

# THE INDISPENSABLE LINK IN THE SUSTAINABLE FOOD CHAIN

## Specialty food ingredients

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 or even in the last months. Activities away from the home have reduced the amount of time spent in the kitchen. The use of specialty food ingredients, combined with innovative food technology, has made possible the large-scale preparation of good wholesome food at economic prices.

Simultaneously, our industry has embarked on a sustainability journey to promote responsible manufacturing practices and adherence to the highest social and environmental standards. Moreover, our industry's cumulated Research & Innovation capacity stands out as a key pillar of our success, and contributes to putting safe, healthy and sustainable foods on the EU market.

More daunting challenges lay ahead for society and industry alike. With the launch of the Green Deal, the EU ambitions to become the first climate-neutral continent by 2050. A major cornerstone of this flagship initiative, the Farm to Fork strategy strives to bring about a transformation of the whole food system, by emphasizing the fundamental links between healthy people, healthy societies and a healthy planet.

As we look towards the future, we, as the European specialty food ingredients sector, are fully engaged in this dynamic towards a more sustainable food value chain.

### Our commitments:

- ✓ Co-operate closely with all actors in the value chain, in particular farmers and the food industry
- ✓ Accelerate our industry's path towards minimized climate impact
- ✓ Innovate sustainably, so that new products and solutions offered to consumers can contribute to healthier and more sustainable diets

## Specialty food ingredients play a key role in sustainable food systems

The Specialty Food Ingredients sector is a vital link in the food value chain. 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 foods offered today to the consumer: whether for home-cooking, eating out or takeaway, whether from local grocery stores or larger retailers.

### Position of specialty food ingredients industries in the food chain



### Safety & Quality

European consumers enjoy some of the highest food safety standards and most advanced food regulations in the world. Specialty food ingredients actively contribute to the safety of our food. They stop foods from deteriorating too rapidly, prevent undesirable micro-organisms from growing, maintain levels of essential nutrients such as vitamins and amino-acids and ensure that foods can be produced for a large number of consumers in safe conditions. Thanks to specialty food ingredients we also have access to many convenience foods of high quality, such as yoghurts and desserts, sauces and soups, baked goods, lunch meats as well as prepared dishes and snacks.

### Circular economy, Efficient production & Waste avoidance

Today the European Commission estimates that roughly 20% of the food produced in the EU goes to waste. To address this problem, the EU wants to set binding targets for reducing food loss within the Farm to Fork framework. Food production also significantly contributes to GHG emissions, which will need to further decrease.

Specialty Food Ingredients can provide tools and solutions towards achieving these goals of minimizing food loss and maximizing production efficiency, due to their effective impact during food processing and food storage. In particular, they help make processing more efficient, thus limiting the quantity of raw materials required, while saving energy and GHG emissions. They also improve yield and circularity by using all valuable components of the raw material.

### Health benefits

Europe's health care budgets are set to expand in forthcoming years, due to the aging of its population and the prevalence of diet-related diseases such as diabetes and obesity. The EU and national health authorities encourage consumers to shift towards a healthier lifestyle including physical activities and good eating habits, to stave off these disease risks and meet their specific nutritional needs at each life stage. Consumers are already paying increasing attention to health benefits of their food.

A (re)balanced diet is part of the solution to tackle obesity and overweight. Specialty food ingredients offer the possibility to make healthier products by replacing sugar, fat etc with less caloric, pleasurable alternatives and by fortifying food with minerals and vitamins to support a healthy nutrition. Moving further ahead, our industry is looking to develop specific foods for the specific needs of individuals, through life's stages from infant formula to senior nutrition. By continuing to innovate, ingredient manufacturers bring to the market a range of nutritional and functional ingredients to support e.g. healthy eating, healthy aging, weight management and physically active lifestyles.

### Sustainable diets

The global population is projected to increase to around 10 billion by 2050. Global food availability will need to keep pace. Europeans are increasingly aware that we need to transition towards a more balanced diet to reduce the environmental impact of our food system and maintain the balance with rising demand for food and the corresponding ingredients in emerging economies.

Specialty food ingredients are essential components of the great variation of enjoyable food products that consumers are increasingly demanding, to be sure that they have access to "healthy food from a healthy planet".

### Specialty food ingredient manufacturers in action for more sustainable food production

With 3-8 % of its turnover dedicated to R&I, the European specialty food ingredients industries are in a good position to address the sustainability challenge by developing R&I approaches meeting consumer expectations, addressing sourcing and manufacturing opportunities and developing desired foods for consumption which are safe, healthy and sustainable.

The European specialty food ingredients industries acknowledge their responsibility of being themselves as resource-efficient as possible in the production of specialty food ingredients. Our sector supports best farming practices and other responsible sourcing practices. The specialty food ingredients production notably strives for energy efficiency improvements and lower water usage. Our industry will continue to launch initiatives in line with the objectives of the Paris agreement, while paying close attention to the measures and strategies that the EU institutions will put forward within the Green Deal and Farm to Fork frameworks.

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**The European Specialty Food Ingredient sector strives for a holistic approach towards sustainable food systems, fostering innovative solutions and taking into account the contribution of all the actors in the food chain.**

**Within the Farm-to-Fork strategy our sector supports the development of a coherent and science-based long-term regulatory approach for specialty food ingredients.**



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](http://www.specialtyfoodingredients.eu)