

Innovation Awards: Plant-based innovation takes centre stage

Meet the winners of this year's Fi Europe Innovation Awards and Startup Innovation Challenge at Fi Europe CONNECT 2020.

Amsterdam / The Netherlands, 2 December 2020: At Fi Europe CONNECT 2020, show organiser Informa Markets announced the winners of the Fi Europe Innovation Awards and the Startup Innovation Challenge for their groundbreaking offerings during virtual award ceremonies held on 1 December and 2 December. Plant-based and alternative ingredients took centre stage in both awards, with winners presenting solutions for healthier plant proteins, fungal-derived food colorants and edible coatings for fruit and vegetables, among many other cutting-edge innovations.

Due to the current situation, the pitches of the participating startups, the jury evaluations and awards ceremonies all took place virtually. More than 1,500 participants of Fi Europe CONNECT followed the award ceremonies live online, as well as the on-demand startup pitches. "This shows not only the standing of the Awards and the Challenge, but also that innovation is crucial, especially in times of crisis. After all, it is proof of how resilient the food and beverage industry has proven to be in recent months," says Brand Director Julien Bonvallet.

The winners of the Fi Europe Innovation Awards 2020 are as follows:

- **Food Tech Innovation Award: NETZSCH Trockenmahltechnik GmbH (Germany)**
This award recognises an organization or company that has submitted an innovative technical processing /manufacturing /packaging /waste reduction solution or service for food ingredients or finished products. Preference is given to entries introduced within the last 2 years.
With the ATEX-compliant Condux® Compact System, NETZSCH has developed a space-saving, less cost-intensive grinding plant.
- **Ingredient Innovation Award: ADM (Switzerland)**
This award recognises an organization or company that has submitted the best ingredient or process in terms of sensory and physical properties or application costs. Preference is given to entries introduced within the last 2 years.
With the ingredient ProFam® Pea from ADM, healthier and more sustainable products based on plant proteins can be produced, all of which are convincing in terms of taste and sensory properties.
- **Sustainability Innovation Award**
In this category, the jury awarded a High Commendation to both finalists: **Olam International Ltd (UK)** and **Solercool Technologies LLC (USA)**.
This award recognises an organization or company for a measurable supply chain strategy that champions environmental, economic or socially sustainable practices in the F&B industry. Preference is given to entries introduced within the last 2 years.

With its platform AtSource, Olam International Ltd has set itself the goal of making supply chains for coffee, cocoa, cashews, cotton and rice transparent to the consumer in terms of sustainability.

Solercool Technologies has developed a solar-powered refrigeration technology that enables African farmers to reduce rapid, heat-related food degradation after harvest.

The winners of the Startup Innovation Challenge 2020:

- **Most Innovative Food or Beverage Ingredient: Michroma (Argentina/USA)**

This category recognises innovations related to food and beverage ingredients or additives from an animal/plant/alternative source.

Michroma uses the CRISPR method to modify the genome of filamentous fungal strains, which then produce powerful ingredients in a bioreactor. The first fruits of this work are food colorants that are stable even at extreme pH values and temperatures.

- **Most Innovative Processing Technology: Sufresca (Israel)**

This category recognises innovations related to food processing technologies that have the potential to positively impact the F&B industry.

Sufresca develops edible coatings for fruit and vegetables that extend shelf life, and avoid plastic packaging, even for products that are traditionally difficult to coat, such as peppers, tomatoes and cucumbers.

- **Most Innovative Service or Technology Supporting F&B: Enzymit (Israel)**

This category recognises innovations that support improvements in ingredients sourcing and production, food safety, traceability, transparency, or supply chain management.

The winner of this category, Enzymit, can quickly develop tailor-made enzymes or improve existing enzymes using algorithm-based protein design.

George Perujo, ADM's Director of Product Management for Specialty Ingredients, comments: "We're delighted that the FiE award council has recognized the innovation and opportunities that our ProFam® Pea 580 brings to the market. ProFam® Pea 580 is a testament to our commitment to innovation in protein, and we're excited about the range of possibilities it opens up for our customers."

Dr. Stefan Jung, Marketing Manager at NETZSCH, also welcomes the award: "Our goal was for ConduxEi Compact Impact Mill to optimally meet the needs of the industry. Of course, we hope that the award will help draw even more attention to the advantages of this product."

"We are proud to receive this recognition and share it with the farmers, partners, and customers who have joined us on our journey to increase sustainable production, build brand trust and confidence, and drive positive impact for people and planet. I honestly believe AtSource has the potential to become the 'Google' for driving sustainability in food supply chains", says Roel Van Poppel, AtSource CEO at Olam International.

Among the highlights of the two remaining days of Fi Europe CONNECT are the panel discussion "Women in Food" (December 3), an on-demand session by Innova Market Insights on personalized nutrition and the innovation tour "The Future of Clean Label" by NutriMarketing (both on December 4).

About Fi Global

Food ingredients Global was launched in Utrecht, The Netherlands, in 1986. Its portfolio of live events, extensive data, digital solutions and high-level conferences is now established throughout the world and provides regional and global platforms for all stakeholders in the food ingredients industry. Over 500,000 people have attended our shows over the years, with billions of Euros worth of business created as a result. With more than 30 years of excellence, the events, digital solutions and supporting products deliver a proven route to market, with a truly global audience. Since 2018, Food ingredients Global has been part of the Informa Markets portfolio. For more information, please visit: www.figlobal.com.

About Informa Markets

Informa Markets creates platforms for industries and specialist markets to trade, innovate and grow. Our portfolio of more than 400 international B2B events and brands spans markets including Healthcare & Pharmaceuticals to Infrastructure, Construction & Real Estate, Fashion & Apparel, Hospitality, Food & Beverage, and Health & Nutrition, amongst others. We provide customers and partners around the globe with opportunities to engage, experience and do business through face-to-face exhibitions, specialist digital content and actionable data solutions. As the world's leading exhibitions organiser, we bring a diverse range of specialist markets to life, unlocking opportunities and helping them to thrive 365 days of the year. For more information, please visit www.informamarkets.com.

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