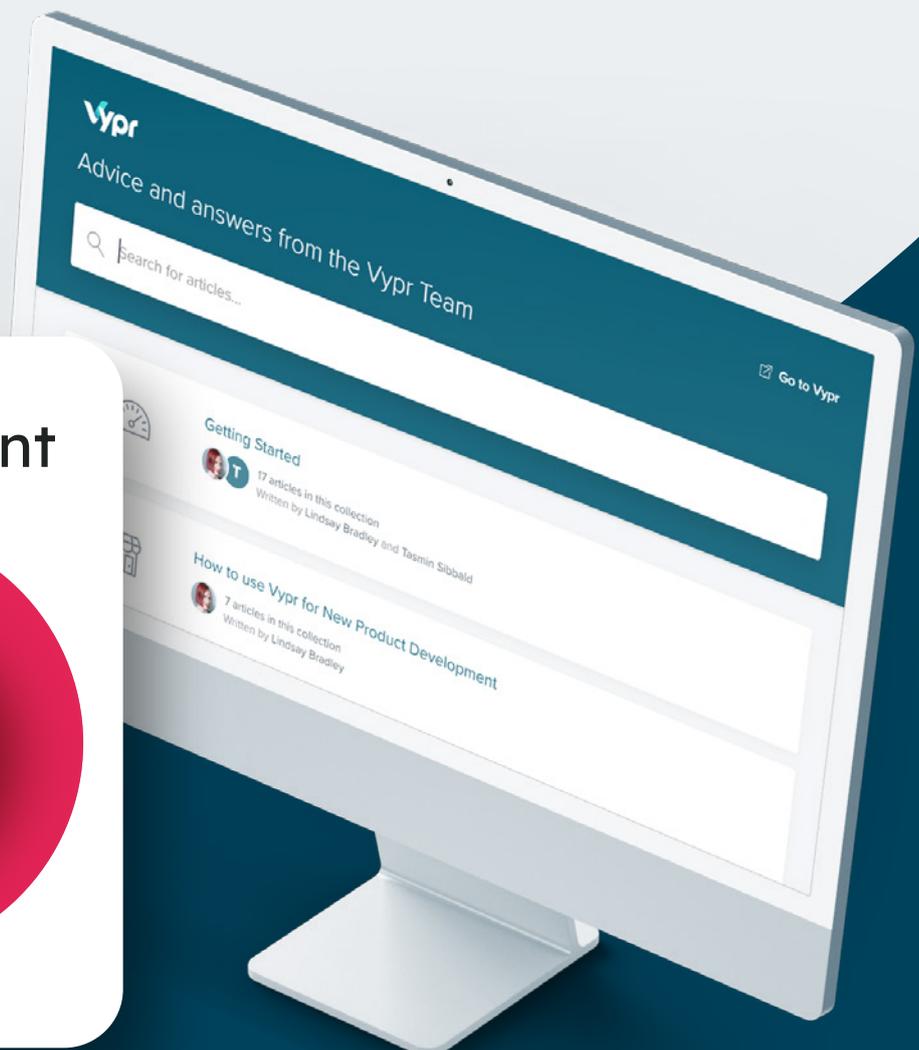
With Vypr, you get the consumer voice at your fingertips, meaning decision-making is rapid, robust and precise resulting in **better decisions, for winning products.**

Our service integrates effortlessly with current product processes, and our Steers (what we call research questions) take an average of 90 minutes to complete, so you can say goodbye to waiting for long-winded research reports, and **get insights when you need them, quickly and efficiently.**

Improvement

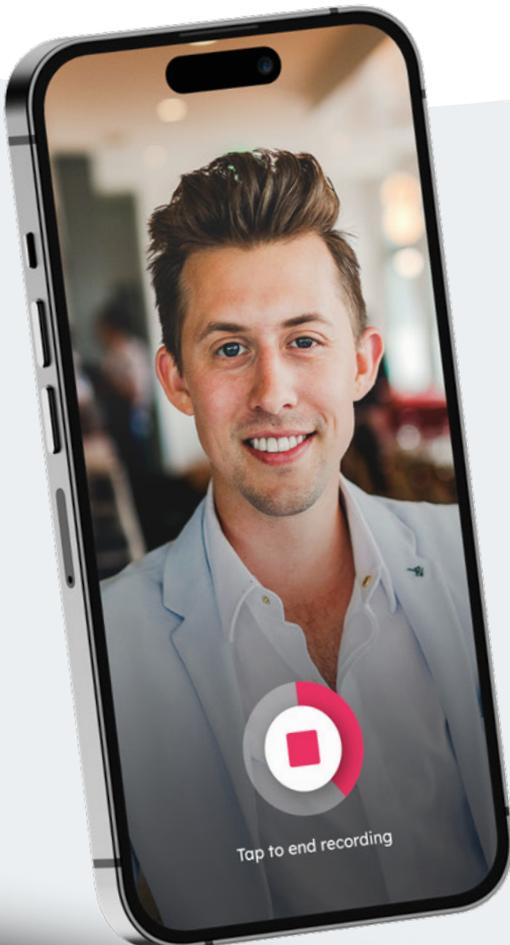
A graphic showing a 97% improvement. It features a white circle with a red border, and the number "97%" is written in red inside the circle.

97%



# Understand Consumers with Powerful Text Insights...

Our platform offers a variety of question types, a blend of Qual and Quant in 1 tool. You can find out consumer sentiment on any topic, figure out what they'd pay for a product, split-test concepts/adverts, and more.



## ...AND Video Insights!

With our latest feature, VyPops, you can now also get video answers directly from your consumers – **the most powerful visual proof of consumer sentiment.**

**Don't get left behind – Vypr makes it easy to get robust and reliable intelligence, and we're always here to help.**

Our team have years of experience in your roles, and know how to help you, whether you work in Category, Marketing, Brand, Commercial, or NPD functions.

**It's time to feed robust consumer intelligence into your product process to power decisions, wow stakeholders, and create engaging presentations that are sure to guarantee success.**

**The possibilities and benefits are endless**

# BETTER DECISIONS, WINNING PRODUCTS.

Ready to get robust consumer intelligence to power your product strategy? Get started with some free research!

Get FREE Consumer Research

