

Almond, soy drinks can be called milk, FDA proposes

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Plant-based beverages that use oats, soy, almonds, cashews and other

products instead of dairy can continue to call themselves milk.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration [released new draft rules](#) on Wednesday, and the agency will accept comments on the draft through April 23.

These [products](#) don't pretend to be from cows, the FDA guidance said, and American consumers aren't confused by the "[milk](#)" name.

Producers of these products, made from the liquid extracts of plants, will need to clearly label them with their plant source, calling them, for example, "soy milk."

The FDA is also asking for voluntary extra nutrition labels on the products if they have lower levels of the nutrients than dairy milk contains, including calcium, magnesium and vitamin D.

While the National Milk Producers Federation, an industry trade group, approved of the decision asking for extra nutrition information, they rejected the FDA conclusion that the word milk is a "common and usual name," the *Associated Press* reported.

The Good Food Institute, an advocate for plant-based products, said "the guidance misguidedly admonishes companies to make a direct comparison" with cow's milk, the *AP* reported.

Key nutrients are already listed on labels of plant-based milk. Fortified [soy milk](#) is the only plant-based option that meets U.S. dietary guidelines for dairy.

While plant-based milks do big business, cow's milk far outsells them still.

Refrigerated cow's milk sales grew to \$12.3 billion in the year ended Jan. 28. Non-dairy milk made \$2.5 billion, according to NielsenIQ, the *AP* reported.

Among the plant milks, almond remains most popular and oat milk is growing fastest.

More information: The U.S. Department of Agriculture has [more](#) on cow's milk and plant-based milks.

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