

Fi Europe Innovation Awards: Honouring innovation by food ingredients companies

Jury rewards outstanding ingredients and concepts in the fields of health, sustainability, sensory and technology innovation

Frankfurt, 1 December 2021: The winners have been announced! During the Fi Europe Innovation Award Ceremony, which took place on the first day of the world's leading ingredients trade show Fi Europe, co-located with Hi Europe, in Frankfurt, six companies received a coveted award recognising their achievements. The previous day, all 19 finalists presented their entries to the expert jury chaired by Prof. Colin Dennis. The Fi Europe Innovation Awards recognize outstanding achievements in the food and beverage industry. This year's winners address current consumer trends with their solutions - from gut and immune health, to naturalness and sustainability.

During the ceremony at the Innovation Hub, which was also streamed live online, Prof. Colin Dennis and Julien Bonvallet, Brand Director, Fi Europe, presented the Fi Europe Innovation Awards to the following winners:

Clean Label & Natural Innovation Award: Bunge Lodders Croklaan (The Netherlands) for Karibon, a 100% shea-based cocoa butter equivalent (CBE) that combines all the processing benefits and versatility of leading CBEs with the nutritional and sustainability benefits of shea

Food Tech Innovation Award: Chr. Hansen A/S (Denmark) for its FreshQ® food cultures, enabling fermentation-based biological protection against yeast and moulds without undesirable sensory effects and acidity development, thus helping producers to naturally prolong shelf-life and quality

Health Innovation Award: NutriLeads (The Netherlands) for BeniCaros™, a proprietary ingredient for immune health that has been clinically proven to support and optimise immune function, and response

Plant-based Innovation Award: DSM (The Netherlands) for Maxavor® Fish YE, a natural fish flavour derived from algal oil for producing authentic fish alternatives, including vegetarian fish nuggets and vegan fish sauce

Sensory Innovation Award: AAK (Sweden) for AkoBisc® GO!, a biscuit fat that is low in saturated fatty acids and free from tropical fats, offering a unique sensory biscuit quality with a crunchy bite, no fat bloom and no discoloration over time

Sustainability Innovation Award: Fonterra Cooperative Group/NZMP (New Zealand) for taking action on climate change by recently launching its first carbonzero™ certified ingredient – Organic Butter

Dr Ing Renee Boerefijn, Director Innovation EMEA at Bunge Loders Croklaan, says the award is vital confirmation that the company's innovation really is of great value to the food industry. "Until now, only blends of shea and palm oil were available as an alternative to cacao butter," he says. "With Karibon, we can offer a pure shea ingredient for chocolate bars, coatings and other applications. Our suppliers are women's cooperatives from West Africa who collect shea to provide additional income for their families. Our ingredient is clean label while contributing to environmental and social sustainability."

For Erik Dam, CEO at NutriLeads, the award honours the intensive development work undertaken by his firm in recent years. "We are a small team and have only been on the market since 2012," he explains. "The fact that we now hold an Fi Innovation Award in our hands with our very first product is wonderful recognition of our efforts. BeniCaros™ is derived from by-products of carrot juice production and scientifically proven to accelerate the immune response, therefore addressing several consumer trends at once."

Alberto Rosado, Global Innovations Manager Bakery at AAK, says it's marvellous to receive such positive endorsement for their ingredient from the panel of industry professionals. "This award recognizes the innovative strength of AkoBisc® GO! which not only scores in terms of sustainability, but also provides sensory enhancement of baked goods while significantly simplifying the various production steps," he says.

Top-quality entries

For jury chair Prof Colin Dennis, who is also Chair of the Board of Trustees of both IFIS and the British Nutrition Foundation, and his jury of industry professionals from consultancy, management, product development and journalism, choosing the winners was particularly challenging this year given the excellence of the entries. "We have seen many evidence-based, top-quality submissions", he says. "This means the benefits of an ingredient or concept have been either scientifically proven, or convincing from a technological standpoint, or from a solid analysis of production costs and economic viability."

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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.

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