**Audio Transcript – The Oatly Chronicles**

*Note: Episodes of Outside/In are made as pieces of audio, and some context and nuance may be lost on the page. Transcripts are generated using a combination of speech recognition software and human transcribers and may contain errors.*

**Taylor Quimby: Hey Nate Hegyi.**

**Nate Hegyi: Hey Taylor. What’s up?**

**Taylor: Question for you: what’s your milk rating?**

**Nate: My milk rating?**

**Taylor: Okay, so there’s all these different milks. How do you rate them?**

**Nate: What’s my favorite milk? Uhhh… you know which milk I actually really like, is the lactose-free 2% milk. I think that’s my favorite and I’ll tell you why: it lasts a really long time, like three or four months, it’s creamy without having a ton of saturated fat, cause we have to watch out for that because of cholesterol levels in my household. It’s pretty good.**

**Taylor: Do you eff around with plant-based milks at all?**

**Nate: Yeah, I do, I can get down with that.**

**Taylor: So here’s the evolution of my milk-drinking, so I started off drinking actual cow’s milk as a kid. Preferably chocolate cow’s milk.**

**Nate: Of course.**

**Taylor: And at some point, I think I went to rice milk… and then almond milk… now I’m into oat milk, oat milk is like my number one milk.**

**Nate: Why?**

**Taylor: First of all it’s a great coffee creamer, which is like 95% of my milk intake…**

**Nate: Right, same!**

**Taylor: … And it’s the most milky without whatever it comes from.**

[mux]

**Nate: So today’s episode comes to us from the folks at The Europeans - a podcast that says it’s about the politics and culture of Europe, but I’ll go out on a limb and say that doesn’t quite describe all the interesting stuff they do.**

**Taylor: That includes their latest three-part series about…. You guessed it…. Oat milk.**

**Nate: We’ll be playing the first episode of what they called The Oatly Chronicles, I really like that name. If you dig it, I really recommend you follow up and listen the the next couple of episodes - which we will link to in the show notes.**

**Taylor: We are going to skip past a little of the opening banter, mostly because we just did some of that ourselves… So as we launch right in, you’ll be hearing from hosts Katy and Dominic… and, yeah, enjoy!**

….

**Katy: Hi Dominic!**

**Dominic: Hey, Katy!**

**Katy: Remember me?**

**Dominic: I do remember you. You’re the one that started this podcast with me, right?**

**Katy: Apparently so, yeah. This podcast was my baby before my actual baby was my baby. Long before I went on maternity leave.**

**Dominic: How’s it going? How are those sleepless nights and blissful days? I hope they’re blissful…**

**Katy: Blissful-ish. It’s more like owning a pig than I thought it would be. Like, he is very small and pink and makes sort of snorty noises, and is hungry all the time. But apart from that it’s good, it’s going well.**

**Dominic: Oh I’m very proud of you and it’s nice to hear your voice.**

**Katy: It’s been fun to listen to the podcast along with the actual listeners, and learn things about Europe for the last couple of weeks - it’s been really fun! I hear you’ve had Covid, and been dressing up as a mushroom.**

**Dominic: Oh yeah. Nothing’s changed! But anyway, I guess we should tell people what the pressing issue is that drew you temporarily out of maternity leave.**

**Katy: Yeah, so I am briefly emerging from baby-land to join you guys for three special episodes that we have coming up over the next few weeks. Three episodes devoted entirely to oat milk.**

**Dominic: As if you aren’t spending enough of your days thinking about milk! Yes, oat milk. Here at The Europeans, we’re obsessed with the Swedish oat milk company, Oatly: a brand that promises to bring the planet back from the brink.**

**Katy: But is Oatly the dairy alternative that will save us?**

**Dominic:  The more we’ve learned about them, the more we’ve realised that Oatly is a \*really\* interesting case study of what you might call ‘green capitalism’.**

**Fredrik: But of course, the company's internal sell was that, ‘Now we’ve managed to turn big capital green.’**

**Katy: This is a three part series and it’s a rollercoaster journey…**

**Laura: I mean, to me, it just felt opposite to what they had been doing up until that point…**

**Katy: A journey from Sweden to China, Barcelona to the UK, spanning from the global food system to the housing crisis**

**George: there are two things we have to do. One is to leave fossil fuels in the ground. The other is to stop eating animals. If we don't do those two things, then we’ve got, I think, a relatively small chance of getting through this century and those that follow.**

**Katy: We’ll hear tales of shadowy investors; protest…**

**Fredrik: There are no such thing are the rich are just rich and stupid and have their funny lives on their yachts - their investments affect our lives.**

**Katy: And even multiple songs.**

**MILK IS MILK song**

**Katy: This is a special mini-series funded by JournalismFund Europe and the Allianz Foundation.**

**Dominic: Our producer and oat milk detective  Katz Laszlo will be our guide on this journey. Hi Katz!**

**Katz: Hi Dominic!**

**Dominic: Co Katz, you’re the person to blame for us getting so deep into green capitalism.**

**Katz: I am. I realise that a 3 part series about oat cappuccinos sounds completely ridiculous and VERY bougey, but I promise you this is a very serious journalistic investigation, the stakes are high, and it is very relevant to all of our lives. The story starts…with me having an existential crisis in the supermarket. I had this day, which I suspect many listeners will have had - where I was standing in the milk aisle and I was looking at all of these options, and thinking my god, I want to shop ethically… I just have no idea what I should be buying. Cow milk is the cheapest, but it’s super unsustainable, it uses a ton of land, animal welfare, antibiotics… Ok, what else do we have. Almond milk. Apparently that uses a bunch of water, causes forest fires. Ok, next up. Cashew, it’s got some labour issue with women in India are burning their hands while picking them. Soy - deforestation?**

**And like, I report on climate, I have taught about climate, this is madness, why is it so difficult? And then, in the middle, a bombastically-branded carton of Oatly.**

**Dominic: Tadaaaah.**

**Katz: And this was a moment, where it felt like Oatly ads were EVERYWHERE.**

**Lots of people met Oatly first, through a rather strange Superbowl ad.**

**Superbowl ad clip: “Wow, no cow. It’s like milk, but made for humans”**

**Katz: The voice you’re hearing is Toni Petterson, the CEO of Oatly at the time, and he’s sitting in a Swedish oat field singing criticism about the dairy industry. This ad got a BIG reaction, and weirdly the main critique was that Toni isn’t a good enough singer…**

**Dominic: That’s pretty harsh…**

**Katz: It is, isn’t it? And also, people thought it was a waste of money…estimates say a 30 second spot during the Superbowl is 5.5 MILLION dollars.**

**Dominic: Woah!**

**Dominic: That’s an investment in Toni’s voice**

**Katz: I know! But it worked - everyone knows what oat milk is now.**

**Ashley: You've seen a really big shift. In the US where I live, for example, oat milk wasn't even the thing that we knew about five years ago.**

**Katz: This is Ashley Allen, she’s Oatly’s Chief Sustainability Officer.**

**Dominic: Oh wow, so Oatly actually agreed to speak to you, Katz?**

**Katz: They did yeah, sadly our request to speak to Toni was declined.**

**Dominic: Shame, I would have been up for giving a free singing lesson in exchange for an interview.**

**Katz: But well, this series is not about Toni’s singing. The big thing this ad did, was spur on a BIG conversation - the zeitgeist around dairy has really shifted.**

**Ashley: Oatly can be a product for people at any stage in their journey, they don't only have to be vegan or vegetarian.**

**Katz: We’re now at an age where four-euro oat lattes are - for better or worse - part of the furniture. But like, I remember in the summer of 2020, there were all of a sudden prominent articles in the New York Times, and Het Parool, Amsterdam’s newspaper, about these great shortages of oat milk. They interviewed people who were running around the city looking for it.**

**Katy: I remember these oat milk shortages!**

**Katz: Right! And I thought, this is madness - of all the things happening in the world. But also, man, people clearly want to be able to buy more ethical products.**

**Katz:  Thing is, Oatly has actually existed for since 1994!**

**Dom: Oh wow, That’s almost as long as you’ve been alive Katz!**

**Katz: Hohoooooo scraping the barrel of reactions!! I’m one year older than Oatly….**

**[Katz, Katy, Dominic laugh]**

**Katz: Originally, Oatly was an alternative for people with lactose intolerance. It’s only branded itself as a like, a climate company since 2013. So back in the 90s the company co-founder Rickard Oste, was a scientist studying lactose intolerance, and he actually invented oat milk.**

**Dominic: Shut the front door, he invented oat milk?**

**Katz: I know, it does sound a bit mad that no humans ever made oat milk. Especially because soy milk has been around for like 2000 years.**

**Katy: It’s as old as Jesus!**

**Dominic: Surely people have been making oat milk forever.**

**Katz: I did actually find one obscure forum citing 19th century texts from England about vegetarians drinking oat milk out of principle. Buuuuut Oatly does claim to be the inventors and most of the internet agrees. Anyway, besides not containing lactose, oats are a really sustainable crop, they grow quite far north, and the other good thing about them is they are incredibly cheap.**

**Katy: Mhmm**

**Katz: And so, Rickard and his brother Bjorn - they launched Oatly, the milk for the lactose intolerant.**

**Katy: That’s a pretty smart business move. Because isn’t like 70 percent of the planet is lactose intolerant?**

**Katz: It is a huge proportion, isn’t it? But that branding isn’t what made them an international household name. In 2013, they decide to rebrand. That’s also when Toni, of Superbowl fame, became CEO. And the way Oatly puts it, they’ve always known that oat milk was far more sustainable, but in 2013 the world was ready. People were thinking a LOT more about climate change, and a new version of Oatly was born. One that says, ‘Buy us!! Feel good about yourself!! Don’t feel guilty!!**

**Dominic: And are their claims true? Is oat milk much better for the planet?**

**Katz: That is exactly what we want to answer today. It’s certainly what made Oatly famous.**

**Katz: It was only once they started taking out all these ads and shifting gears that people really knew who they were**

**Dominic: Aha - like, with the Superbowl ad.**

**Katz: Yes and so much more. Oatly started doing some at-the-time really innovative marketing things. So, they were one of the first brands to start printing all this information about the carbon footprint, on the side of their cartons. And they called for other brands to do the same - especially dairy. And starting in its home country, in Sweden, Oatly starts getting a lot more attention for all this campaigning it’s doing against Big Dairy.**

**Dominic: BIG DAAAIRYYY.**

**Katz: Yeah this was a bold move, because the dairy industry is powerful.**

**Dominic: Looking forward to learning more about our dairy overlords.**

**Katz: Yes, we have many here in Europe. Europe is home to the biggest dairy companies in the world: Nestle, Lactalis, Danone. And their dairy product revenue specifically is in the 20 billion range.**

**Katy: That is many billions!**

**Katz: Yeah and with that money comes a bunch of lobbying power - over 50 percent of dairy farmers incomes come from EU subsidies.**

**Dominic: Wow, so there would be a LOT less dairy farmers without these subsidies.**

**Katz: Yeah, there probably would be. And that’s also why cow milk can be so cheap. So, very quickly after Oatly’s rebrand, the biggest dairy lobby in Sweden sues oatly.**

**Katz: This Swedish milk lobby - it’s called LRF MJolk —**

**Dominic: LRF Mjolk? Is the Swedish word for milk, mjolk?**

**Katz: Yep**

**Katy: Mjolk!**

**Dominic: Love that!!**

**Katz: I know, it is good. So LRF Mjolk sues Oatly specifically for its statement, “It’s like milk, but made for humans.” And they argue that Oatly is giving cow milk a bad name in its adverts.**

**Dominic: That must’ve been quite scary for Oatly I can imagine, because big dairy, at least at that point would have had much fancier lawyers than a tiny little oatmilk start up.**

**Katz: Yes they did - Oatly lost the lawsuit. But the case got them a bunch of publicity. Oatly sales went up dramatically.  And t got people talking more about the impact that dairy has on the planet. People call it the start of the ‘The Milk Wars’, and they are ongoing.**

**Dominic: The milk wars!**

**Katy: The milk wars!**

**Katz: The Milk Wars range from these legal battles to very sassy ads - like the Superbowl song, or another really strange ad. It’s in Swedish, and Toni the CEO is a taxi driver, and in the back seat is a cow.**

**Katy: Okaaay…**

**Katz: So this cow, it farts and then Tony is like: you and your friends really fart a lot, you actually account for 7.1 billion tons of greenhouse gases per year. So they’re goofy, but there is a seriousness to what they are saying. And then massive dairy companies like Arla, the big Swedish milk conglomerate, launch its own ads - like this one, with a fist punching a “fake milk” that it calls Pjolk.**

**Katy: Pjolk!**

**Katz: and a retaliation song**

**Ad: “Miiiilk is miiiiilk”**

**Dominic: It’s ironic that Arla now sell their own cartons of oat milk.**

**Katz: Arla Pjolk!**

**Scene 4: WHAT’S THE PROBLEM WITH DAIRY**

**Dominic: So - Oatly took some legal hits, but that they won some successes with their adverts because they actually have a point, right?**

**Katz: To help us figure out how much truth there is to Oatly’s big claims, I called up long time climate journalist for the Guardian, George Monbiot.**

**Katz: how essential is it that we stop eating animal products if we want to meet our climate goals?**

**GM: there are two things we have to do to prevent the collapse of Earth's systems above any other things we need to do. One is to leave fossil fuels in the ground. The other is to stop eating animals. It is as simple as that. If we do those two things, then we've got a good chance of getting through this century and those follow. If we don't do those two things, then we’ve got, I think, a relatively small chance of getting through this century and those that follow.**

**Dominic: GETTING THROUGH THE CENTURY? Oh my god.**

**Katz: I know. George is pretty vocal on this front. But it is something a LOT of scientists agree on, and it’s even in the IPCC report, those big UN climate reports connected to the Paris Agreement.**

**Sonalie: I really, really wish that people knew that addressing food and fixing what's on our plate is as important if not more important than solving for electric vehicles and renewable energy. I do not think people understand that. And the media does not reflect that.**

**Katz: This is Sonalie Figueiras, she’s a journalist and she writes about our food systems, and she’s also the founder of an online magazine about food and the climate called Green Queen. She was so passionate about this, you can actually hear her smacking the table.**

**Sonalie: People think, oh, I should use a plastic straw and I should bring a reusable bag. But overall, there's just not an understanding even at policymaking levels, at business levels. It's just not reflective of the percentage of greenhouse gas emissions that the food system is responsible for. So that’s really the takeaway, it's as simple as that.**

**Katz: I don’t think we can wrap our heads around Oatly, and why we’re talking about it for three episodes, if we don’t really understand the magnitude of dairy’s impact.**

**Katy: You’re about to tell me things that I don’t want to hear about cheese, aren’t you Katz?**

**Katz: It’s not looking good for cheese Katy. Now…. I knew in broad strokes that dairy was concerning, I’ve sort of casually been calling myself ‘flegan’ for a few years.**

**Dominic: FLEGAN! That is ridiculous Katz**

**Katy: Wait what is flegan, am I missing something?**

**Dominic: Flexibly vegan**

**Katz: But reporting this podcast gave me the chance to dig into it so much further, and it is not pretty. It would take a LOT of time to really explain all of it, but to give you a sense, I made you guys a montage.**

**Katy: Just what everyone wanted! A nice dairy horror sound bath.**

**Katz: You’re welcome!**

**Katz: Problem number 1: Farming animals uses a crazy amount of land.**

**George: 26% of the surface of the planet is for grazing animals, largely cattle and sheep.**

**Katz: To put that into perspective…**

**George: …all of the building ever done in the world — is about 1% of the planet’s surface.**

**Katy: Katz, is all of this also true for organic meat, and organic dairy?**

**Katz: Yes. Yeah, organic meat and dairy is more ethical in some ways more ethical in some important ways, but it does use more land.**

**George: And that vast amount of land, all of which would otherwise have been wild ecosystems much higher in carbon, much richer in wildlife, upon which the entire earth system depends, that vast area of land produces just a tiny amount of our food. So if you look at the UK for instance - very large areas of our uplands - there's one sheep per hectare, one sheep per two hectares, I mean, almost no production at all. And yet, that's enough to make sure that the woods, including rainforests in the west of the country, can't come back. It's got a massive ratio of destruction to production, and there are similar issues all around the world.**

**Katz: Problem number 2: Water pollution. Largely, because of all the poop.**

**George: To get your milk out of the cow, a whole lot of things have to happen, you're passing a great deal of feed through that cow, they have to be fed on feed imported, often from a long way away - soya from Brazil. The dung comes out the other end… and that dung has to be disposed of.**

**Katz: With so much dung, plants and soil can’t absorb it, and so the nutrients wash straight into the river. By the way, this also happens with chickens and eggs.**

**GM: Basically, it can push your river over into complete ecocide. It just dies.**

**Problem number 3: Greenhouse gases - those cow farts that taxi driver Toni was talking about with his cow passenger. They’re mostly methane, which is 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide.**

**Katz: Problems 4 to a million —**

**Dominic: Oh god, you’re not done.**

**Katz: Animal welfare — and the many animals that are bred and then killed within the dairy industry -- here’s Sonalie again --**

**Sonalie: The way that we're marketed dairy is, you know, a happy black and white spotted cow in a lush green field. It's what I call the Happy Cow myth. But now we are forcibly impregnating cows and keeping them pregnant the entire year, and taking their calves away, which is very cruel.**

**Katz: Antibiotic resistance…**

**Sonalie: Cattle requires a lot of medications, so that means that we're developing superbug resistance and we’re not able to use antibiotics for when we get sick…**

**Katz: Maltreatment of the people working in the big warehouses…**

**Sonalie: I 100% feel that we need much more of a focus on workers - the exploitation happens on the extremely intensive, giant, more industrial setups.**

**Katz: And finally, the political impacts of the power of these massive corporations in the dairy industry.**

**George:  We start from a position where almost the entire food chain is in the hands of big business. Extremely exploitative and concentrates wealth to a very great extent indeed. And of course, their economic power translates into political power and, you know, it’s a very, very dangerous situation for democracy… as well as for everything else.**

**Katy: So I need to ask an intensely personal question here. Um, does all of this mean I have to stop eating cheese completely? Because I want to be a good person, but I would find that very difficult.**

**Sonalie:  I think dairy is really hard. I think that for so long, we've been told it's good to be vegetarian. So this idea that you have to go further than that is hard. There are studies that show that certain types of cheese are a little bit addictive.**

**Katy: I knew it wasn’t my fault! It’s due to the chemical composition of cheese that I have a problem.**

**Katz: And you are most certainly not alone. 30-40 percent of Europeans say they are either vegetarian, or they’re trying to reduce meat.**

**Dominic: Wow that’s quite a lot!**

**Katz: It is! But only three percent of Europeans are vegan.**

**Katy: hmm.**

**Katz: And I’m wondering, if there’s anything to my flegan philosophy. Does it still have an impact if we reduce the amount of dairy we eat, even if we don’t quit completely?**

**GM: Yeah, I think it's fair to say, you know, that eliminating it is better than minimising it. But reducing is better than not doing anything. You know, you’re not going to succeed with everyone, but as far as you can go in that direction, that would be great. Thanks.**

**Katz: There was a big report published in 2019 in the Lancet, that said we need to eat a maximum of 70 kilos of dairy per person per year, if we want to take care of the planet. A bit more than a kilo a week, so definitely not nothing.**

**Katy: Ok so I could continue enjoying the odd morsel of gruyere and roquefort.**

**Dominic: The odd morsel! You could eat a kilo of gruyere.**

**Katz: A week!**

**Katy: A large morsel. But if we \*are\* going to cut our dairy consumption, as a planet – it seems like we’ve got a lot of work to do here in Europe in particular, right? Because we eat a lot of dairy.**

**Katz: In Europe, we eat more dairy than anywhere else in the world. In 2022 we ate a whopping 220 kg of dairy per person per year.**

**Dominic: And that’s three times higher than the 70 kg recommendation!**

**Katz: Yeah I really can’t emphasise enough how disproportionately huge the footprint of Europeans’ diets are compared with the rest of the world. And despite that 70 kilo report, George says**

**George: If you say, ‘Actually, you know, we've got to do everything within our power to minimise all of those metrics,’ then you will end up eating no dairy at all. Now I completely understand that in some parts of the world, India in particular, there’s ultra-small-scale dairy which is essential to people’s livelihoods. As a comfortable Western consumer, I don’t think I have any justification to eat any dairy at all. And I mean that’s my position because I don’t see dairy as being compatible on any sort of scale, with a habitable planet.**

**Katy: Ooookay.**

**Katz: I can see how listeners might feel disheartened and demotivated by this. But if I flip it - it also means there’s this really obvious thing that we can do - especially as Europeans - that would seriously reduce our climate impact. And that feels really amazing, given how powerless climate change can make you feel.**

**Katy: Ever the optimist Katz…  Nice to know you’ve found a silver lining to this cloud while I am just here planning my cheese funeral.**

**Katz: As you plan this cheese funeral… let’s get back to the plant-based milks, and back to Oatly.**

**Dominic: Yes please, I’m not sure I want to think about dairy farming for a good long while.**

**Katz: So now that we’ve got all these options like Oatly, what impact would it have to drastically reduce dairy? There was a really interesting study early this year published in Nature - that was the first real rigorous meta-analysis comparing the impact of different diets. So they had high meat eaters, low meat eaters, pescatarians, vegetarians and vegans. And it compared the impact of these different diets in terms of things like their greenhouse gas emissions, and how much water and land they use. And one of the most striking things for me was that there’s a big difference in impact between people who eat loads of meat compared to people who don’t  eat much meat. And then there’s a small difference between people who eat a small amount of meat and vegetarians. And THEN there’s another big leap between the vegetarians and the vegans.**

**Dominic: Oh, interesting.**

**George:  Vegetarianism doesn't make a lot of sense. It's definitely better not to be eating meat. But you are still going to be very heavily reliant on dairy and eggs. And dairy and eggs both have enormous problems.**

**Katz: So, what that breakdown shows, I think, is that cutting down on dairy -- including eggs -- really does matter.**

**Katy: And Katz - is there any big difference between the plant - based milks?**

**Katz: Well, there was another study using the same data, that compared cow, soy, rice, almond, and oat milk.**

**Katy: Huh, and what did it say?**

**Katz: So first I should mention that across all metrics, plant based milks beat dairy - sometimes by a long shot, like 90% less impact.**

**Dom: That is pretty impressive.**

**Katz: Now, between the plant based milks, there are some differences.**

**GM: Almond, soy, I've even had potato milk, which is disgusting, I have to say.**

**Katz: Like just boiled potato**

**GM: It's sweet and sickly and tacky. Oh, it’s horrible. Horrible! Coconut, of course, I mean, there's a whole range of them. You know, there's no such thing as a perfect product, right, everything has got an impact.**

**Katz: Nothing’s perfect — but oat and soy came out as the BIG winners. Oat and soy milk emit three times less greenhouse gases, and use twelve times less freshwater.**

**Katy: Alright, and what about nutrition? This is something I’m especially thinking about because I’ve just had a kid, and here in Northern Europe we are always trying to stuff our children full of cow milk. Is plant milk like Oatly actually a viable replacement?**

**Katz: It’s true that especially kids eat a lot of cow milk in Europe, especially when we’re kids. In large swathes of the world, especially like Hindu and Buddhist populations - people have been vegan for hundreds of years. In Europe and the US, veganism is fairly new and niche, which means we do need a lot more time to study the long term impacts on health. The main thing people talk about is protein, but in Europe, people are eating on average, double the amount of protein recommended every day. Even the vegans are mostly well above meeting the daily needs. Vitamin B12 is an issue, but you can take supplements pretty easily. And of course, dairy also has a bunch of health concerns, like cholesterol and cancer. But that is a different podcast.**

**Katz: Back to Oatly’s journey as a company. When we last left them, they’d been sued by Big Dairy - and they’d lost. BUT the case also got them loads of publicity, and lots of people were talking about all of these dairy problems. And there they were, ready with their replacement product.**

**Elsa: Around 17% of Europeans, for example, consume on a daily basis plant-based products. So this is definitely already an important number.**

**Katz: This is Elsa Guadarrama, from ProVeg, which is an international NGO that advocates and researches plant-based diets.**

**Elsa: I mean, it's still a way to go with conventional traditional milk products, but this is definitely here that the moment in which we are reaching mainstream area.**

**Katz: if you think about the public discourse, and also just walking around the supermarket, there’s been a huge increase in plant-based options over the past few years.**

**Dominic: So regardless of what you think of them, and I get the impression that the rest of this mini-series isn’t going to be super rosy about Oatly - the Oatly boom is pretty important for helping to put a conversation about dairy on the map.**

**Katy: Right - and given all the problems with dairy we just learned about thanks to your miserable montage, this seems like it’s actually really important?**

**Katz: Yeah, especially because – and this might surprise you – our dairy consumption in Europe is still going up every year.**

**Katy: Huh!**

**Katz: Yeah another sprinkling of bad cheese news is…**

**Katy: Quite enough of that, thank you.**

**Katz: It takes like 10 litres of milke to make 1 kg of cheese, so - even though we are drinking less…like glasses milk, we are still going up in dairy.**

**Katy: Oh no!**

**Katz: And a lot of people I spoke to said, you know, all those people who’ve replaced meat with cheese, but what blew my mind is that meat is ALSO increasing.**

**Katy: Really?! How is that possible?!**

**Katz: Part of the problem, is actually the EU - the short version is: it’s really super complicated. How is EU policy either limiting or encouraging people transitioning from dairy to diet?**

**George: The European subsidy system is one of the greatest causes of environmental destruction on Earth. It’s an absolute catastrophe: The Common Agricultural Policy.**

**Katz: One the hand, you have the Green Deal, this package of EU climate policies, that actually says plant-based diets are an important part of meeting our climate goals. But, then you look at the EU’s subsidy system.**

**GM: All over Europe, this massive, perverse incentive - and it's a huge amount of money spent every year on these subsidies - demands that those wildlife habitats are eliminated.**

**Katz: It is supporting this entire industrial dairy system, at the behest of these very powerful dairy lobbies. Here’s journalist Sonalie, again.**

**Sonalie: The EU is doing two different things. It's both protecting conventional dairy agriculture, and also providing some incentives for alternative dairy. It's just we're in different ballparks. Hundreds of billion for subsidies for dairy and, you know, a few hundred million for the entire alt-protein industry.**

**Dominic : And there’s still an EU law, right, that says that companies can’t sell oat milk or soy yoghurt as oat milk or soy yoghurt. Which is totally insane.**

**Katz: And all of this power affects the price of cow milk, it’s why it is so cheap.**

**Katy: And it affects policy! There was also this story we talked about on the show recently, about the dairy lobby successfully blocking a move to make plant-based milk available in schools. Especially for kids with allergies to cow milk!**

**George: Because of the influence of the livestock lobby, which is a very powerful lobby, across the world but you know, especially in Europe, you've got all this advertising. It’s as if there was publicly funded advertising saying burn coal. That’s how perverse it is. This is taxpayers money, people living within the EU are funding this, and these advertising campaigns to get people to eat more of the most damaging products of all.**

**Katz: So in the face of the almighty dairy industry, in comes Oatly. Here’s Oatly’s Ashley Allen again.**

**Ashley Allen:  We really see that in order to have the influence that we want on the food system, we have to grow, we have to be able to provide more products for more people and really put products and options out there for people for the plant-based movement to grow.**

**Katz: Along the way, they have made some pretty unpopular corporate decisions -- decisions connected to global finance, the massive housing crisis around the world, the Chinese state…**

**Katy: And that’s exactly where we are going to go next week.**

**Dominic: Join us next week, for part two of The Oatly Chronicles as we try to answer the question - will green capitalism save the planet?**