

# Use of Plant-Based Enteral Formula in the Homecare Setting: Demographic and Prescription Trends on a National Level

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## Introduction

Among the general population, plant based diets are rising in popularity. This trend has expanded to the home enteral nutrition (HEN) space with the introduction of plant based formula options from manufacturers driven by consumer and healthcare provider demand. Unlike standard enteral nutrition formulas, which contain animal based ingredients, plant based formulas are an alternative for consumers whom may have specific lifestyle choices, food allergies, and tolerance related issues. The purpose of this study is to outline the available plant-based formula options, characterize the home users, and quantify their use compared to remaining HEN formulas available.

## Methods

Demographic and enteral formula dispensing data from a national home infusion provider was analyzed between April-June 2021.

## Results

Figure 1. Plant Based Formula Options by HCPC

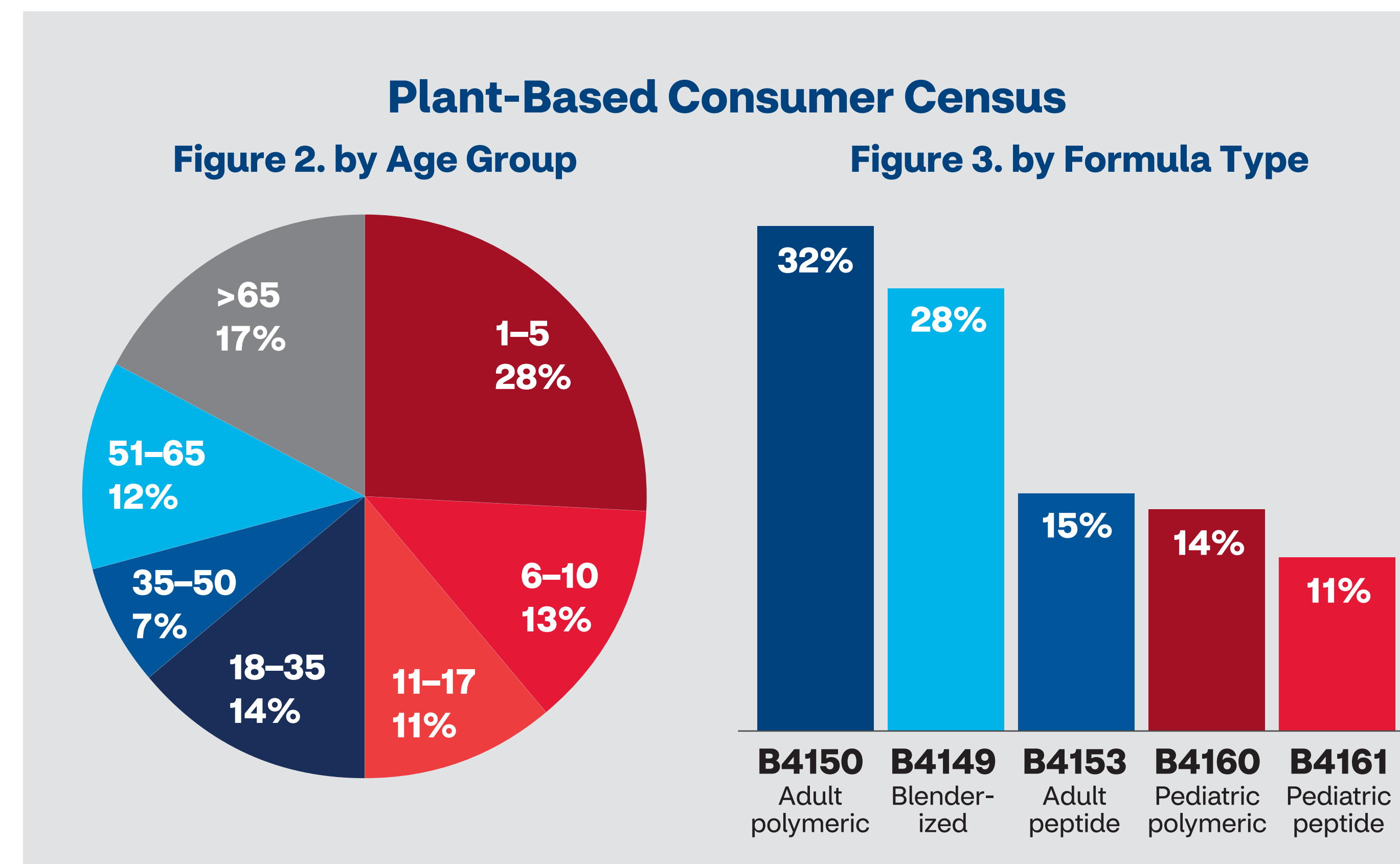
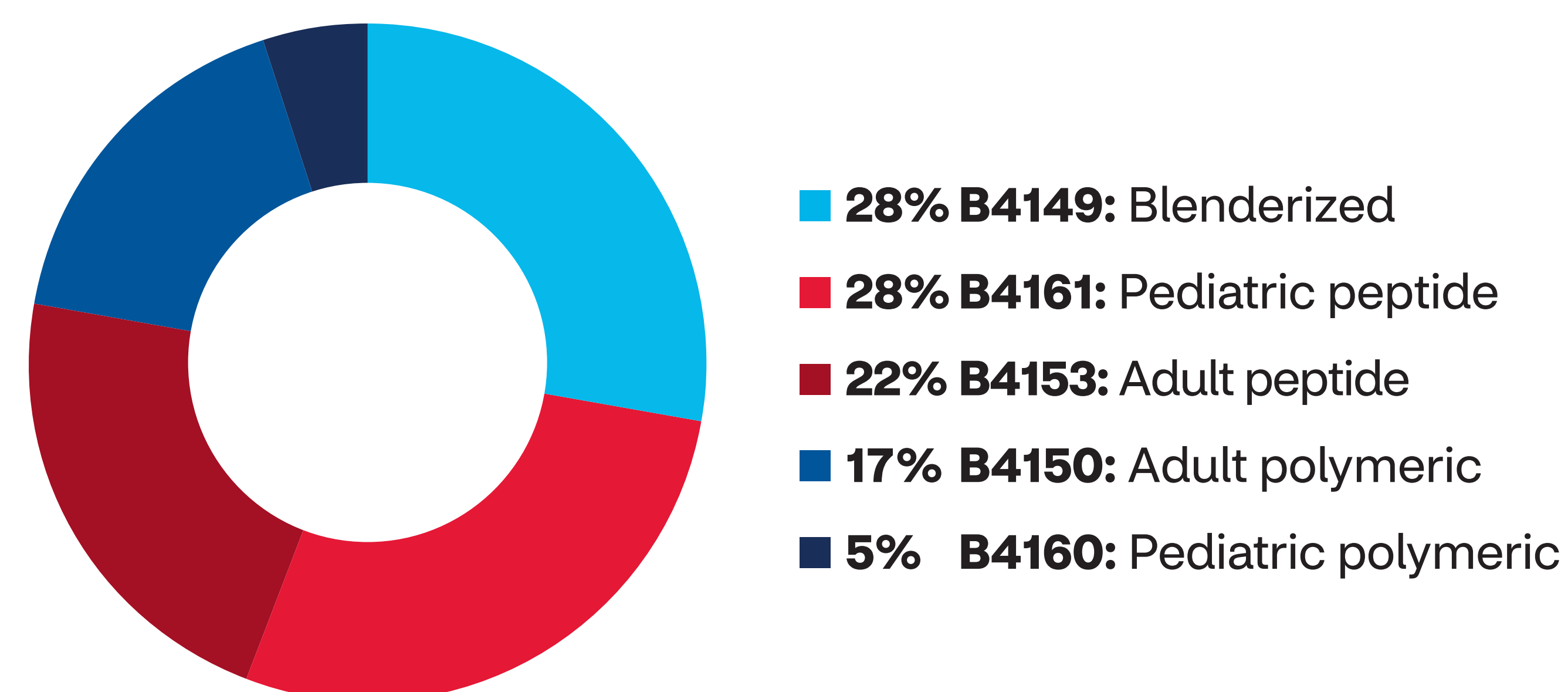


Table 1. Plant-Based Consumer Census by Age Group and Formula Type

	B4149 Blenderized	B4150 Adult polymeric	B4153 Adult peptide	B4160 Ped polymeric	B4161 Ped peptide
<18	39%	9%	4%	28%	20%
18-35	24%	42%	29%	1%	4%
35-50	16%	52%	30%	0%	2%
51-65	13%	65%	22%	0%	0%
>65	14%	61%	25%	0%	0%

Table 2. Plant-Based Consumer Census by State: Top 10

State	Percent
California	13.8%
Florida	9.0%
Massachusetts	7.5%
New York	5.4%
Illinois	4.2%
Idaho	3.4%
Ohio	3.4%
Pennsylvania	3.4%
Texas	3.4%
Michigan	3.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>56.7%</b>

CA, FL, MA accounted for  
**>30%**  
 of Coram's plant-based  
 formula consumers

## Conclusion

- Patients <18 comprise 52% of our plant based formula consumers
- The majority of <18 year old plant based consumers were prescribed a blenderized formula
- The majority of >18 year old plant based consumers were prescribed a polymeric formula
- The polymeric formula categories have the fewest options with the most consumers
- The peptide formula categories have the most options with the fewest consumers

Despite the increased cost of plant based formulas for manufacturers, it could be argued the consumer demand for adult polymeric plant based formulas justifies diversifying available options. For home infusion providers, the cost of plant based formula options is also higher than traditional formulas which impacts the cost of service without any additional reimbursement. While limited, current research of plant-based formulas has suggested these formulas may have a positive impact on gut microbiota and reduce the frequency of gastrointestinal symptoms compared to polymeric formulas<sup>4,5</sup>. Future research could focus not only on why plant-based formulas are selected but also who selects them; prescribers, dietitians, patients, or caregivers. Lastly, a deeper understanding of the impact on tolerance and outcomes of this population would contribute to the body of knowledge around their health benefits and impact to overall cost of healthcare.

### References

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