

Brussels Flavour Day

THE CONTRIBUTION OF FLAVOURINGS TO THE FUTURE OF FOOD

On June 20th 2017, Brussels became the '*Capital of Flavour*'. The event was organized by **EFFA** (the European Flavour Association), together with **AROMA** (the Belgian Flavour Association) and **IOFI** (the International Organization of the Flavor Industry). The event was a great success with more than 100 participants. Policy makers, customers and food and drink associations gathered for discussions about the future of food and the role that flavourings plays in key consumer trends.

AN OUTLOOK ON THE FUTURE OF FOOD

Jean Robello, President of EFFA, opened the event and was very satisfied with the outcome of the day "*It was great to see the interest that flavourings raised. It was the opportunity for policy makers, customers and the flavour industry itself to learn more about each other and our common objectives for the coming years.*"

The future was one of the key words of the day. Lidewij Edelkoort, one of the world's most famous trend forecasters, inspired the audience with an outlook on consumer trends in food and flavours and how these have an impact on everyday life, highlighting that nowadays, food is even more fashionable than fashion itself. Edelkoort unveiled the main trends for the coming years, noting: "*We are witnessing a Revolution of Taste, moving away from sweet to sour, tart and even bitter*". An interactive panel formed by representatives of the European Commission, a consumer research institute and the flavour industry itself, commented on these trends.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Moving away from sugar is also one of the goals of policy makers, trying to inspire a more conscious diet and asking the food industry to propose products with less sugar, salt and fat. In order to be successful these products must also be tasty. Regina Maiseviciute Haydon, Global Food & Drink Analyst for the research firm Mintel, mentioned that "*flavour remains the most important factor when choosing food and drink products. Approximately two-thirds of European adults claim to choose food and drink products mostly based on flavour rather than other product features*". This was confirmed by attendees during a vote that, Jacki Davis, the moderator, did with the audience. Almost 90% of the public selected "look, taste and smell" as main criterion for choosing a food product.

Another important criterion was sustainability, which Sven Ballschmiede, Executive Director of IOFI highlighted as something the industry has been working on for years "Be it at taking care of raw materials, ensuring an efficient use of limited resources or helping to reduce the environmental impact, the flavour industry is part of a circular economy". Since the Flavour Industry invests 10% of the turnover in innovation, the panel also discussed the creativity aspect, and how important it is to adapt to consumer's expectations, which are linked to memories and emotions and therefore can vary much from one country to another.

THE JOURNEY OF TASTE

Viviane Vijverman, President of AROMA, the Belgian Flavour Association, closed the panel and invited the

attendees "to become creators themselves and embrace the flavour experience" with dedicated ateliers on the three key topics of the event:

- Sustainability corner: participants were invited to taste a soup made with a seafood co-product flavouring that won a sustainability award in 2015. Attendees could also have a look at best practices and examples of sustainability from the flavour industry in the roll-ups available, which included examples of long term partnerships with local farmers in Madagascar, and a bee preservation programme from an SME in Germany. One of the most interesting projects in that roll-up which triggered the attention of the public was WaterReuse, WaterReuse is a project funded by the LIFE + Programme of the European Union. It tries to set a definitive solution to unsolved problems of application for recommended Best Available Techniques (BAT) on this type of waste.
- Conscious diet corner: Tasters could choose between two types of barbecue flavoured chips, one of them with 55% reduced salt. Noted EFFA Communications Director, Jimena Gómez de la Flor "When we asked which one was the reduced salt one, our visitors had difficulties to answer, and a few got it wrong since they were both very tasty!" This supported the idea that flavourings can help consumers to have a conscious diet without renouncing on good taste. They could also try a soya drink with and without a vanilla flavouring.
- Creativity corner: The most popular atelier, where attendees had the opportunity to see the process of creation of a flavouring and how it progresses to a final application. Two professional flavourists gave attendees the opportunity to choose among different tonalities of vanilla and citrus flavourings, explaining the wide range of possibilities, and how they are connected to cultural preferences, memories and emotions. Once each delegate chose one, the flavourist put a few drops into a creamy filling in order to create personalized macarons for each attendee.

THE FUTURE OF THE FLAVOUR DAY

This event was the first one organised by the National, European and Global associations together, and will be the first one of many 'FlavourDays' around Europe. Next stop, UK. London FlavourDay is on September 21st, celebrating the 100th anniversary of the [UK Flavour Association](#), followed closely by the Paris Flavour Day on November 16th organised by the French Flavour Association ([SNIAA](#)). Also Copenhagen, Berlin, and many more cities are planning similar events...so keep a close eye on the association's websites. More information and the detailed programme at: <http://www.ffa.eu/flavourday>

You can also follow the highlights of the event at [#Brussels_FlavourDay](#) or through our [LinkedIn](#) and Twitter [@EFFA_Flavour](#)

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