

## Schouten Europe Pushes for Stronger Dutch Plant-Based Food Value Chain

11 September 2026 | News

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Schouten Europe has joined a broad coalition of organisations calling on the Dutch government to develop a national Action Plan for More Plant-Based Food. The plan aims to accelerate the production and consumption of plant-based food in the Netherlands while creating new opportunities for the Dutch agricultural and food sectors.

The call was presented at Nieuwspoor in The Hague and handed to Members of Parliament Joris Lohman (CDA) and Anne-Marijke Podt (D66). A total of 46 organisations from across the Dutch food and agricultural system support the initiative. Alongside producers such as Schouten Europe, the coalition includes retailers, trade associations, producer organisations, foodservice companies, educational institutions and civil society organisations.

Schouten Europe has been developing plant-based foods since 1990 and sees significant opportunities to further strengthen the Netherlands' position in the international market for plant-based food.

Niek-Jan Schouten, CEO of Schouten Europe, "The Netherlands has everything it needs to remain at the forefront of plant-based food internationally. We have strong agricultural value chains, extensive knowledge and an innovative food industry. By investing strategically in innovation, production and market development now, we can accelerate the protein transition, create new economic opportunities and strengthen our international competitiveness. This is an opportunity the Netherlands must seize."

Schouten believes it is important to consider the entire value chain, not just consumption: from growing raw materials and developing products to production, availability and exports.

### Five pillars

The signatories propose developing the Action Plan for More Plant-Based Food around five pillars:

stimulating demand and improving the food environment;

strengthening cultivation and collaboration throughout the value chain;  
using public procurement as a lever to encourage plant-based consumption;  
investing in research and innovation;  
strengthening exports, branding and internationalisation.

The call includes a proposal to establish a Plant-Based Acceleration Fund of EUR 65 million per year. The fund would support initiatives throughout the value chain, from production and innovation to demand stimulation and exports. One third of the proposed fund would be specifically allocated to organic plant-based production.

For Schouten Europe, the focus on innovation and internationalisation aligns closely with the opportunities the company sees in the market. From the Netherlands, Schouten develops and produces plant-based and vegetarian products for retailers, foodservice companies, QSR chains and food manufacturers in more than 50 countries.

The market is also becoming increasingly diverse. Alongside traditional meat alternatives, demand is growing for products based on a variety of protein sources, plant-based ingredients and concepts that combine taste, nutritional value, convenience and affordability.