

# Planet A Foods Raises \$30M Series B to Industrialize and Solidify its Position as Leader in Sustainable Food Innovation

*The B2B foodtech startup accelerates its international expansion, scaling production to meet surging demand for its brand ChoViva, the leading cocoa-free chocolate alternative.*

## Key Highlights:

- **Market Opportunity:** The global chocolate industry, valued at \$130 billion<sup>1</sup>, is under pressure due to environmental and social costs of traditional cocoa farming.
- **The solution:** With ChoViva, Planet A Foods offers an innovative, scalable solution: a cocoa-free chocolate alternative that saves approximately 80% of carbon emissions, while delivering the same delicious taste and texture that consumers know and love.
- **Funding Amount:** \$30M, co-led by Burda Principal Investments (BPI) and Zintinus.
- **Production Capacity:** Scaling production from 2,000 to over 15,000 tons of ChoViva per year in an IFS-certified facility and through strategic partnerships, ensuring consistent quality at an industrial scale.
- **Global Expansion:** Successful product launches in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, with the UK and France confirmed for Q1 2025. Strategic partnership discussions are underway for the US and Asia.
- **Innovative Products:** Ongoing investment in R&D to expand the range of ChoViva recipes, and to develop a specialty fats solution, aimed at replacing cocoa butter.
- **Team Growth:** Hiring world-class talent across R&D, production, and commercial functions to bolster the current team of 60+ experts.

**Munich, Germany, December 6th 2024:** Planet A Foods, the next-generation ingredient pioneer delivering sustainable ingredients to the food industry, today announced it has closed a \$30 million Series B equity funding round. The funds will further strengthen Planet A Foods' leadership in sustainable food innovation, accelerating international expansion and the scaling of production capacities nationally and internationally.

Founded in 2021 by siblings Dr. Sara Marquart and Dr. Maximilian Marquart, Planet A Foods is redefining the future of chocolate with ChoViva, the world's leading cocoa-free chocolate alternative. Made from sunflower seeds, ChoViva offers the rich, indulgent taste and velvety texture that consumers love from chocolate—without the cocoa. This innovation delivers approximately 80% fewer carbon emissions compared to chocolate, supporting the fight against climate change and the environmental challenges of traditional cocoa farming. ChoViva is featured in over 20 products and trusted by major partners like Lambertz, Lindt, Rewe Group and Deutsche Bahn.

The round was co-led by Burda Principal Investments and Zintinus, with participation from World Fund, Bayern Kapital, Cherry Ventures, Tengelmann Ventures, BayWa Venture and Omnes Capital. Driven by the global push for sustainable food alternatives, Planet A Foods is now setting its sights on dominating the global stage. Following successful product

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<sup>1</sup> According to [MarkNTel Advisors](#)

launches in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, the company is set to debut in the UK and France in the first quarter of 2025. This latest investment will enable Planet A Foods to scale production from 2,000 to over 15,000 tons annually, leveraging both its own facilities and strategic partnerships to meet surging demand.

Dr. Maximilian Marquart, CEO and co-founder, declared: *"This Series B round marks a major milestone for us. With 30 million dollars in fresh funding and an industry-leading product, Planet A Foods is no longer just a startup - we're now on the way to becoming a leading foodtech player reshaping the sustainable food industry. Our mission remains unchanged: to provide sustainable food ingredients that are decoupled from price volatile and limited resources such as cocoa. This funding will enable us to further expand into new markets, ramp up production, and deliver at scale to global confectionery giants."*

Julian von Eckartsberg, Managing Director of Burda Principal Investments, emphasized the strategic importance of the partnership: *"Our investment in Planet A Foods reflects our commitment to supporting groundbreaking solutions that address critical global challenges like sustainable food production. We are excited to support Planet A Foods in scaling their business and expanding their brand ChoViva into new markets, driving growth, and building more resilient, climate-conscious food systems and supply chains in general on a global scale."*

Christian Neuss, Partner at Zintinus added: *"Planet A Foods combines scientific excellence with a clear focus on sustainability. Scaling innovations like ChoViva is a significant challenge, and we believe the right support is crucial to unlock full potential. Therefore, we are excited to support Planet A Foods with knowledge, networks and capital on their journey to becoming a market leader in sustainable food and to make a positive impact on both the environment and the food industry."*

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### **A sustainable solution for an industry threatened by climate change**

The global chocolate industry, valued at \$130 billion, faces growing challenges from both environmental and economic pressures. Climate change threatens the long-term viability of cocoa supplies, while conventional cocoa farming contributes to deforestation, biodiversity loss, and significant carbon emissions. Additionally, the industry has been heavily impacted by volatile cocoa prices, increasing uncertainty for producers and consumers alike.

ChoViva offers an innovative, scalable solution: a cocoa-free chocolate alternative produced through a proprietary fermentation process using locally sourced sunflower seeds. This innovative process dramatically reduces carbon emissions—approximately 80% less than chocolate production—while significantly reducing the cost of material and delivering the same indulgent taste and texture that consumers love.

Dr. Sara Marquart, CTO and co-founder, commented: *"At Planet A Foods, we believe the future of food must be sustainable, ethical, and scalable. ChoViva empowers producers to create 100% cocoa-free products, reducing reliance on vulnerable supply chains and making a tangible impact on the environment. This Series B allows us to scale our impact and strengthen our position as the go-to partner for sustainable chocolate innovation."*

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## Industry-Leading Partnerships & Awards

Planet A Foods' rapid growth has already resulted in collaborations with confectionery and FMCG leaders. Key achievements include:

- **Retail Presence:** ChoViva products debuted in German supermarkets in 2023 and are expanding rapidly across Europe, with over 20 products available in over 42,000 retail stores so far.
- **Award-Winning Innovation:** Products featuring ChoViva have received numerous industry awards, including the *New Product Showcase* and *Consumer Award* at ISM, as well as the *Bestseller Awards* for most successful product innovations in 2024 by Rundschau für den Lebensmittelhandel in partnership with Peter Kölln and Griesson-de Beukelaer.
- **Brand Partnerships:** Planet A Foods collaborates with leading brands such as Deutsche Bahn, Griesson - de Beukelaer, Lambertz, Lindt, Lufthansa, Peter Kölln, Piasten (Treet's) and Stella Bernrain. Building on the latest trends, the newest product, a Dubai bar with ChoViva, was developed in collaboration with Seidl Confectionery.

With this latest funding round, Planet A Foods is primed to accelerate its growth, expanding its global footprint and strengthening its position as a leader in the sustainable food sector. The company remains committed to its mission of providing innovative, sustainable ingredients that meet the growing demands of the food industry, while tackling the challenges posed by limited resources such as cocoa.

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### About Planet A Foods

Planet A Foods GmbH develops sustainable, future-proof food ingredients using the most innovative preparation processes, allowing them to be produced independently of limited resources like cocoa. The company exclusively uses natural ingredients, contributing to a socially just and environmentally friendly food industry. The startup's portfolio includes the world's first cocoa-free chocolate alternative, ChoViva, made with sunflower seeds.

Founded in 2021, Planet A Foods employs around 60 people. The company is headquartered in Planegg near Munich and produces in Pilsen, Czech Republic. The company is led by co-founder Dr. Sara Marquart as CTO, co-founder Dr. Maximilian Marquart as CEO, and Stefan Rost as CFO.

For more information, visit [www.planet-a-foods.com](http://www.planet-a-foods.com).

### About Burda Principal Investments

Burda Principal Investments (BPI) is a leading international growth capital investor with offices in London, Munich, Berlin, and Singapore, investing across Europe, the US, and Asia. As a partner, BPI utilizes deep market expertise to support visionary entrepreneurs scaling their businesses and expanding globally. Born out of Hubert Burda Media, BPI leverages a vast network of global brands. Across sectors such as marketplaces, fintech, foodtech, cybersecurity, and AI, BPI's portfolio includes numerous successful and fast-growing companies including Vinted, Nord Security, Aleph Alpha, Bloom & Wild, Carsome, NeoTaste, and BillEase.

For more information, visit [www.burdapincipalinvestments.com](http://www.burdapincipalinvestments.com)

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### **About ZINTINUS**

ZINTINUS is a Berlin based Food Tech Growth Capital Fund with a focus on solutions in alternative proteins, functional food, clean nutrition and food waste reduction. ZINTINUS aims to contribute its unique combination of knowledge, experience and network to the positive transition of the food systems creating the basis for superior value generation along the whole chain to the benefit of consumers, the environment and investors.

For more information, visit [www.zintinus.com](http://www.zintinus.com)

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