Dear President Juncker/President-elect von der Leyen,

I am writing regarding The Vegan Society’s [‘Play Fair for Plant Milk’](https://www.vegansociety.com/take-action/campaigns/play-fair-plant-milk) campaign, in recognition of the of the inequality surrounding the promotion and favouring of animal milk over plant milk in global public health initiatives, such as the European School Milk Scheme. **I am therefore writing to advocate for fortified plant milk[[1]](#footnote-1) to be incorporated as part of the scheme**.

The regulation of the existing scheme states that schools and other educational institutions will provide animal milk for a subsidized price but does not include an option to provide non-dairy milks, as an alternative within the scheme. As vegan pupils do not consume the milk of any animals, but consume plant milks instead, this therefore indicates an act of indirect discrimination towards these pupils, by preventing them from accessing the benefits of this scheme.

Evidence from The Vegan Society states that the number of vegans continue to rise at a rapid rate, having quadrupled over four years in Britain by 2018. This therefore reinforces that there are a significantly high number of children who are being excluded from the current scheme. As vegans are protected under the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR) and fundamental rights law, I would like to see the existing scheme amended, in order to promote equality for vegan pupils.

Given the current climate crisis, **it’s more imperative than ever to promote environmentally sustainable schemes.** Incorporating fortified plant milks would support this, due to the numerous environmental benefits of plant milk. Plant milks are a more sustainable choice than dairy milk, requiring far less land and water, whilst also generating fewer greenhouse gas emissions. Research has shown that oat milk, for example, requires less than 10 times the amount of land, 9 times the amount of water and produces on average, 3 times fewer greenhouse gas emissions than cow’s milk. In order to meaningfully tackle the climate crisis, we must consider making sustainable choices - such as plant milks - more accessible, whilst continuing to support nutritional needs.

I would therefore like to the see the EU School Milk Scheme be made far more inclusive, and avoid discrimination towards vegans, by including fortified plant milks, allowing vegan children – as well as those who don’t drink milk for other reasons – to enjoy the benefits of being able to access affordable and nutritious drinks within school.

I hope you will support the campaign and consider the incorporation of fortified plant milks into the EU School Milk Scheme. I look forward to hearing your thoughts.

Yours Sincerely,

[Sender Name]

1. The European Court of Justice ruling in Case C-422/16 (“TofuTown”) on 14 June 2017, confirmed the restrictive interpretation of the relevant provisions of Regulation No 1308/2013 (CMO Regulation). We are aware that this only allows dairy terms, such as ‘*milk’*,to be used to market animal milk and not plant-based alternatives, such as soya, oat, almond or rice milks. Whilst we disagree with this ruling it must be noted that terms like ‘soya milk’ continue to be used widely - by vegans and non-vegans alike - in everyday usage, to refer to these products. Whilst we have collectively referred to these products as ‘plant milks’ in this letter, we are not opposed to them being referred to differently in the scheme, i.e. ‘plant drinks’, if this ensures that these products – which meet the nutritional asks of the scheme – are incorporated in the scheme. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)