

Functional Foods

The new R&D engine for your business

The Functional Food Forum (FFF) is designed to give new ideas and wider opportunities to Food and Drink Companies. The FFF has already generated innovative ideas for functional food and drink ingredients to be further developed with its industry members.

There are currently a number of industry memberships available. The benefits of membership include new business opportunities, rapid routes to market, increased margins, production of healthier foods with something extra and greater R&D and innovation opportunities.

Attendance at meetings is restricted to member companies. Companies joining the Forum will benefit from exclusive access to the functional food innovations evolved by its academic members.

The next joint industry and academic meeting of the Forum is on Wednesday 29th November 2006 at the Cedar Court Hotel, Wakefield. To join the forum and attend the meetings contact Frances Lister at:
FFF@FoodChainCIC.co.uk

Sweeter Side of Going Green

Chocolate will become a 'greener' treat, thanks to a new process being tested at the Food Chain.

The new process gives chocolate its smooth, mellow flavour in seconds rather than hours, reducing the energy needed to make one of our favourite treats.

The new process uses a continuous stream of liquid chocolate which is poured on to the centre of a heated, spinning disk. The chocolate is drawn outwards by the centrifugal force, and this simple movement is enough to create a thin layer and release unwanted flavours, creating the sweet we savour. The process can be also be used for other foods.

The equipment takes up less space than conventional equipment, which boosts its appeal to smaller producers. The technology can blend ingredients or purify a product quickly, giving it tremendous potential and saving energy at the same time.

Contact the Food Chain for further information
Tel: 0113 343 7593 or email
info@FoodChainCIC.co.uk

Automation

Yorkshire Forward have agreed to support the establishment of a Centre of Food Robotics and Automation within the Yorkshire and Humber Region.

The Tender for the new Centre has been won by a Consortium lead by University of Salford's Centre for Robotics and including the Food Chain CIC.

The Centre for Food Robotics and Automation will act as a competence focus for intelligent and advanced automation for food companies across the region. It will provide advice and training for a technically skilled workforce and act as a research and proving arm for the sector.

The Centre will be set up and operational by the end of 2006.

Contact:
Dr Graham Clayton for further information
Tel: 0113 343 7593 or email
G.Clayton@FoodChainCIC.co.uk



Food Industry Events

The events section of the Food Chain's website promotes a wide range of conferences and events relevant to those working within the food and drink sector.

This is a free service provided by the CIC to promote best practice in the food and drink sector. To add your event to the site complete the online form at
www.foodchaincic.co.uk/event-booking.html

Formulation

Let the Food Chain CIC help your products:

Market trends mean your products need to have less sugar, less salt, less fat or less calories but still taste good. Consumers are looking for healthier options and products with functional benefits. This leads to new sales opportunities becoming available and the opportunity to generate competitive products with USP's.

The CIC offers:

- Ability to reformulate your products while keeping the same taste and texture
- Knowledge to balance nutritional, dietary and health claims
- Access to a wide variety of functional ingredients
- In-depth processing awareness to ensure optimum conditions are experienced for consistency and high quality
- Pilot scale production for trials
- Access to new technology for scaleable and innovative production

Contact:

Dr Graham Clayton to discuss the special needs of your product and its Shelf Life Assessment.
Tel: 0113 343 7593 or email

Formulations@FoodChainCIC.co.uk

Music to Your Mouth

Enjoyment of biting

We already know that we judge food's satisfaction by its taste, aroma and texture but groundbreaking new research has identified a hitherto unexplored dimension – ultrasound.

Trials at the Food Chain examined the crispy nature of various inherently crunchy foods – Jazz apples, premium thick-cut crisps and rich tea biscuits.

The taste panel findings revealed that the subjects recorded the apples as providing the most 'enjoyment of biting'.

Interestingly, laboratory research using a texture analyser machine that 'bites' into food and records the sound in a matter of milliseconds showed that the apples produced far more ultrasound than the crisps or biscuits, measuring significantly higher amplitude (loudness).

For further information on other ultrasound applications contact the Food Chain
Tel: 0113 343 7593 or email
Ultrasound@FoodChainCIC.co.uk

Innovate or Die?

The competitive environment for UK food manufacturers has never been fiercer, driven by such phenomena as globalisation and retailer consolidation. In this scenario many businesses go into "survival" mode, focussing on costs, supply chain efficiency and factory utilisation. Incremental innovation (variants and line extensions) may continue to take pace, but thoughts of breakthrough innovation (i.e. new business streams) usually go on the back burner.

A strategy of cost reduction is a necessity, but it is only a winning strategy if you can achieve "lowest cost producer" status in your category, something a UK-based manufacturer finds difficult to achieve in the face of global competition. The only other strategies for winning are supply chain domination (rare), creation of niche markets (i.e. new differentiated offerings) or competitive advantage through ownership of intellectual property. The latter two depend upon real innovation, and here new science & technology can play a vital role in sustained competitive advantage.

The food industry increasingly recognises the vital role of genuine innovation in business strategy, and Food Chain CIC is well placed to be a strategic "partner in innovation" for food science & technology.

Contact:

Dr Arthur Day, Industrial Member, Food Chain CIC Steering Committee and Former Head of Innovation, Nestle Rowntree

Tel: 0113 343 7593 or email

A.Day@FoodChainCIC.co.uk



contact the Food Chain

Further Information and Getting in Contact

P: Food Chain CIC | University of Leeds | Leeds | LS2 9JT
T: +44 (0) 113 343 7593 | **F:** +44 (0) 113 343 2982
E: info@foodchaincic.co.uk | **W:** www.foodchaincic.co.uk