



## Jerónimo Martins

Carlos Santos, Quality & Private Brand Development  
Global Director at Jerónimo Martins, explains how  
they inspire customers to try a more diverse and  
healthier diet across their retail brands.

***“We place fruits and vegetables at the entrance of our food stores regardless of the banner, and we actively promote the consumption of less processed food.”***

**Q:** How do you help consumers test plant-based products, recipes and a plant-rich diet in general?

**A:** At the heart of our private brand development lies a simple commitment: to empower consumers with trustworthy dietary options, freedom of choice and accurate information. As we operate food retail chains specialised in the quality of fresh products, we actively promote the consumption of less processed food. This starts with a special focus on fresh fruits and vegetables, while also ensuring healthy, ready-to-eat soups and meals prepared daily in our takeaway sections – always made with fresh, natural ingredients and including vegetarian options.

**We do this based on our firm conviction that a diverse and balanced diet is key to healthy living.** That is why we actively promote the Mediterranean diet, an immaterial heritage of humankind, which defines a role and portions for all nutritional groups of foods.

Year after year, we have been reinforcing both the availability and the diversity of healthy alternatives on our shelves. Today, across the countries where we operate, **consumers can choose from 1,880 alternative products, including gluten-free, lactose-free, vegan/vegetarian or organic.**

Providing clear and accessible information is a pillar of our approach to healthy food. **We promote literacy around product labelling and apply labels** such as Nutri-Score to all new private brand food launches in Portugal and to selected categories in Poland. This simple, easy to read system helps consumers to compare the nutritional profiles of similar products, supporting the informed choices that match their needs and values.



**Figure 1:** [Jerónimo Martins places fruits and vegetables at the entrance of their food stores regardless of the banner](#)

**Q: Which elements did you include to make it easier for consumers to take relevant first steps towards a more diversified and healthier diet?**

**A:** To lower the barriers to healthier food, while preserving free and informed choice, we have included a set of practical elements that help democratise access to nutritious and more diverse options, including plant-based ones. **Central to this effort is the range, availability and affordability of healthier options across all the countries where we operate.** In our stores, consumers can easily find affordable products that match their preferences and needs – which is critical for first-time trial and access. Among the several options available at our banners, we highlight two:

- 1) Specific ranges of private brand products, such as **the Go Active line – created especially for consumers who prioritise movement, wellbeing and an active daily life** – and the [Go Vege line](#) – aimed at vegan and vegetarian consumers.
- 2) The investments in our banners' takeaway services, ensuring that freshly prepared, ready-to-eat options are available on a daily basis. **Consumers can choose from fresh soups to meals from the Balance or Vegetarian lines available at Pingo Doce** – recipes crafted by our main chef and a nutritionist to offer varied dishes, with a high predominance of vegetables.

Clear front-of-pack information is central to helping consumers make confident first choices. That is why, besides the Nutri-Score labels already mentioned, we also use easy-to-read icons for gluten-free, lactose-free, omega-3, GMO-free or vegan/vegetarian suitability products. **Our companies also run programmes to promote healthy dietary principles (such as the Mediterranean diet in Portugal and relevant healthy-eating guides in Poland and Colombia), complemented with recipes and tips that help consumers take their first practical steps at home.**

Recipe reformulation is another key factor in our approach, making the “healthier pick” also an easy pick as we improve the nutritional profile of everyday choices without compromising taste. By doing this, between 2020 and 2024, we helped avoid the consumption of more than 5,100 tonnes of sugar, almost 900 tonnes of fats and around 240 tonnes of salt.

Finally, we prioritise children and other vulnerable groups, such as seniors, by ensuring products that meet nutritional benchmarks.

**Q: How do you spread healthier products and recipes with your consumers?**

**A:** The feedback we receive from our customers is reflected less in formal statements and more in the choices they consistently make. **What we observe is a consumer appreciation for transparent, simple information and affordable healthier options.** The solid purchase of products that carry clear front-of-pack information, confirms how much consumers value guidance that helps navigate the shelf with ease. This behaviour has encouraged us to keep expanding these labelling features across our private brand ranges.

We also see rising interest in health-focused and specialised categories. The continuous increase and wide presence of differentiated products across our banners reflect strong consumer acceptance and demand.

Finally, our educational initiatives continue to gain relevance. While product labelling is a crucial touchpoint, we use several communication channels to turn our nutritional guidelines into practical, everyday tools that help households with different levels of literacy and digital habits.

**Some examples are the partnership we have in Portugal with CUF, a leading private healthcare provider, through the [A Saúde Alimenta-se](#) (Feeding Health) programme, helping consumers to apply healthy-eating principles at home.** Also in Portugal, we also produce digital booklets and curated recipe collections, such as the [Receitas e Conselhos para Doentes Oncológicos](#) (Recipes and Advice for Cancer Patients) e-book, which includes 100 Mediterranean-style recipes and guidance for managing cancer treatment-related symptoms. These recipes also feature regularly in

[Sabe Bem](#) (Tastes Good), Pingo Doce's bimonthly magazine and the most read publication in Portugal, which also generally includes articles from the Portuguese national healthcare authority. **In Poland, Biedronka invests in educational and loyalty campaigns, such as the [Gang Mocniaków](#) (The Strong Gang),** aimed at raising the awareness of younger generations to the "superpowers" of food, focusing on fresh produce. Biedronka also uses [its website](#) to disclose information on the Go Vege range, with articles and tips for consumers interested in increasing the uptake of vegetable proteins.

**Q: What was the most important argument for starting these initiatives?**

**A:** We can tell the story behind the Go Vege private brand. We launched it in Poland, because Biedronka saw the opportunity to provide tasty, affordable, everyday products that meet the plant-based trend without jeopardising its principle for fostering diverse diets and thus public health.

The Go Vege brand was conceived to offer a broad, good-quality plant-based range – from burgers and hummus to drinks and desserts – **made for everyone: vegans, vegetarians, flexitarians or simply the curious about new flavours.**

Another strong argument was the recognition that plant-based alternatives must be widely available and trusted in order to **support real diet diversity**. The creative strategy behind the launch emphasized exactly that point: **Go Vege sought to inspire consumers by making plant-based eating feel accessible, tasteful and free of ideological pressure, a "bloom of opportunities" rather than a restrictive shift.**

**Q: How much impact did these initiatives have so far?**

**A:** Although Go Vege is still a young brand, there are already some tendencies emerging. It has become an important contributor to the assortment diversification at Biedronka, offering plant-based products that promote diverse diets thus avoiding pressure over just one group of foods or production methods. Also, the Go Vege assortment is produced without GMOs, contributing to the Group's broader commitments on responsible sourcing and ingredient transparency.

Go Vege also supports national campaigns. The **"[Roslinne Wyzwanie – Misja Oszczędzanie](#)"** (Plant-Based Challenge – Mission Savings) **attracted nearly 7,000 people who joined the challenge to know more about plant-based proteins and how to incorporate them into their eating habits using Go Vege recipes and meal plans** – an indicator of growing consumer engagement and trial.

More broadly, plant-based food is gaining consumer traction in Poland. **There is evidence that diverse diets are rising in popularity and are not limited to specific areas.** This is also supported by the consumer uptake of other products targeting healthy lifestyles, such as Go Active, fresh soups or gluten-free and lactose-free products.

**Q: Which further developments and effects of the initiatives do you expect in the future?**

**A:** Rising consumer interest in healthier eating is shaping the demand for products and ready-to-eat meals with better nutritional profiles, less processed and diversified sources of protein, vitamins and minerals – while ensuring convenience, flavour and affordable prices.

In more developed countries, longer life expectancy combined with a higher incidence of diet-related diseases – such as diabetes, obesity or cardiovascular diseases –, reinforce the need to reduce the intake of saturated fats and to increase the consumption of fibres and plant-based proteins in the scope of a balanced and diverse diet.

We will therefore continue to enhance the nutritional profile of our products, develop and strengthen product categories such as fruits and vegetables, promote clear communication and initiatives that encourage healthier lifestyles.



**Figure 2:** Consumers at Pingo Doce can choose from fresh soups to meals from the Balance or Vegetarian lines available – recipes crafted by their main chef and a nutritionist to offer varied dishes, with a high predominance of vegetables