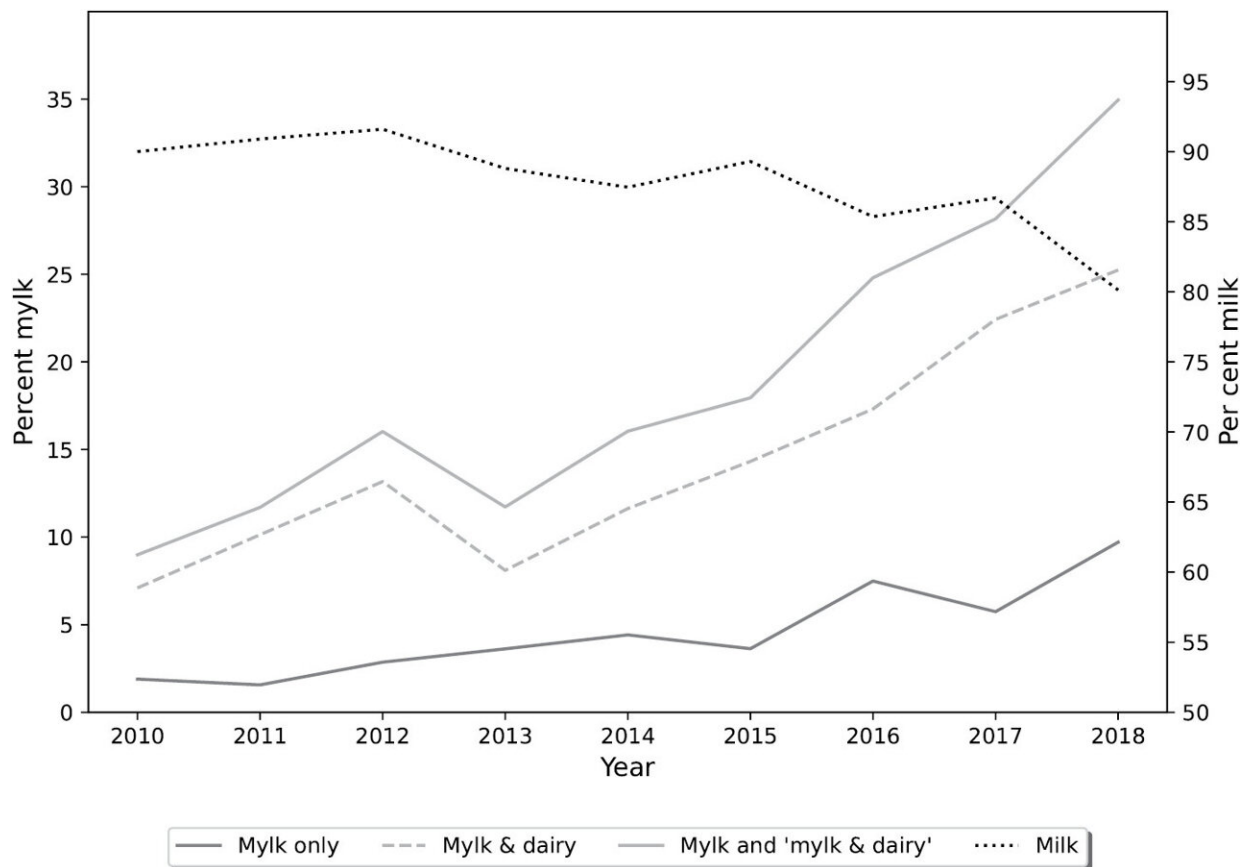


Sustainable consumption by product substitution? Appropriation of plant-based 'mylk' in everyday life

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Percentage of the population consuming mylk. Credit: *Consumption and Society* (2023). DOI: 10.1332/PREN9891

Josephine Mylan has co-authored an [article](#) in the journal *Consumption and Society*, "Sustainable consumption by product substitution? An exploration of the appropriation of plant-based 'mylk' in everyday life."

Many mainstream visions of sustainable societies assume that 'green' products will come to replace existing ones, reducing the footprint of [consumption](#) and enabling daily life to continue relatively undisturbed. However, several sustainable consumption studies have demonstrated that product substitution is not necessarily a straightforward process.

This article asks whether the increased consumption of plant-based "mylk," which is marketed as a more sustainable option compared to dairy milk, can be understood as a case of sustainable consumption via product substitution.

The study applies a mixed methods approach, combining [quantitative data](#) from the National Diet and Nutrition Survey with secondary qualitative data from the Mass Observation Archive. The researchers find that while the consumption of mylk has increased and that of milk decreased, this cannot be characterized as a straightforward case of substitution.

Many people consume mylk alongside milk, rather than cutting milk consumption entirely. Rising mylk consumption requires the engagement of new, sometimes conflicting, meanings around health and the environment. In addition, a range of situational factors constitute unequal mylk consumption in society, and provisioning systems present important drivers and barriers that shape mylk consumption.

Overall, the researchers' [account](#) suggests that moving towards sustainable consumption is not a simple process of product substitution as mylk is often consumed in addition to milk, and as this process requires adjustments in practices and meanings, unfolds unevenly within

society, and is shaped by [production systems](#) rather than just demand.

More information: Milena Büchs et al, Sustainable consumption by product substitution? An exploration of the appropriation of plant-based 'mylk' in everyday life, *Consumption and Society* (2023). [DOI: 10.1332/PREN9891](#)

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