

Fruit Protein Could be the “Poster Child” for the Plant Protein Category, Claims New Book

10 Jun 2015 --- In a world with rapidly increasing populations and a growing number of people moving up the food chain consuming grain-intensive animal proteins such as meat and dairy, changes are for real that a major disruption in food supplies is looming. Even now, some areas of the world can be seen as a “food bubble” which is the result of using unsustainable agricultural methods like overpumping of groundwater in order to keep farming yields to unrealistic inflated high levels.

Moreover, the rapidly changing consumption patterns, the growing populations, and the depletion of natural resources pose real challenges for future generations. These are some of the warnings in Henk Hoogenkamp’s new book “Plant Protein Vision: Rice Bran Protein, Pea Protein, Soy Protein,” where the protein expert looks at these and other new and emerging protein sources.

One of the other new sources noted is fruit protein, which is extracted from byproducts such as seeds, shells/hulls or stems. For Hoogenkamp, this category has all the necessary elements to become the “poster child” of all plant protein ingredients.

“For starters, the name association with the word ‘fruit’ can launch this protein straight to the top of the protein pyramid. The mild nutty aromas of the fruit seeds and well-balanced essential amino acid profile has good market potential to position ‘fruitein’ for a variety of culinary applications. Additionally, this would facilitate formulation of texturized fruit-only foods, such as breakfast cereals and calorie restricted fruit protein diets.” He also notes how this fruit protein is often accompanied by an array of sought after bioactive compounds as well as essential fatty acids like omega 3, 6 and 9. Fruit protein is still in its infancy, with one supplier sourcing the seeds from Central America, set to launch their product in the coming months.

For Hoogenkamp, in the last few decades major strides have been made to increase both animal and plant protein production. However, more innovation needs to move through in order to significantly increase the current food output by 2050.

Agricultural productivity is closely interconnected with food safety, genetically-modified organisms, health, nutrition, sustainability, environment and obesity. Diet, climate change and agriculture are intertwined and it is difficult to tackle one without consideration of the others.

Demand for premium protein is experiencing exceptional global growth and it can be expected that availability will fall short, if the world continues business as usual.

“Protein sustainability is not an easy issue, but most probably the answer is to optimize increased consumption of premium plant protein sources and a reduction of animal protein, most notably meat consumption,” he notes.

“Plant Protein Vision” is Hoogenkamp’s twelfth book that deals with protein technology, following two books that were mainly focused on rice bran protein.

By Robin Wyers