

SPECIALTY FOOD INGREDIENTS: VITAL INGREDIENTS FOR THE FOOD CHAIN

What are specialty food ingredients?

Specialty food ingredients typically preserve, texture, emulsify, colour, help processing and add an extra health dimension to produced food. They are all key to guarantee the wide range of processed foods as offered today to the consumer. They range from micro-ingredients like vitamins, minerals and enzymes to macro-ingredients like specific proteins, fats, carbohydrates, fibres and other substances. With their technological, nutritional and health related functions they make the food tasty, pleasant to eat, safe, sustainable, healthy and affordable.

Position of specialty food ingredients industries in the food chain



Contribution to the safety and convenience of foods

Specialty food ingredients are an essential part of a wide range of the food products we take for granted these days. Our way of life has thoroughly changed in the last few decades. Activities away from the home have reduced the amount of time consumers spend in the kitchen. The use of specialty food ingredients, combined with food technology, has made possible the large scale preparation of good wholesome food at economical prices.

Several types of specialty food ingredients are added to a food with a **safety purpose**. The precise nature and purpose of a food determines what specialty food

ingredients are needed, as does the way in which it is processed. Just as different food products have different properties, so do the various specialty food ingredients. For example, specialty food ingredients can be used to stop foods from deteriorating too rapidly, to maintain a food's nutritional profile and to mitigate the formation of undesirable components such as acrylamide during cooking processes.

For more information please see the factsheet: "How do specialty food ingredients and their manufacturers contribute to the safety and convenience of food?"

A technical and market response to public health needs

4-5 % of the annual turn-over of the European speciality food ingredients industries are invested in research and development. For ingredients companies that are committed to invest in research, innovation represents actually a technical and market response to existing public health needs. To take a few examples: ingredients manufacturers can contribute to the goal of **healthy ageing** not solely through existing products such as vitamins and minerals but also through further innovative ingredients, the efficacy of which is recognised by a specific health claim according to Regulation (EC) 1924/2006. Specialty food ingredients also play an essential role in compensating for changing diets, replacing less healthy alternatives and combating allergies and intolerances.

For more information please see the factsheet: “How do specialty food ingredients and their manufacturers contribute to healthier diets?”

Specialty food ingredients are one of the key options for sustainable food processing

Specialty Food Ingredients provide tools and solutions to improve resource efficiency along the whole of the food value chain, due to their effective impact during food processing and food storage. In particular they:

- improve resource efficiency by continuously innovating and **by using all valuable components of raw materials**
- **help make processing of foods more efficient**, thus limiting the quantity of raw materials required for production and resulting in energy saving, thus reduction of Greenhouse gas
- **contribute to waste reduction**

Technology advancements continuously reduce the environmental impact of the specialty food ingredient production.

For more information please see the factsheet: “How do specialty food ingredients and their manufacturers contribute to the sustainability of the food system?”

June 2014

The European specialty food ingredients industries spent in average €2 billion on R&D every year. They do have the potential to develop innovative ingredients in order to address important challenges facing the food chain in future.



EU Specialty Food Ingredients represents a united voice for the specialty food ingredients industry on scientific, technical and regulatory issues relating to food products in Europe. It is our aim to ensure that all stakeholders - from manufacturers and retailers to regulatory authorities and consumers - are correctly informed of the use, safety and benefits of specialty food ingredients. In total, more than 200 international and national food ingredients companies are currently involved in the Federation's activities through direct membership or an association. 3-8% of EU specialty food ingredients manufacturers' turnover is dedicated to research and development.

For more information, please visit: www.specialtyfoodingredients.eu