

Enabling Food Innovation Project

LINK FOODS LTD

Link Foods Ltd wish to scale up production on 3 plant based food concept dishes: an Asian coconut potato, chickpea and mung bean curry, a Falafel wrap and a Middle Eastern salad. The aim is to serve at farmers markets, festivals and small cafes as part of a wider social enterprise to promote plant-based foods.

Project Brief: Nov 2016

Contribute to the process of commercialising the recipes by carrying out a sensory product characterisation session with the aims of:

1. Producing sensory quality attributes sheet.
2. Collating feedback on the dishes from a technical point of view (and with scale up, commercial manufacture and requirement for stability in pack/over life in mind).
3. Providing a milestone for the company to aid finalisation of the formulations.

The Response: Jan 2017

1. The 3 products were cooked by chefs on behalf of Link Foods Ltd in the UoN development kitchen.
2. A sensory product characterisation tasting session was held next door with members of the Enabling Innovation team (previous product development experience) and volunteer members of Link Foods Ltd and mentors of the organisation:
 - a. Sensory descriptors for appearance, aroma, taste, flavour, texture and aftertaste were generated and refined as a team.
 - b. Feedback and notes from a technical perspective was made throughout.
3. The descriptors and photos of the products were compiled into Sensory Quality Attribute Sheets for Link Foods Ltd.
4. Feedback from the session was compiled and summarised into a report for Links Foods Ltd.

Benefit to the Business:

Through this intervention, Link Foods Ltd was able to refine its product specification based on advice on formulation/recipe and a product characterisation process to create sensory attribute sheets. This has moved the business on from having initial product, developed in a home kitchen to having proper trade specifications and an understanding of the process of scaling up and the issues that entails.

Reuben John stated “Thank you for facilitating the sensory analysis and product testing last Friday, I found this most useful and very encouraging. The Sensory Quality Attribute Sheets and the accompanying report you provided will help guide the business development and I am very impressed with this. It gives me such a great platform to understand all the technical considerations with starting up food production.”