

Interview

LUPILICIOUS, DELICIOUS BREAKFAST CEREALS WITH LUPIN AND OATS



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CROPDIVA wants to see underused crops back in the field. But for these crops to reappear and be grown by farmers, they have to be in demand with the general public. What products can be created using things like lupins and oats? We asked LupiLicious, a new startup company that sees potential in both.

LupiLicious came to be as the result of a makeathon organized by Generation Food and financed by the Flemish government and Le(j)on. In this makeathon, UCLL and KU Leuven students from different specialty came together and via brainstorm and creation sessions tackled questions society in general is trying to answer. One of these questions was how to find diversity in the food we consume using plant-based proteins. LupiLicious was one of the answers that surfaced. In only two days, a group of four students developed a new concept of breakfast cereals that includes both oats and lupins. With this new breakfast delicacy, they target people who consciously choose a healthy and sporty lifestyle. No wonder: the combination of both legumes is gluten-free and just one serving of these breakfast cereals will supply up to 25 percent of a human's daily protein needs.

“Lupin is still quite unknown as a food component in our region”, remarks Zeno, one of the students who conceived Lupilicious. “Though most people would consider that a disadvantage, we actually consider it to be a plus. It helps our cereal stand out from the masses of other breakfast cereals out there.”, he adds. “Of course, lupin is also very interesting when it comes to nutritional values. It has a very high protein content and mixing it in with oats makes our cereal even gluten-free. That’s a very interesting combination marketing-wise. It allows us to tap into new audiences. The fact that both crops can also be grown locally adds to that, as it makes it possible for us to work with local farmers. That’s not only important for the story behind our new food product, it also stimulates the local economy”.

Admittedly, the idea sounds great on paper. But for the story to really stick with the general public, a level of expertise is required that will help convince current nay-sayers. Cattoo, Zeno’s colleagues, brings this to the table. “I have personally always been very interested in healthy food and new products based on plant proteins. As a vegetarian, it’s important that I watch the amount of proteins in my diet and that I stay on top of which products exist in the market. Hence also my passion for cooking and experimenting with ingredients such as chickpea and lupin flour. Even before LupiLicious, I used them in many of my dishes. Now that I’ve started my MBA in Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Strategy, it feels like it’s time to take this passion a step further and

really study the market for lupin. That will be the topic of my master’s thesis. The makeathon design competition really helped in that department too. It gave me the opportunity to enrich the knowledge I already had, and bounce some ideas off of my colleagues.”

The concept of LupiLicious seems clear enough, but of course, as the result of a food design competition, it currently is just that: a concept. Bigger scale development is yet to start, mentions Zeno. “At the end of the design competition, we arrived at a prototype we were all happy with and created our first business plan. We are now fine-tuning the recipe and plan to find a producer in 2023. We’re also thinking about how we want to package our cereal and how we should differentiate between target audiences. As mentioned, we want to aim this new cereal mostly at sporty people who are looking for healthy and protein-rich food. This should allow us to distinguish ourselves from most breakfast cereals on offer, which mostly target people who want to lose weight. In any case, we’re excited to get our concept going. I usually eat skyr and muesli for breakfast, but I can definitely already see myself enjoying a good portion of Lupilicious before going to the gym. Delicious!”

