

A guide to vegan sweets

From the sweeties.net wiki

Vegans avoid all foods of animal origin, including meat, fish, eggs, dairy and honey. For sweets, that means checking not just the obvious ingredients but the glazes, colours and setting agents too.

The ingredients to watch

- **Gelatine.** Made from collagen in animal skin, bones and connective tissue, it sets many jelly sweets: see [beef gelatine and pork gelatine](#)
- **Beeswax, E901.** Used as a glazing agent to give sweets a shine: see [what is beeswax on sweets?](#)
- **Shellac, E904.** A glaze made from a resin secreted by lac insects: see [what is shellac on sweets?](#)
- **Carmine, E120.** A red colour made from cochineal insects, also listed as cochineal: see [what is carmine?](#)
- **Milk and butter.** In chocolate, fudge, toffee and caramel: see [milk in sweets](#)
- **Egg white.** In nougat, some marshmallows and macaroons: see [eggs in sweets](#)
- **Honey.** Some nougat is sweetened with honey.

The plant based swaps

- **Setting.** Agar, starch and pectin can replace gelatine to make gummies suitable for vegetarians and vegans: see [pectin sweets explained](#) and [starch jelly sweets explained](#)
- **Shine.** Carnauba wax, E903, comes from the leaves of a Brazilian palm and is used as a plant based glaze: see [what is carnauba wax on sweets?](#)
- **Colour.** Plant and algae colours, such as spirulina and black carrot, give colour without insects: see [natural colours in sweets](#)

What a vegan label means

There is no legal definition of vegan food in UK law, but businesses must label food accurately and not mislead. The government says a vegan label means no ingredients of animal origin were intentionally used, but it does not guarantee that the product contains none, because it may be made where animal products are handled.

The Vegan Society has certified products with its Vegan Trademark since 1990, and says more than 70,000 products worldwide carry it.

A warning for allergies

The government advises that people with allergies to milk, eggs, fish, crustaceans or molluscs should not assume a vegan product is safe, because vegan labelling does not require the strict controls used for free from claims: see [the 14 allergens explained for sweets](#)

Which sweets are vegan?

Recipes change, and some well known sweets have become vegan, such as Percy Pigs in 2022: see [what sweets are vegan in the UK?](#) Our pick and mix includes vegan gummy bears and vegan fizzy cola bottles, and each sweet card shows its full ingredients before you buy.

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