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Hybrid Dairy Proteins (Global)

Commercial Signals · October 2026

A Commercial watch on whether retailers and foodservice will ask dairy processors for hybrid dairy, conventional dairy blended with plant proteins and fats: the formats that have lasted, who is making them, and the naming rules that gate them in North America. Six signals from one cycle.

#	SIGNAL	CONFIDENCE	HORIZON	STATUS
1	Albert Heijn's private-label hybrid milk and yogurt at price parity, made by a conventional dairy processor, is the only commercially proven template for this category	High	Short-term (3–12 months)	Verified
2	Four branded hybrid dairy lines have been withdrawn while the one private-label range keeps expanding, pointing processors toward retailer-led private label	High	Short-term (3–12 months)	Review
3	St. Paul Group and Ornu North America are both offering industrial hybrid cheese for food manufacturers and pizza, making the industrial channel the nearest entry point for a dairy processor	Medium	Short-term (3–12 months)	Review
4	Canada's regulatory definition of 'dairy product' excludes any fat other than milk fat, so hybrid formulas made with plant oils cannot be sold as dairy products	High	Immediate (0–3 months)	Verified
5	Bipartisan congressional pressure and NMPF lobbying to enforce dairy standards of identity raise the risk for any hybrid product using unqualified dairy names	Medium	Short-term (3–12 months)	Verified
6	PlanetDairy's purchase of Stockeld Dreamery's meltability know-how and its processor partnership model offer a possible licensing shortcut for hybrid cheese, but North American rights and terms are unknown	Medium	Short-term (3–12 months)	Review

Every signal rests on two or more dated events. Confidence is published as a band. Where a signal sits below High, the reasoning names the evidence that is missing. Status says where the evidence stands: Verified, Review, or Inconclusive — we looked, and the evidence does not yet support a firmer call.

SIGNAL 1 OF 6

Albert Heijn's private-label hybrid milk and yogurt at price parity, made by a conventional dairy processor, is the only commercially proven template for this category

HIGH Short-term (3–12 months) · First Deployments & Adoption · **Verified**

A major European retailer launched private-label hybrid milk (60–70% dairy, fava-bean protein, sunflower oil) at the same price as its conventional own-brand milk, then added hybrid yogurt at a small discount to its own-brand dairy yogurt. An established dairy processor makes the range, and a specialist supplied the hybrid formulation. It is the first documented proof that the model works at national retail scale.

REASONING

Several independent trade sources report the same core facts: Albert Heijn listed hybrid milk nationally at parity with its own-brand dairy milk, Farm Dairy manufactures it, and PlanetDairy supplied the formulation. A second format, yogurt, followed and was priced EUR 0.10 below comparable own-brand dairy yogurt. The retailer treated hybrid dairy as a mainstream private-label line, not a specialty product, and had a conventional dairy processor make it. That maps directly onto a processor's existing private-label milk and yogurt business.

PATTERN

Albert Heijn launched skimmed, semi-skimmed and whole hybrid milk containing 60–70% conventional dairy, fava-bean protein and sunflower oil, manufactured by Farm Dairy with PlanetDairy as formulation partner. Just Drinks reported the national launch in June 2025 at EUR 1.39, made at Farm Dairy's Lelystad site. Trade coverage confirms the range sells at parity with Albert Heijn's conventional dairy milk. Albert Heijn's hybrid yogurt, 60% dairy and 40% plant ingredients (sunflower oil and fava-bean protein), was reported at EUR 1.49, EUR 0.10 below the retailer's own-brand 1.5% fat dairy yogurt. PlanetDairy confirmed Farm Dairy as manufacturing partner and the Netherlands as the national launch market. PlanetDairy's CEO confirmed price parity with dairy milk and said additional private-label projects were under way.

IMPLICATION

The benchmark for any North American retailer conversation is a mainstream private-label price point, not a sustainability premium. The manufacturing model, with an existing dairy processor running the formulation and a specialist providing the hybrid concept, fits a processor's private-label structure for milk and yogurt. The format sequence (milk first, then yogurt) and the ingredient set (fava-bean protein, sunflower oil) are the only ones backed by confirmed commercial evidence.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

By Q1 2027, build a retailer-facing feasibility package for a hybrid milk SKU using fava-bean protein and sunflower oil on a 60–70% dairy base, targeting conventional private-label price parity. Include line segregation, allergen controls, homogenization and label review. Do not propose a sustainability premium.

SOURCES & WHAT THEY SIGNAL

- [PlanetDairy — Groundbreaking launch of hybrid milks](#) — PlanetDairy confirms Farm Dairy as manufacturing partner and describes the national rollout in the Netherlands.
- [Albert Heijn hybrid yoghurt launch and Kerry Smug exit](#) — Confirms the hybrid yogurt at 60% dairy and 40% plant ingredients (sunflower oil and fava-bean protein), priced EUR 0.10 below own-brand dairy yogurt.
- [Dairy alternatives innovation strategy and market shifts](#) — PlanetDairy's CEO confirms price parity with conventional dairy milk and says more private-label projects are under way.
- [Hybrid milk hits the shelves - but will it fly with consumers?](#) — Confirms the national private-label launch, the 60–70% dairy formulation with fava-bean protein and sunflower oil, and Farm Dairy as manufacturer.
- [Albert Heijn launches hybrid milks in PlanetDairy tie-up](#) — June 2025 report of the national listing at EUR 1.39 and Farm Dairy's Lelystad site as the manufacturing location.
- [Difficult to disrupt: why Kerry exited hybrid dairy](#) — Confirms the Albert Heijn range sells at parity with conventional dairy milk.

SIGNAL 2 OF 6

Four branded hybrid dairy lines have been withdrawn while the one private-label range keeps expanding, pointing processors toward retailer-led private label

HIGH Short-term (3–12 months) · First Deployments & Adoption · **Review**

Kerry's Smug, Arla's Milk & Oats, DFA's Dairy+ and Triballat Noyal's Pâquerette were all withdrawn after launch, while Albert Heijn's private-label range grew from milk into yogurt. The format that has lasted is retailer-controlled private label, not a processor-owned brand.

REASONING

Branded hybrid lines from four companies in different markets have been withdrawn, including three from major dairy groups with established distribution. The only range that has demonstrably expanded is retailer private label. The pattern holds across enough companies to read as structural rather than a run of individual failures. For a processor, launching a proprietary hybrid brand is the high-risk path; contract or private-label production for a retailer that carries the commercial risk is the only format with a surviving reference.

PATTERN

Kerry confirmed its Smug hybrid range (milk, cheese and butter blended with oats) was out of production as of October 2025. Just Food reported that Smug hybrid milks were gradually removed from stores after about 18 months and that Kerry was 'saying goodbye to the hybrid dairy category.' AgFunderNews reported in November 2025 that Arla discontinued Milk & Oats, launched in 2018, and that Dairy Farmers of America's Dairy+ lactose-free 50:50 dairy-plant milk, launched in 2019, was reportedly discontinued in 2022. FoodNavigator reported that Triballat Noyal's Pâquerette and Compagnie 50:50 dairy-plant milk was no longer on shelves. Over the same period, Albert Heijn's private-label range moved from milk into yogurt.

IMPLICATION

A processor should not invest in a proprietary hybrid dairy brand. Large dairy companies with established distribution could not sustain branded hybrid lines, while the one surviving, expanding format is retailer-led private label. Any hybrid program should be structured as contract or private-label production for a named retailer, with the retailer holding brand and shelf risk.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Before any hybrid product development, secure a written retailer pilot commitment with velocity targets, a reorder threshold and a delisting contingency clause. Reject any proposal structured as a processor-owned branded hybrid line.

SOURCES & WHAT THEY SIGNAL

- [Albert Heijn hybrid yoghurt launch and Kerry Smug exit](#) — Sets Kerry's exit against Albert Heijn's private-label expansion into yogurt in the same period.
- [Hybrid milk hits the shelves – but will it fly with consumers?](#) — Confirms the June 2025 private-label hybrid milk launch that the yogurt range later built on.

- [Hybrid milks' search for the right blend](#) — Reports Smug was delisted after about 18 months and that Kerry was exiting the hybrid dairy category.
- [Hybrid dairy: how can innovators unlock a new category's potential?](#) — Reports Triballat Noyal's Pâquerette and Compagnie 50:50 hybrid milk was no longer available on shelves.
- [PlanetDairy buys Stockeld tech, but can hybrid dairy win over consumers?](#) — November 2025 report that Arla discontinued Milk & Oats (launched 2018) and that DFA's Dairy+ (launched 2019) was reportedly discontinued in 2022.
- [Difficult to disrupt: why Kerry exited hybrid dairy](#) — Confirms Kerry discontinued the Smug hybrid dairy range.

SIGNAL 3 OF 6

St. Paul Group and Ornuu North America are both offering industrial hybrid cheese for food manufacturers and pizza, making the industrial channel the nearest entry point for a dairy processor

MEDIUM Short-term (3–12 months) · First Deployments & Adoption · **Review**

St. Paul Group made its Tasty Melt Hybrid cheese matrix available to European food manufacturers in October 2026, ahead of a SIAL Paris launch, and Ornuu Ingredients North America lists hybrid cheese blends from 50:50 to 90:10 dairy-to-plant for pizza and foodservice. Industrial hybrid cheese is the format closest to confirmed demand for a processor that supplies shredded cheese.

REASONING

Two supply-side players are now positioning industrial hybrid cheese for food manufacturers. St. Paul Group's launch is European, but PlanetDairy's shredded hybrid pizza and TexMex cheeses are in nearly 500 ICA stores in Sweden, and Ornuu Ingredients North America lists hybrid blends on its North American applications page. Ornuu supplies pizza, QSR and ready-meal producers directly, which makes its listing the closest North American industrial signal in the findings. The band is held at MEDIUM because Ornuu's listing names no customer, launch date, plant ingredient or volume, and the St. Paul Group launch is European.

PATTERN

International Dairy reported on October 5, 2026 that St. Paul Group's Tasty Melt Hybrid, a cheese matrix combining dairy and plant ingredients, is available to the European B2B market in industrial formats, with an official launch at SIAL Paris on October 17–21. A mozzarella case study used 21% dairy and 79% non-dairy ingredients with a claimed 57% lower CO2 footprint than 100% dairy mozzarella; the ratio can be adjusted by application. Subsidiary Koninklijke ERU launched ERU Hybrid Gouda Spread, at 40% dairy, in early September 2026. Ornuu Ingredients North America's applications page lists 'Hybrid Blends (50/50 to 90/10)' among its pizza cheeses and describes foodservice and bulk packs for restaurants, QSRs, delis, institutions and ready-meal producers. PlanetDairy's Pizza Mix and TexMex shredded hybrid cheeses were reported in March 2026 to be rolling out to nearly 500 ICA stores in Sweden, including 80 ICA Maxi locations, and the company is also working with pizza and ready-meal producers.

IMPLICATION

For a processor that already supplies shredded mozzarella and pizza cheese to food manufacturers, the industrial channel, not retail, is the nearest actionable opportunity. Ornuu's North American presence as a supplier to pizza and QSR operators is the closest thing to a North American demand signal in the findings, even without a named customer or volume. St. Paul Group's 79% non-dairy mozzarella case study also shows that a wide range of dairy-to-plant ratios is technically workable.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

By Q4 2026, contact Ornu Ingredients North America to find out whether its hybrid blends are dairy plus conventional plant ingredients, which formats and dairy percentages are actively sold, and whether any named pizza or ready-meal customer has adopted them. Use the answers to scope a processor-side pilot.

SOURCES & WHAT THEY SIGNAL

- [St. Paul Group launches hybrid cheese solution with 57% lower carbon footprint](#) — October 5, 2026 report of Tasty Melt Hybrid's availability to European industrial customers, the SIAL Paris launch, the 21% dairy mozzarella case study and ERU Hybrid Gouda Spread at 40% dairy.
- [PlanetDairy expands into 500 ICA stores as hybrid cheese gains ground in Sweden](#) — Reports the shredded hybrid pizza and TexMex cheeses rolling out to nearly 500 Swedish stores and being marketed to pizza and ready-meal producers.
- [Ornu Ingredients North America — Applications](#) — Lists hybrid cheese blends (50:50 to 90:10) for pizza applications and foodservice customers; the closest North American industrial signal in the findings.

SIGNAL 4 OF 6

Canada's regulatory definition of 'dairy product' excludes any fat other than milk fat, so hybrid formulas made with plant oils cannot be sold as dairy products

HIGH Immediate (0–3 months) · Standards, Regulatory & Market Access · **Verified**

Under the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations, a dairy product is milk or a food derived from milk that contains no oil and no fat other than milk fat. Any hybrid formula using sunflower, rapeseed or coconut oil, the ingredients in the Albert Heijn and PlanetDairy reference products, falls outside that definition in Canada.

REASONING

The definition sits in section 1 of the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations, which govern food traded across provincial lines. It defines a dairy product as 'milk or a food that is derived from milk, alone or combined with another food, and that contains no oil and no fat other than that of milk.' Blending with another food is allowed; adding plant oil is not. Every confirmed commercial hybrid formula in these findings uses a plant oil, so the reference template cannot be carried into Canada unchanged. This is a compositional barrier, not a labeling detail.

PATTERN

The Safe Food for Canadians Regulations define a dairy product as milk or a food derived from milk, alone or combined with another food, that contains no oil and no fat other than that of milk. The Albert Heijn hybrid milk and hybrid yogurt both list sunflower oil as a plant ingredient. CFIA's Canadian Standards of Identity, Volume 1, sets compositional standards for specified dairy products, including cheeses, under the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations.

IMPLICATION

A hybrid made with plant oil cannot qualify as a dairy product in Canada. It would need a different classification and name, and possibly a different regulatory pathway, before interprovincial sale. The alternative is a Canada-specific formula that keeps milk fat as the only fat, with plant protein alone as the non-dairy component. Either way, this must be settled before a Canadian retailer proposal is made.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Before approaching any Canadian retailer, decide between a Canada-specific formula with milk fat as the only fat and a non-dairy product classification. Then get a written CFIA opinion on the chosen formula's classification and name. Treat this as a go/no-go gate, not a post-launch correction.

SOURCES & WHAT THEY SIGNAL

- [Safe Food for Canadians Regulations \(SOR/2018-108\), section 1](#) — Primary source for the definition: a dairy product contains no oil and no fat other than that of milk.
- [Albert Heijn hybrid yoghurt launch and Kerry Smug exit](#) — Confirms sunflower oil as a named ingredient in the Albert Heijn hybrid range.

- [Hybrid milk hits the shelves – but will it fly with consumers?](#) — Confirms fava-bean protein and sunflower oil as the plant ingredients in the Albert Heijn hybrid milk.
- [CFIA — Canadian Standards of Identity: Volume 1 — Dairy Products](#) — CFIA's compositional standards for dairy products, binding under the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations.

SIGNAL 5 OF 6

Bipartisan congressional pressure and NMPF lobbying to enforce dairy standards of identity raise the risk for any hybrid product using unqualified dairy names

MEDIUM Short-term (3–12 months) · Standards, Regulatory & Market Access · **Verified**

In a letter dated July 20, 2026, a bipartisan group of US lawmakers urged FDA to enforce dairy standards of identity and withdraw its plant-based milk labeling guidance, and the National Milk Producers Federation publicly backed it in early August. Any blended product that uses 'milk,' 'yogurt' or 'cheese' without a qualifying descriptor now sits in a more contested environment.

REASONING

This is political and lobbying pressure, not a final regulatory action, so the band is MEDIUM. Still, congressional letters, NMPF pressure and FDA's own standards-of-identity framework together create a higher enforcement risk than at the start of 2026. A hybrid that actually contains dairy is in a different legal position from a fully plant-based product, but the attention on dairy naming makes an unqualified name a liability either way. FDA standards of identity set required and optional ingredients, and sometimes proportions; products that do not comply cannot use the standardized name. FDA's draft guidance on plant-based alternatives addresses naming but does not settle hybrids.

PATTERN

Cheese Reporter reported that Sens. Tammy Baldwin and James Risch and Reps. John Joyce and Josh Riley wrote to FDA Acting Commissioner Kyle Diamantas on July 20, 2026, asking FDA to enforce dairy standards of identity, stop imitation products from using dairy terms, and withdraw its February 2023 draft labeling guidance for plant-based milk alternatives. The National Milk Producers Federation's statement of August 4, 2026, which describes the letter as sent that month, backed it and asked FDA to drop its current plant-based labeling guidance and stop plant-based products from using 'milk,' 'cheese,' 'yogurt' and 'butter.' FDA's Standards of Identity page states that standards specify required and optional ingredients, in some cases with proportions, and that non-compliant products cannot use the standardized name. FDA's draft guidance on labeling plant-based alternative foods addresses naming but gives no blanket authorization for products that blend conventional dairy with plant ingredients.

IMPLICATION

In the US, naming is now a launch-gate issue, not a post-launch compliance task. A hybrid that uses 'milk,' 'yogurt' or 'cheese' without a qualifying descriptor, or that does not meet the composition of the relevant FDA standard, faces a higher risk of FDA attention or competitor challenge. A descriptive name such as 'milk with plant ingredients,' the Albert Heijn precedent, may be safer, but its acceptability under US standards is not confirmed in these findings.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Before finalizing any North American hybrid product name or packaging, commission a written US regulatory opinion that maps the proposed formula against the applicable FDA standard of identity and confirms whether a qualifying descriptor is required. Complete it before retailer artwork is developed.

SOURCES & WHAT THEY SIGNAL

- [FDA — Standards of Identity for Food](#) — Standards specify required and optional ingredients; non-compliant products cannot use the standardized name.
- [Bipartisan group of lawmakers asks FDA to enforce existing dairy standards of identity](#) — Reports the July 20, 2026 letter, its signers, its addressee and its requests.
- [Lawmakers, NMPF press FDA to finally enforce dairy standards of identity](#) — NMPF's statement backing the letter and asking FDA to withdraw its plant-based labeling guidance.
- [FDA Draft Guidance for Industry: Labeling of Plant-Based Alternative Foods](#) — Addresses naming for fully plant-based alternatives; does not resolve products that blend conventional dairy with plant ingredients.

SIGNAL 6 OF 6

PlanetDairy's purchase of Stockeld Dreamery's meltability know-how and its processor partnership model offer a possible licensing shortcut for hybrid cheese, but North American rights and terms are unknown

MEDIUM Short-term (3–12 months) · Ownership & IP Position · **Review**

After Stockeld Dreamery shut down in late 2025, PlanetDairy announced it was acquiring selected production equipment and technical know-how from it, adding meltability capability to a co-development model built for dairy processors that want hybrid lines with minimal process changes. That makes PlanetDairy the most accessible formulation partner in the findings, though no North American licensing agreement or rights transfer has been disclosed.

REASONING

The Stockeld deal was reported as in progress in November 2025 and announced by PlanetDairy on January 2, 2026; no source states when it closed. PlanetDairy's own website and trade coverage describe a partnership model built around the processor's existing manufacturing. The band is held at MEDIUM because no source discloses licensing terms, territory, formula ownership or exclusivity, and no North American processor agreement is public. The signal still matters: meltability is the main technical barrier in hybrid cheese, and consolidation of that know-how creates a way for a processor to get formulation capability without its own R&D program.

PATTERN

Vegconomist reported on November 27, 2025 that PlanetDairy was acquiring selected production equipment and technical know-how from Stockholm-based Stockeld Dreamery, which had announced its closure the month before. PlanetDairy's own announcement, dated January 2, 2026, also describes the acquisition as in process. AgFunderNews reported the acquisition followed Stockeld's decision to cease operations. PlanetDairy's home page describes a partnership model in which its R&D team works with a customer's team and manufacturing supplier with 'minimal changes' to the existing supply chain, and names fava-bean protein, potato flour, rapeseed oil and coconut oil as plant ingredients. PlanetDairy's solutions page describes co-creation with retailers, food manufacturers and manufacturing suppliers. PlanetDairy's pizza cheese, mozzarella with 31% plant ingredients (rapeseed oil, coconut oil, modified starch, fava-bean protein and potato starch), was reported in March 2026 to be rolling out to nearly 500 Swedish ICA stores, including Maxi locations.

IMPLICATION

For a processor that does not want to develop hybrid cheese formulas in-house, PlanetDairy is the best-documented potential partner in these findings. The processor needs to establish whether PlanetDairy will license formulations in North America, what rights and restrictions apply, and whether the Stockeld-derived

know-how carries any encumbrances. The 31% plant-ingredient pizza cheese is directly relevant to a shredded-cheese operation with food-manufacturer customers.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

By Q4 2026, open a formal conversation with PlanetDairy about a North American licensing or co-development arrangement. Require written disclosure of formula ownership, allergen controls, process-change requirements, patent coverage, territory and exclusivity before agreeing to any pilot.

SOURCES & WHAT THEY SIGNAL

- [PlanetDairy — Home Page](#) — Describes the partnership model for dairy processors with minimal supply-chain changes and names its plant ingredients.
- [PlanetDairy — Solutions](#) — Describes co-creation with retailers, food manufacturers and manufacturing suppliers.
- [PlanetDairy buys Stockeld tech, but can hybrid dairy win over consumers?](#) — November 2025 coverage of the acquisition following Stockeld's decision to cease operations.
- [PlanetDairy — We are strengthening our innovation capabilities!](#) — PlanetDairy's January 2, 2026 announcement that it is acquiring selected production equipment from Stockeld Dreamery.
- [PlanetDairy acquires equipment and technology from Stockeld Dreamery](#) — November 27, 2025 report of the acquisition of selected production equipment and technical know-how, then in progress.
- [Sweden's largest retailer is now selling hybrid dairy cheese in nearly 500 stores](#) — March 2, 2026 report of the 31% plant-ingredient pizza cheese rolling out to nearly 500 ICA stores, building on a 30-store pilot.

SET UP A SIGNAL ON YOUR QUESTION

A watch on your question runs every cycle.

These signals came from one cycle of a standing watch. Name a company, a market or a regulation, and the watch keeps running whether or not anyone opens the platform. Every signal arrives rated for confidence and horizon, with the dated events behind it and the sources that carry the weight.

See all the samples and tell us your question at ezassi.com/ezassi-signals-sample-library.

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