

[versie 2: technical focus]

PRESS RELEASE

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Soy Beverages Innovation Conference

New soy beverage technologies provide greater stability and new flavours

New ingredients and advanced technologies are enabling soy beverage manufacturers to significantly improve product stability and to develop new flavour-texture combinations. These were the main conclusions drawn at the Soy Beverages Innovations Conference held on September 23 and 24 in Bangkok. The event was organized by the Dutch knowledge and network agency Bridge2Food.

One of the main challenges faced by soy beverage manufacturers is to keep their products stable during processing, storage and consumer use. Variations in temperature and pH may cause changes in the soy protein structure, leading to sediments or to phase separation. Soy beverages may also have a grainy or coarse mouthfeel due to the presence of insoluble soy components and enriching minerals such as calcium.

No shaking required

According to Ross Clarke, Distinguished Research Fellow with CP Kelco, it is possible to develop a soy milk that is perfectly stable and "does not need to be shaken before use." In his presentation, Ross explained that CP Kelco has developed gellan gum and hydrocolloid systems which help keep the proteins in a stable state and suspend insoluble components. "Gellan-stabilized beverages have proven to remain stable under difficult processing conditions and high temperatures during transportation and storage. And what's more, it does not require any changes to the production process," Clarke said.

Calcium enrichment

Simone Bouman, Marketing Manager for PURAC, said calcium enrichment of soy drinks had not yet proven effective. "In most calcium-enriched soy milks, the calcium sinks to the bottom of the carton. Consumers are instructed to shake the carton well before use, but may forget to do so, leaving the calcium unused in the carton." To solve this problem, PURAC has developed a special range of calcium products for enriching soy drinks: Puracal QStable range. This calcium product remains stable in dissolved form during both processing and storage of soy drinks.

New flavours

New technologies are also creating ways to develop soy drinks with new flavours and/or textures. Kamthongvijit Prapaporn, Marketing Manager for Symrise Thailand, described four possible flavouring strategies: "Soy does have a characteristic, 'beany' flavour. You could either emphasize this flavour, or mask it with other flavours such as berries, chocolate or pomegranate. But you could also develop a full-taste product with less sugar and less fat." Symrise has developed several semi-finished ingredients which make new flavour and texture combinations possible. One example is the Symlife Sweet flavour range for full and natural fruit flavours with less added sugar.

Currently, half of the soy milk products on the market consist of unflavoured editions. However, this will soon change, according to Prapaporn: "We are seeing a growing interest in flavours for product differentiation among soy beverage manufacturers. In the next year or so, we expect to see many more fruit-flavoured soy drinks appear on the shelves."

Soy Beverages Innovation Conference

The second Soy Beverages Innovation Conference (Sept. 23-24) was aimed at senior professionals in retail category management, marketing, sales, business management, R&D and new business development. The conference dealt with the state of the art in market developments, products and technological innovations. The first Soy Beverages Innovation Conference was held in 2006.

Bridge2Food

Bridge2Food is a knowledge and network agency based in The Netherlands. Its key strength is the development of specific platforms for the food industry: 'building bridges between food professionals.' Through its partner company PROSOY Research & Strategy, Bridge2Food has offered courses and organized conferences on topics such as healthy & nutritional bars, foods for school children, and food products for the elderly. Bridge2Food has recently set up networks for the meat-free and dairy-free industry in Europe and Asia. www.bridge2food.com

Attachment: picture 'boy drinking soy milk'

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Media contact

For more information on the 2008 Soy Beverages Innovations Conference or coming events organized by Bridge2Food, please contact Gerard Klein Essink, tel. + 31 30 225 2060, gkleinessink@bridge2food.com.