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BUSINESS INSIDER

Starbucks is not ending its extra charge for plant-based milks

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AP Photo/Lisa Poole

- Starbucks is not stopping its practice of charging for plant-based milk on January 1, 2022.
- A fake press release was put out on Thursday by an unknown organization claiming to be Starbucks.

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despite a fake press release put out by an unknown organization claiming to be Starbucks, the company confirmed to Insider.

The press release, which was sent out to reporters on Thursday, claimed the chain was ending the practice to fight "dietary racism."

"It has come to our attention that false information has been released to press about Starbucks raising prices on beverages made with dairy milk, and removing upcharges on non-dairy milks, based on the prevalence of lactose intolerance in people of color versus white people. This was a hoax," Starbucks Communications Deputy Head Jerelyn Curlew said in a statement.

"Understandably, this has caused much public concern. We assure our most valued customers that we would never place the burden of a dairy upcharge on them. Further, we categorically deny the accusations of 'dietary racism' in this false announcement. Starbucks is and always has been a vigorous defender and promoter of people of all the colors.

Starbucks added oat milk in March 2021, alongside almond milk added in 2016 and coconut milk in 2015. The chain has had plant-based milk on the menu since 2004, with the addition of soy milk.

Plant-based milk currently comes with a 70 cent upcharge on any drinks they are added to. When oat milk was first added to menus, it was so popular that many stores reported they were out of oat milk, which several workers told Insider was at least in part due to the popularity of the Ice Brown Sugar Oat Milk Shaken Espresso.

In 2020, former COO Roz Brewer said "While there's no single factor in pricing decisions we expect costs to come down as the supply chain for plant-based options matures," in responses to questions about eliminating fees.

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