

CONFECTIONERY

PRODUCTION

chocolate, sweets, snacks & bakery

MAY 2020



Inside

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Oils, fats & gum

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chocolate, sweets, snacks & bakery

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Cover image courtesy of Schubert



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Making the most of challenging times

These are very much unprecedented days we are experiencing, as we face dealing with the global pandemic unleashed by coronavirus. Every aspect of our working and personal lives continues to be impacted by the unfolding situation, which poses a number of notable challenges.

This has been very clearly illustrated with the cancellation of major events across all spheres of industry, including the confectionery sector.

Underlining this, shortly after going to press with our last edition, we learned that Interpack was being postponed until next year, followed rapidly by the cancellation of Sweets and Snacks Expo in Chicago.

However, despite the events of the past few weeks, our business, like many others, is carrying on as usual, and we continue to publish our magazines with our staff and writers all working remotely.

One thing that has particularly stood out and impressed me is the response to the crisis from individuals and companies in our sector that are further revealed in our news pages.

There have been a number of instances of people and firms who have given back to communities with gestures of assistance for much-needed medical services tackling this pandemic around the world.

It has also been encouraging to see that businesses have continued to support us

during this challenging time, which we will naturally reciprocate through offering the strongest coverage of the sector we possibly can. For this month's site visit, we explore behind the scenes at Cargill's facilities in Mouscron, Belgium, which was possible just before travel restrictions were enforced.

We also offer an innovation focus for equipment and systems which were due to appear at Interpack, revealing an array of creativity within the sector.

As a gesture to our readers, we are also making this edition free to read on our website, and we can also arrange for copies to be sent to a home address.

Here's hoping you enjoy this latest edition, wherever you find yourself working.

Neill Barston, editor,
Confectionery Production magazine

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

An annual subscription to *Confectionery Production* includes: direct personal delivery of 10 issues per year, weekly email newsletter and online access to digital back issues.

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Editorial Advisory Board



Mary Barnard
President of Caobisco, the association for the chocolate, biscuits and confectionery industries of Europe.

Mary has extensive experience in the food and drink sector at a senior level, including her present role as president of the European chocolate division of Mondelez International. She has a special interest in the company's Cocoa Life programme.



Andreas Bertram
Managing director of the Central College of the German Confectionery Industry (ZDS)

Andreas has a background in product and market development. He is now responsible for the day to day running of ZDS as well as managing the seminar department.



Andy Baxendale
Chocolate consultant

Andy has worked for some of the largest names in the UK confectionery market, advising on everything from recipes to staff training and production techniques. He has nearly 25 years industry experience and has extensive knowledge of regulation and legislation within the confectionery sector.



Sara Jayne Stanes OBE
Chairman of the Academy of Chocolate

Sara Jayne is chief executive at the Academy of Culinary Arts, an ambassador for 'real' chocolate, and author of *Chocolate: Discovering, Exploring, Enjoying* and co-author of *Chocolate: The Definitive Guide*.



Graham Godfrey
Confectionery consultant

Graham is a technical and manufacturing consultant with expertise in the technologies of cocoa, chocolate, sugar confectionery and chewing gum, and experience in process development, factory design and commissioning, operations development and manufacturing reconfiguration.



Claudio Zanão
CEO of Brazilian Manufacturers Association of Biscuit, Pasta and Industrialised Bread & Cakes (ABIMAPI)

With a background in mechanical engineering, administration, marketing, finance and business management, Claudio has experience of working with FMCG companies including Coca-Cola, Danone and Bunge.

CONFECTIONERY SECTOR MAKES MARKED SUSTAINABILITY PROGRESS

Italian confectionery brand Ferrero has joined other major firms in releasing its sustainability performance action plan to protect forests in Ghana and Ivory Coast.

The business said it had made notable progress as part of its joint initiative with the two African governments alongside industry, with the likes of Olam, Mars Wrigley, Nestlé and Barry Callebaut all having similarly issued updates on their work towards the Cocoa & Forest Initiative (CFI)

According to Ferrero, the company is on track to meet its commitments to the scheme, which it aims to implement by 2022, to protect forests used by the cocoa sector for the confectionery market, building on its initial environmental action plan that was released last year.

The company said: "For over 30% of our CFI indicators we are already close to reaching or have even exceeded our defined goals for 2022. This progress was possible due to the trusted partnership we have built with our suppliers over many years.

"We will even increase the targets where needed to continue delivering on ambitious goals. We are proud of our performance in



The Coco and Forests Initiative has made inroads into protecting forests used for cocoa

the first year. It energises us to continue with the same dedication to make sure that we meaningfully contribute to this collective initiative and to the common goal of ending deforestation within the cocoa sector."

The company added that in the first year of its plan, the firm mapped more than 140,000 cocoa farms in total in both countries.

It also developed more than 15,000 hectares of cocoa agroforestry in total Ghana and Ivory Coast. Furthermore, it distributed about 500,000 trees to farmers to plant, and trained over 90,000 farmers and organisations in Good

Agricultural Practices and over 32,000 farmers in Climate Smart Cocoa.

Significantly, the business added that by the end of 2020, all the cocoa in its supply chain will come from sustainable sources, as well as aiming to have all farmers supplying the firm cocoa fully mapped.

Among other major companies to join the CFI, Mars Wrigley confirmed it was also in line to reach its own goals as part of its work on key issues including environmental protection.

In collaboration with the Grameen Foundation, The Rainforest Alliance, Satelligence and Waterwatch Projects, the company, along with Touton were the first businesses to embrace FarmGrow, an Android-based, decision making tool for cocoa farmers that combines agronomy and economics to help them improve their productivity and the sustainability of their farms in the long-term.

In a statement on its progress, the company said: "In order to achieve

a deforestation-free cocoa supply chain by 2025, we have been advancing partnerships with cocoa suppliers, governments and civil society partners who share our common goal of forests preservation for the future, and are accelerating our progress by working only with cocoa suppliers who can be accountable to meet the milestones in our Cocoa for Generations plan."

For its part, Olam Cocoa added that the company's teams in both Ivory Coast and Ghana have worked in partnership with farming communities over the last 12 months to implement the commitments in its Cocoa & Forests Initiative (C&FI) Action Plans.

These range from distributing over 1,735,233 cocoa seedlings to teaching agroforestry techniques to 78,624 farmers. This has also included GPS mapping through the company's entire direct supply chain, as well as providing micro-financing money to help thousands of women in cocoa communities in supporting their families.



Companies such as Olam have made innovations with cocoa monitoring equipment

NCA RAISES URGENT NEED FOR BUSINESS SUPPORT DURING CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

The US-based National Confectioners Association (NCA) president and CEO John Downs has highlighted the urgent need to support businesses in surviving the economic impact of the coronavirus outbreak.

In an opinion piece, he stressed that smaller companies, including those within the confectionery sector, required an immediate need for support from government in order for such

businesses to continue trading. He warned that if such companies were allowed to fail then there would be a significant number of job losses that would cause 'major harm to the economy,' which made decisive action on the issue a key priority.

In response to the situation, US president Donald Trump said he would be seeking multi-billion financial support from Congress

for businesses, including a package of short-term loans. Consequently, the US government agreed a financial support package of \$1.7 trillion, as a record 6.6 million US citizens filed for unemployment amid the crisis. Downs said: "It's time to harness the collective resilience, grit and determination needed to get assistance measures across the finish line for the family-owned companies in



John Downs, president and CEO of the US National Confectioners Association, called for government aid



our industry and all small businesses across the country. Wholesalers, distributors and other family-owned companies alike need business interruption liquidity so that they don't have to lay off their employees. In other words, our elected officials need to move quickly to provide no-interest loans to these companies so that they can make payroll," said Downs.

Manufacturers of chocolate, candy, gum and mints directly employ nearly 54,000 people across the US, with the majority of these jobs being created by small businesses.

UK confectionery firm offers support to medical workers amid pandemic

UK manufacturer Whitakers Chocolates has been doing its bit to lend some cheer during the coronavirus outbreak, by offering thanks to NHS staff in donating thousands of chocolates to Airedale General Hospital. Gemma and William Whitaker, pictured, felt moved by the present crisis and wanted to give something back to the community, which they said they're determined to keep doing while the country faces a hard period ahead with most economic activity grinding to a halt.

"It was safe to say these were greatly received with very big smiles, and over the coming weeks we plan to continue to donate chocolates to local charities and food banks to help lift spirits and to give people the chance to enjoy chocolate who wouldn't necessarily be able to afford to in these current circumstances," explained Gemma.

The Yorkshire-based business has more than 130 years heritage, as *Confectionery Production* has previously featured, producing its own branded

range of chocolates, as well as considerable work within the private label sector. For this year's ISM event in Cologne, the company unveiled a re-branded

image and product range, which included luxury chocolate truffles, foiled chocolate hearts, truffle spheres and new flavours of fondant creams.



Gemma and William Whitaker at Airedale Hospital

Deploying technology against the virus

Despite Interpack being postponed this year, there have been a number of equipment releases due this summer, as *Confectionery Production* reports

Seeking a practical means of overcoming restrictions on working environments surrounding the coronavirus pandemic has posed businesses considerable challenges (see our innovation feature later in the magazine for further content).

However, one such company using its initiative to respond to testing conditions is sorting business Tomra, which is showcasing its latest systems through virtual test and demonstration centres for its customers. As the business explains, manufacturers seeking new equipment lines will be able to book interactive sessions with the Centres in Leuven, Belgium, Xiamen, China, and Sacramento, US. During these demonstrations, participants will see first-hand the company's sorting solutions in action.

Throughout the session, they will be in contact with the firm's experts via live video link to discuss the benefits of these technolo-

gies in quality, food safety, profitability and sustainability. Ashley Hunter, senior vice president and head of Tomra Food, commented: "We are going through a period of unprecedented disruption. In this situation, our foremost priority now is to ensure that we support our customers' ability to maintain a consistent supply of quality food while keeping our employees and, by extension our customers' and suppliers' staff, safe and well."

"These are challenging times for all of us, both on a personal level and for our businesses, but it is vital that we keep up our collective efforts to keep the global food supply chain operating effectively."

Meanwhile, French-based Proform has specialised in creating equipment for the gum manufacturing sector, and is marking its 25th anniversary with upgraded machinery.

The business offers a series of individual machines from winders, through



Tomra has created virtual demonstration centres for its equipment lines

to complete processing systems that are PLC controlled. As the company notes, making gum with a continuous mixer ensures that there is no break in production, from the moment the process starts, until the line is stopped; the mixer works continuously with the different metering devices adding liquid or powder ingredients into the mixer according to a certain ratio, so as to respect the manufacturers' formula.

The company can provide solutions for downstream extrusion and forming of all types of chewing gum.

This includes ball forming production lines that can shape spherical products or distinctive patterns such as footballs, made with or without semi-liquid or powder fillings.

For its part, industrial bakery equipment business Mecatherm notes consumer trends continue to drive innovation in machinery development. In response, the company has created two series – its Mecaflex modular industrial production line fitted with advanced software, and hardware to ensure production efficiency.



A sorting line from Tomra is put through its paces



Proform is releasing extended lines as part of its 25th anniversary



Mecatherm's bakery lines are being upgraded this summer

For the patisserie market, which the company notes now amounts to 11 million tonnes of product a year, it has devised its Mecapatisserie system.

This offers high precision baking, hygienic operation and a focus on consistent performance, as well as flexible operation.

In addition, the company has created a dividing solution, the M-NS divider, designed to forge high quality product using dough that does not stretch items, and offers a high level of tolerance during production processes.

Cocoa processing

In the Netherlands, the equipment firm Caotech is expanding its range of solutions being offered. It supplies a variety of installations, varying from a small lab size, ball mill type CAO B5 lab conche, as well as delivering established lines such as its CAO B3000 batch system.

The company's CAO 4000, used as a component in a continuous production line for both cocoa and chocolate to complete

turnkey projects, was due to be exhibited at this year's Interpack. It has a capacity of up to 2,000kg per hour and the capability to be supplied with ingredients feeding components.

The CAO 4000-CHOC In-Line system has been devised for heat sensitive masses, featuring a configuration using a horizontal mixer, (water-cooled) grinding shaft, grinding tank, grinding media and tube heat exchangers, resulting in an optimum use of the grinding/cooling efficiency.

According to the company, the benefits of using such a system include a consistent process delivering high quality gum, enhanced hygiene procedures due to greater automation, and flexible operating parameters.

Another sector experiencing notable developments is the labelling market.

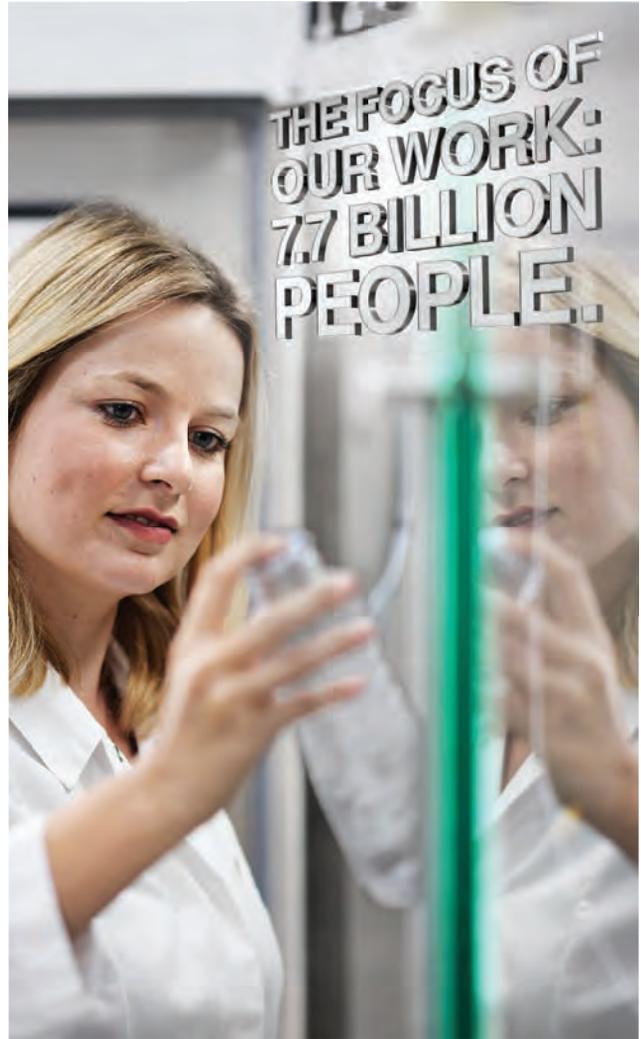
One key release for this summer is Herma's 500 series high-speed applicator, which has been designed to be operated continuously 24 hours a day if required. It runs at 200 metres, or 2,000 labels a minute. It features motorised winders as well as a loop unit.

Caotech's range of cocoa processing machinery is also upgraded for 2020



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NEWS IN BRIEF

FDF supports firms

The UK's Food and Drink Federation (FDF) has struck a 16-week partnership with job recruitment app, Syft, in a bid to provide support to individuals working across the sector during the coronavirus outbreak. As the organisation, which represents a number of major businesses across the confectionery and bakery market segments, noted, the Covid-19 crisis has had a disastrous effect on the hospitality and non-food retail sectors with hundreds and thousands of workers suddenly at risk of being made redundant or placed on furlough. To address this, the FDF has launched its partnership with Syft to offer a 'lifeline' with potential job opportunities across the food and drink supply chain.

Deal for Give & Go

Mondelēz International has completed its agreement to acquire a significant majority interest in Give & Go, a North American sweet baked goods business and owners of the two-bite brand of brownies and decorating kit specialists, Create-A-Treat.

"As we continue to establish foundations in fast-growing snacking areas, this is an important acquisition for our company that supports our ambition to lead the future of snacking," said Glen Walter, executive vice president and president, North America for Mondelēz International.

Schubert annual growth up

German packaging machinery firm Gerhard Schubert reported a continued pattern of annual growth, with 2019 revenues up 5.3% to €289 million.

In addition, the business reported that its order intake in 2019 also grew significantly by 14.5% compared to the previous year, with the group now employing a total of 1,400 staff. The company is presently investing a total of €30 million at its Crailsheim headquarters into expanding production facilities, with construction having begun in autumn 2019.

Nestlé joins global Red Cross efforts in tackling coronavirus

The Nestlé group has intensified its response to the coronavirus outbreak with a joint initiative with the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) organisation. In a statement responding to the global pandemic, the company, which produces a number of established confectionery brands including KitKat, said it 'cared deeply for the communities in which it operate' and believed that it had an essential role to play in combatting the situation.

As part of its measures, the company has pledged CHF10 million towards international aid in helping communities around the world cope with coronavirus. The company said: "Food and beverages help keep people healthy and enhance their quality of life. We care about our responsibility to provide good nutrition, especially for the most vul-

nerable in society – children, the elderly and those struggling with illness.

"We would like to assure our customers and consumers that we will continue to produce and deliver products to meet global demand. Our people are fully committed and are working tirelessly to ensure that supply is maintained. We are working very hard to keep them healthy and safe."

Outlining its actions, the global business said it had implemented enhanced safety measures at all its sites, with particular focus on its frontline workers in Nestlé factories, quality labs and distribution centres.

In addition, the business said it had put in place sick leave arrangements and further measures for those who contract the virus and will provide cash loans or advances for those in financial distress.

The company's statement continued: "Since the very beginning of this crisis, our people have led substantial local relief efforts in the communities around the globe where we operate.

"We have provided support to charities, medical institutions and other organisations in the frontline of the fight against this pandemic. We have worked very closely with physicians to develop new tailored COVID-19 medical nutrition and supplement treatment protocols," the company said.

In addition, the business said it had also donated to food banks and food delivery organisations to support people in need.

Furthermore, the company has set out to provide prompt and pragmatic support to its business partners, with notable examples being its supply chains, which are affected by the crisis.



Mark Schneider, pictured at the company's annual results, told staff recently of 'a storm ahead' over coronavirus

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Time for your company to shine at the World Confectionery Conference

Plans for our debut World Confectionery Conference are fast gathering pace, as the stage is set for the event this September in Brussels

Among our industry showcase's core elements will be a celebration of excellence across the entire sector with the launch of the World Confectionery Awards. While there may be challenges facing global economies, there are many reasons to highlight achievements across our fields of business.

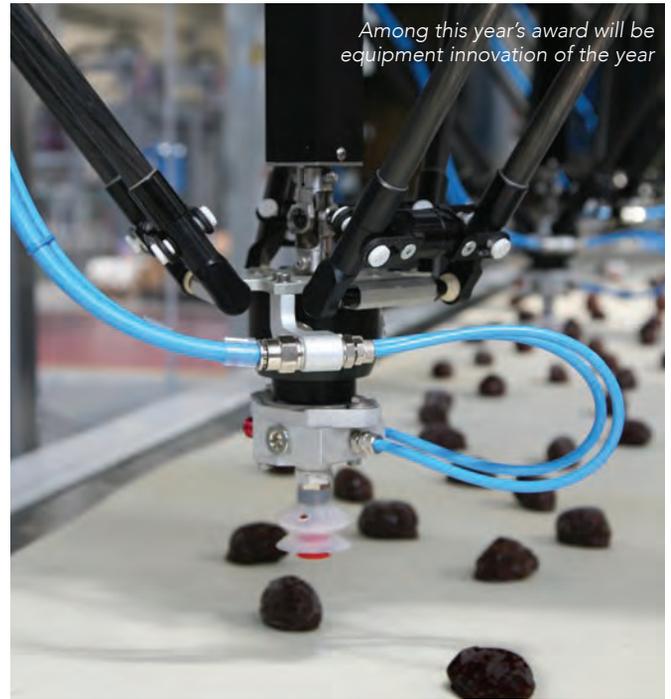
Traditionally, confectionery, snacks and bakery markets have often been at the centre of wider industry innovation, which we aim to put firmly in the spotlight.

With many outstanding developments across our sector, and as our parent company Bell Publishing recently celebrating its own 20th anniversary, we believed the timing was right to ensure significant developments and breakthroughs are recognised. The awards, voted for entirely by those working within the industry, will mark supplier innovations across equipment, ingredients and finished product market segments. They will be pre-

sented at a drinks reception that draws our conference to a celebratory close in Brussels on 11 September, 2020, with event delegates expected from a wealth of small and medium enterprises, as well as larger businesses from around the globe. In total, there will be five supplier awards presented. Each business will be allowed to nominate a maximum of one company innovation into each of these awards.

This year, the categories are:

- **Equipment innovation** – Dedicated to the overall design of new or existing equipment
- **Sustainability** – Focusing on efficiency of equipment and systems for confectionery and snacks sectors
- **Team of the Year** – Marking leading team contributions and achievement to an individual business.
- **Ingredients innovation** – Celebrating major breakthroughs in ingredients



Among this year's award will be equipment innovation of the year

- **Finished Product innovation** – Showcasing dynamic new finished product confectionery lines

The awards are free to enter, with companies able to place entries until 10 July 2020 to nominate in each respective category.

This will be done through the World Confectionery Conference website, which is now live. Entries should include a 200-word description on why their nomination has made a difference to the sector over the past year.

This can also be done through contacting Kyra O'Sheen at Bell Publishing at kyraosheen@bellpublishing.com

The awards will be independently moderated by our editorial board, and to ensure neutrality, only one vote per person is permitted. Multiple votes from an individual, or excessive votes from any one company will be discounted.



The World Confectionery Awards is also seeking the Sustainability development of the year

There will be a shortlist announced prior to the event, with accolades being presented at the conference on 11 September 2020.

Contact assistant events manager Kyra O'Sheen, at kyraosheen@bellpublishing.com for further event details on the event, or by post, addressed to the World Confectionery Awards, The Maltings, 57 Bath Street, Gravesend, Kent DA11 0DF, UK.



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Major confectionery producers plan long-term confectionery market expansion within Ukraine

Global confectionery producers plan to accelerate expansion in the Ukrainian confectionery market this year, despite the impact of coronavirus and general economic uncertainties, according to key analysts.

As market observers within the region have noted, the country's food industry particularly its confectionery segment, has not been as severely affected by Covid-19 as a number of other commercial sectors.

The potential impact of coronavirus in terms of logistics chains for the entire food sector has been highlighted as a considerable potential issue by global analysts, but the market in Ukraine has so far seemingly proved comparatively resilient this year.

Beyond concerns over the virus, the region is also still contending with ongoing geopolitical tensions between Ukraine and Russia, which began six years ago, and have impacted on the region's economy.

However, as far as the confectionery

While the Ukrainian economy remaining under considerable strain with political tensions remaining high in the region, key confectionery firms have shown interest in expanding in the region. Eugene Gerden reports



Major brands such as Nestlé, behind KitKat, are planning expansion in Ukraine



Alessandro Zanelli of Nestlé is optimistic about the region's market

and snacks market is concerned, recent statistics of the Ukrainian government showed sales have increased by several times in recent weeks, amid the fears of the imposition of strict quarantine measures in the country, which forced local customers to make large stocks of food, including confectionery products. Consequently, this has not gone unnoticed by some local confectionery producers and multinational companies operating in the local market, many of which consider a significant increase of their capacities in Ukraine in 2020.

One such business, Nestlé, has been successfully operating within the country for around two decades. Since 2017, the firm has already invested more than UAH 700 million (\$25 million) in the development of its confectionery business in Ukraine and is reportedly planning further investments.

Alessandro Zanelli, general director of Nestlé in Ukraine and Moldova, said the company considers the Ukrainian market as one of the priority for its further development, while a particular attention will be paid for the development of both local and global brands of the company in the Ukrainian market.

Speaking about current market conditions, Zanelli said: "At present among our flagship brands in Ukraine are both local ones, such as Svitoch, and some global. Nestlé will continue to invest in Ukraine to gain consumer confidence with high-quality products on the basis of current and future market trends."

Furthermore, one of its production facilities at Svitoch in Lviv, will continue to remain its flagship site in Ukraine for the foreseeable future.

In the meantime, Nestlé is not the only global major planning acceleration of the Ukrainian market, with plans being considered by Mondelez International.

Presently, the company operates the Trostyanetska chocolate factory, which is reportedly the only factory in Ukraine with a full cycle of chocolate production, planning its further development within the near future.

Meanwhile, a recently completed expansion of the factory has provided a notable opportunity to Mondelez International to increase the supplies both to the domestic market and for exports. In addition, in recent years, the company has started regular exports from its Ukrainian factory to its export markets.

As an official spokesman of Mondelez International Ukraine earlier said in an interview to the Ukrainian Delo business paper, thanks to installation of new equipment the company has started the production of Oreo cookies for the EU market. In general, the firm delivers Ukrainian-made products to 12 EU countries and several Gulf states.

The Trostyanetska chocolate factory is among the country's most notable facilities



Subsequently, local producers also consider acceleration expansion in the domestic market this year.

For example, Boris Kolesnikov, a well-known Ukrainian businessman and the owner of "Konti", one of the largest confectionery producers in the post-Soviet space, has announced plans to build a new confectionery factory in the Ukrainian Cherkasy region.

Technical details of the project have not been disclosed, while, according to some media reports, that will be one of

the largest confectionery producers in Ukraine, in terms of annual output. In 2019 the Ukrainian market amounted to about 880,000 tonnes in volume terms, which became significantly higher the figures of some previous years.

According to data from Nielsen, the market grew up to 20 per cent on year-on-year basis, to (\$754 million).

Analysts predict that this year the market may increase further, though at slower rates compared to those observed during the past few years. ♦



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Maintaining a high bar of confectionery quality

Anne-Cecile Duhem, project manager at Cargill's Mouscron site, leads a tour of facilities



With some of the finest luxury chocolate offerings continuing to stem from Belgium, it is little surprise it retains a special place in the hearts of consumers, as much as professionals working across the industry.

The nation's close association with the sector dates back to the 17th century, when the country was under Spanish control, which saw the region first exposed to chocolate's delights with examples being brought back by European explorers to South America.

Then, the country took confectionery to a higher level with the development of the praline by Louise Agostini, wife of Jean Neuhas Jr, in 1915, cementing its place in the heart of the confectionery world. Consequently, it has played host

Being famed as one of the centres of the confectionery industry has given Belgium an enviable reputation, as Neill Barston found visiting Cargill's key production site, with the company now becoming a sponsor of the World Confectionery Conference

to a number of major manufacturers including Cargill, which has seen its site rapidly expand at Mouscron, close to the border with France and the vibrant cultural hub of neighbouring Lille. The company's confectionery interests have evolved significantly over nearly two decades, as part of the firm's wider international agri-business that employs a global tally of 160,000 employees.

Its key progress within the sector was

recently demonstrated at the Food Ingredients Europe trade fair in Paris last December, which saw significant product showcases. Among the most notable items unveiled were offering for high quality milk chocolate devised with 30 per cent sugar reduced formula, devised with its development teams' sensory science resources.

The event showcased its broader range of filling fats, vegan-friendly

alternative for gummies, as well as sweetener systems for use in products such as cookies and brownies (the latter using its own brand Gerkens cocoa powder for the bakery market), completing its range. But it is perhaps the company's chocolate offerings that have commanded headlines in recent months, working with a host of global confectionery groups.

So the opportunity to explore the firm's main production site in Mouscron offers a chance to experience its ever-evolving portfolio of products. There seems a strong degree of optimism among the team for my visit, in the wake of a \$5 million site investment targeting the delivery of its sugar-reduced chocolate. It's a move that chimes well with current market demand growing within the luxury product segment, making this a notable area of focus for the business.

As project manager Anne-Cecile Duhem explains as we tour the facilities, when the business first set up in the area more than 15 years ago, the site was just arable land being grazed by sheep – which has now been transformed into an agile business serving a global client base. "When you start in the chocolate business, it's difficult to leave. It's a very nice product, as well as being a good company that has a lot of passionate people working here.

"So it has been a really exciting working environment," she adds, outlining the site's ongoing development, which has undergone several notable milestones in its relatively

The Mouscron site has extensive research and meeting facilities for its Belgian employees



"When you start in the chocolate business, it's difficult to leave. It's a very nice product, as well as this being a company that has a lot of passionate people"
 – Anne-Cecile Duhem, project manager, Cargill

short lifespan. It's clearly a well-drilled operation, split into two carefully organised production areas, with conventional lines mirrored by an entirely separate unit on site devoted to nut-free production of chocolate products, addressing the ever-growing market for ranges devised for those with specific food allergies.

According to Duhem, it is challenges such as this, as well as devising products with reduced sugar and more specialist lines for the growing vegan market, that offer significant tests for the 150 or so

employees making up the total base of staff at the facility.

"I'm really attached to this site here at Mouscron, as I've been working here since 2006, so it's felt like my baby, as I was production manager in the beginning, and now I am involved in the extension project here, which has expanded my experience. I think it has been quite an adventure here, with new lines being developed all the time, which has made it very interesting," enthuses the project manager, who says that her degree studies in food engineering offered a platform for corporate life within Cargill.

Extensive facilities

Continuing the tour of the site, we explore some of its production processes, including the industrial scale conche mixing systems, which are being pressed into action preparing a broad range of chocolate batches.

Exploring further into the production halls, we also take in the site's moulding facilities, which just happen to be fashioning a line of luxury dark chocolate drops – just one of many product styles the company is capable of delivering.

As Duhem notes, the site is designed around a core requirement of being particularly flexible with the bespoke orders that are placed with its teams. ►



Staff can gain an insight into its latest range of its products with sample stations



Processing facilities at Mouscron

There's certainly no one-size-fits all approach adopted here.

"We have tried to place delivering excellence as a key factor, and we have set the bar very high, which is why we have such a good plant," Duhem says.

"I would say our biggest challenge is in delivering the best projects possible in line with business expectations – we have in place very strong processes to follow and are well prepared avoid issues with budgets and planning. My objective is to be in scope, within budget and on time with the work we do here, which are our three pillars," she notes, saying the facility was strategically chosen for its prime location to some of its major customers based in Benelux, France and Germany.

Having opened in 2003, she explains that it swiftly doubled its production capabilities within three years, and further extensions just over five years ago (worth around €35 million), enabled the doubling of liquid chocolate production and warehouse capacity. Furthermore, a dedicated line for dark chocolate, representing an investment of around €12 million, was also added in 2018.

This enabled considerable expansion of its ranges, which carry the much sought after certified status of being Belgian chocolate.

Key performance

Speaking to *Confectionery Production* on the company's performance and priorities, Miriam van Wanroij, global

product and process manager at Cargill, says the company's chocolate processing facilities remain in a strong position.

"I think the issue of sugar reduction in confectionery and chocolate is a very important one. This has been shown through a study we did on the subject with 8,000 people from 10 countries, which found that consumers' behaviour is changing.

"They are increasingly aware of health aspects of their diets, so they are looking for products that are seen as being healthier, and our research found around 55 per cent of people are willing to pay more for these kinds of items, so there is a lot of demand for this.

"The rate of growth within the EMEA market is now around nine per cent a year, compared to four per cent for regular confectionery.

"So, I think it is crucial that we develop sugar reduced chocolate, and we have the knowledge within our company to be able to do this."

As she notes, the €5 million recently invested in the Mouscron site is set to play a crucial role in expanding its capabilities, with its new facilities including advanced dosing systems for each product line. Van Wanroij adds that there are plenty of technical complexities to master in terms of product formulation – which are by necessity highly guarded



Refiners in action at the Mouscron production site

for commercial sensitivity reasons. She adds: "In reducing the level of sugar, you have to put something back in its place, which we have done a lot of research and testing on."

"We've looked at all options for this, looking at milk powders and how they can be replaced, as well as examining the use of proteins. Creating the right sensory experience is really important, as altering the sugar levels can impact on taste, so we look at all the options that are available to us and come up with the right solution for each customer."

"With the investment that has been made at our Belgian facilities, we can ensure that those requirements are met," explains the specialist, who says that devising the right taste profile was critical, and that its systems had the potential to reduce sugar by up to and exceeding 30 per cent if required. Furthermore, she adds that direct consumer research had shown that its formulations for chocolate series with less sugar had tested positively with consumers, who rated these offerings as good if not better than their full sugar equivalents.

As she reveals, the company has a number of tools at its disposal, which includes its range of texturisers, edible oils and sweeteners, which have so far enabled the business to engage with



The company's warehouse facilities enable a large volume of storage for its ranges

major confectionery manufacturers around the world. Another segment that the business has paid close attention to is the vegan and dairy free segment, working on chocolate products to satisfy what the company acknowledges is an area that has fast captured mainstream interest.

"We work together with our customers who visit us at our application centres so that they can test out their recipes, with these processes often taking several weeks. In terms of the challenges ahead that we face, I would say that it is in

aiming to be one step ahead of our customers and knowing what the trends are happening in the market."

With the business continuing to make investment into its chocolate production facilities and cocoa processing sites around the world, it remains focused on a programme of expansion.

Furthermore, despite economic conditions remaining challenging, the company is also remaining on track with a strategy of delivering new product innovations that it hopes will make a real impact in an ever-shifting market. ♦



Miriam van Wanroij, global process and project manager, says the market for high quality chocolate is expanding

Cargill factfile

- Cargill's history dates back over 150 years, beginning with William Wallace Cargill, who became owner of a grain warehouse in Conover, Iowa, US.
- Today, the business employs 160,00 people in 70 countries across its food ingredients and agriculture interests, recording sales revenues of around \$113 billion in 2019
- Cargill was established in Belgium via a grain importing office in Antwerp in 1953. It now has over 1,000 employees in eight locations: Antwerp (two locations), Izegem, Ghent, Herent, Vilvoorde, Mechelen and Mouscron.
- The company's activities in Belgium include production of food ingredients and the processing, distribution and trading of a variety

of grains and oilseeds. Both Cargill's European headquarters for its food businesses and Cargill's European R&D Centre, are located in Belgium.

- Cargill's cocoa and chocolate business offers the food industry standard and customised cocoa and chocolate ingredients for use in bakery, confectionery and dairy applications all over the world.
- The company's product range includes high quality Gerkens cocoa powders, chocolate, coatings, fillings, cocoa liquors and cocoa butters.
- Cargill's processing plants in Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, France, Germany, Ghana, Indonesia, the Netherlands, UK and the US are in full compliance with the highest food safety standards.

Coronavirus downs the Sweets and Snacks celebration

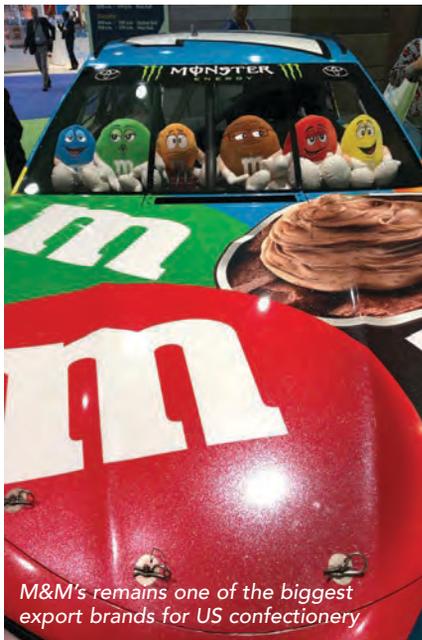
Having reported on last year's US Sweets and Snacks Expo in Chicago, it was clear the market was in a strong place from the sheer number of new launches.

Everything from Hershey marking its 125th anniversary, major lines from the likes of Mars and Mondelez International, through to Ferrero gaining a breakthrough with its own expanded lines, showed a positive growth pattern.

As the single largest confectionery market in the world, it's where major trends are often spawned, though what translates well on US soil, doesn't always necessarily work quite as well in other territories.

However, the past year has been a good one for America, with the statistics to prove it. The overall market category value for 2019 stood around \$36 billion, which showed a slight recovery over the previous twelve months.

According to research from the Euromonitor organisation, the increase in consumers seeking products promoting health and wellbeing has increasingly found its way into the confectionery market for the region.



M&M's remains one of the biggest export brands for US confectionery

The world's biggest single confectionery market is always an interesting one to observe, but like all others, it faces a battle to recover from the effects left in the wake of coronavirus affecting the nation. Neill Barston reports



Sweets and Snacks Expo is off for 2020 due to coronavirus, having been the major annual US confectionery focal point

The US has traditionally been behind Europe in terms of reducing ingredients that are not natural, but from speaking to a number of leading businesses at Sweets and Snacks, there seemed a general consensus that there was a need to deliver improvements on ingredients.

Coming into 2020, the signs were equally positive, with the National Confectioners Association unveiling plans for a national candy month in the US (June), which has been just one of its measures to continually help drive product innovation on a considerable scale. However, the US market, as with every other sector of industry, seriously hit the buffers in March with the highly unwelcome emergence of coronavirus. John Downs, president of the NCA, subsequently made an urgent appeal to the US government that the sector, which directly employs around 55,000 people, needed urgent assistance.

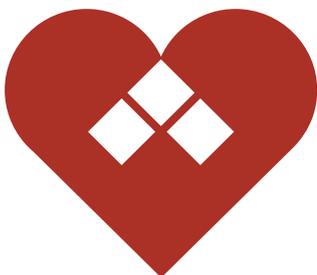
In response, the US government agreed a historic financial stimulus package of \$1.7 trillion to help stabilise

the economy from a massive health pandemic shockwave. The effects of coronavirus have been immediately felt with the fact that a total of six million citizens have registered for unemployment in the wake of a near-shutdown of the economy as an urgent search for a vaccine for the virus begins.

While physical stores have been forced to temporarily close, some businesses have managed to continue trading online – which has been an increasing area of focus for some of the bigger manufacturing brands.

Though quite how long it will take for 'business as usual' to continue in the US, and elsewhere, is hard to judge, with events surrounding the spread of coronavirus changing at a considerable pace. But the NCA has confirmed that in spite of the cancellation of Sweets and Snacks (which serves as the annual focus point for product launches), there will be web-based activity lined-up across the summer that may well ensure a degree of continuity for the industry. ♦

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Schubert's packaging systems were seen by Bahlsen as a perfect fit for its biscuit production operations



Absolute biscuit indulgence, packaged in a small space

How does biscuit indulgence actually sound? Because this question is not that easy to answer, Bahlsen designers work hard on developing the distinctive noise the famous butter biscuits with their 52 teeth make when you bite into them.

Until the treat ends up in the consumer's mouth, however, nothing should crack or pop. When baking and packaging, Bahlsen, the family-owned company with more than 130-years of heritage, expects smooth processes. This was recently the case with the packaging line for the new "Keks'n Cream" product line.

For even more satisfaction, this treat consists of two biscuits at once, complemented by a filling of delicious chocolate cream.

"Keks'n Cream Milk" is the name of the version made with dark chocolate biscuits and milk cream.

Both are manufactured and packed at the Bahlsen plant in Skawina near Krakow, Poland.

The filled double biscuits from the new product line are placed vertically in a tray, which is packed in a resealable

Bahlsen's new "Keks'n Cream" creation delivers taste in the layers of its filled double biscuits. To enable the pastry manufacturer to pack the sensitive products safely, quickly and attractively, a total of 24 pick and place robots were placed in a machine area of less than ten metres.

Moreover, a building post had to be integrated into the system. As Gerhard Schubert explains, one of its customised TLM machines takes on these challenges while offering flexible packaging options

shell. This allows them to remain fresh and crunchy even after the packaging has been opened.

For small moments of indulgence, the biscuits are also sold individually packaged. For the most part, the German market is supplied from this location. In order to meet the high demand, Bahlsen invested in a new TLM picker line at its Polish site in Skawina.

Furthermore, the requirements with which the manufacturer approached Gerhard Schubert, the German-based specialist in top-loading packaging machines, initially sounded like a standard inquiry.

But as the company explains, the

hall intended for packaging the new product range represented an additional challenge: A freestanding building support post stood in the way of the packaging line, requiring a specially adapted yet compact, high-performance system. "Since the post could not be removed, we simply integrated it into the somewhat extended system," reports the firm's sales account manager Michael Voelskow.

"It was especially important for Bahlsen to be able to run other tray sizes in the future as well. Furthermore, low maintenance and low spare parts costs had to be ensured," adds Voelskow of the system's operation.



The Schubert concept made an impression, and the contract for design, delivery and installation was awarded back in 2018. The company's experts developed a line ideally adapted to the specific conditions, yet still impresses with its extremely compact dimensions.

Consequently, the new packaging line runs at a slightly lower cycle output rate in order to reduce wear and maintenance requirements. However, there was still room for the output to be increased without taking the robots to their performance limit.

"This forward-looking planning is certain to pay off for Bahlsen," says Voelskow. At the head of the packaging line, the plastic trays are taken from the magazines and fed into the machine on both sides, so that the product placement into the trays can also run on both sides of the line.

A total of 24 pick and place robots work in four TLM frames. Arranged in pairs, they pick up the biscuits and place them into the trays passing by in the opposite direction.

After filling, the trays are rotated by 90 degrees so that they can be discharged lengthwise from the picker line to the subsequent flow-wrapping machine. On one side of the new TLM system, there is also a single storage belt. At the push of a button, individual placement of the biscuits on this grouping belt for flow-wrap bag packing without plastic trays can be activated.

This works without having to stop the system. The individual discharging and the placing into trays then run in parallel, i.e. simultaneously on both the left and right hand side of the machine. If more products are to be conveyed to the individual deposit belt, up to twelve robots will be able to perform this task in the future. Up until now, three of the 24 pick and place robots had been responsible for taking over the individual placement if required.

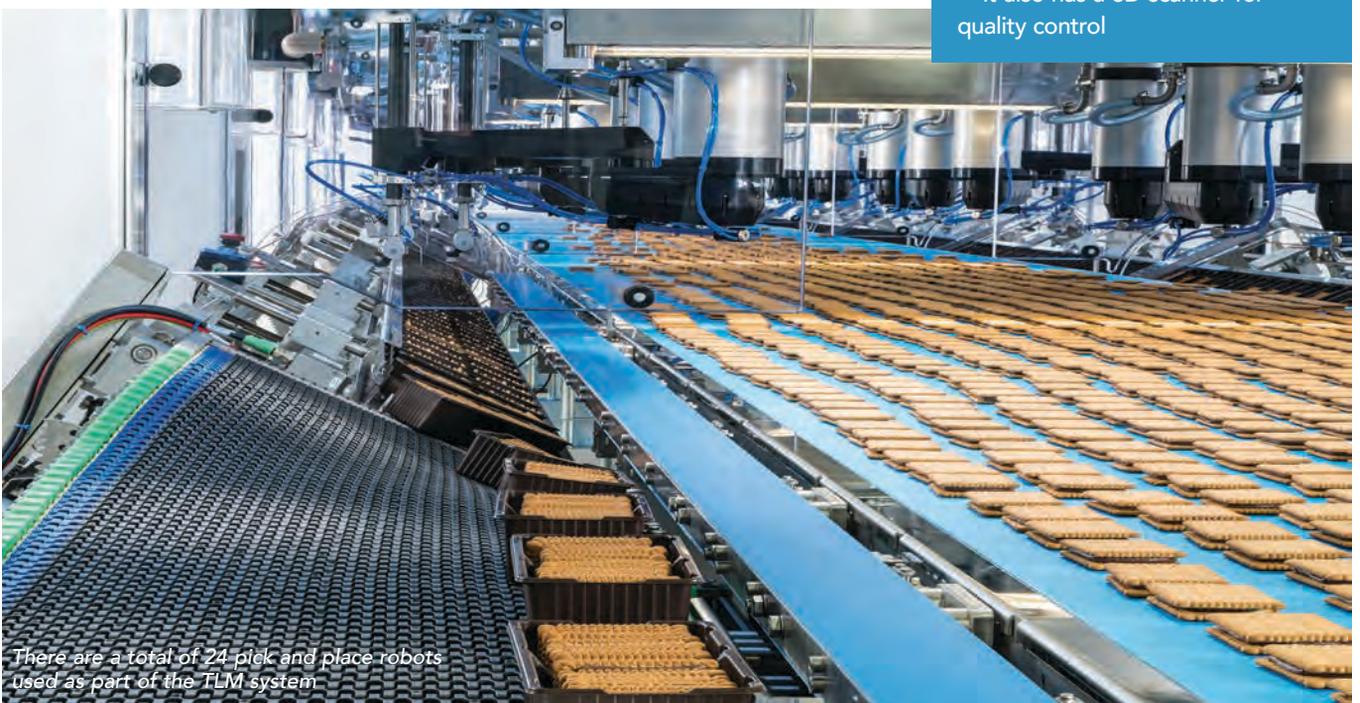
In the picker line, four 3D scanners ensure that only intact biscuits are detected and enter the packaging. Products containing no filling or less than the specified amount of filling, as

well as those not clearly bearing the Leibniz lettering, are rejected. This ensures that only flawless products get into the packages.

The TLM system was delivered in January 2019 and put into operation within weeks. Richard Tomczyk, who was responsible for the project as an investment manager at Bahlsen, reports: "In April last year, the machine was already running at a level of efficiency that had not been planned until December 2019." Voelskow concludes the success has been based on an excellent partnership. ♦

Facts & figures: Bahlsen project

- Bahlsen deployed a compact machine, the TLM from Gerhard Schubert, featuring 24 robots
- Product lines were packed into trays and on to a single placement conveyor
- The system offers 6 to 14-packs with different packaging formats
- It also has a 3D scanner for quality control



There are a total of 24 pick and place robots used as part of the TLM system



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Unveiling the next generation of sector technology

As technology continues to be applied ever more effectively across equipment ranges for the confectionery, snacks and bakery markets, the expectations of manufacturers also increase.

The core requirements for many businesses seeking packaging, processing or complete turnkey production solutions, remains ever constant in having access to machinery designed with enhanced levels of productivity, efficiency and connectivity at its heart.

This year's Interpack was set to respond to these challenges, with systems ranging from ever-growing Internet of Things (IOT) systems based on Industry 4.0 principles, through to breakthrough 'cobot' robotics solutions that are set to hit the commercial market.

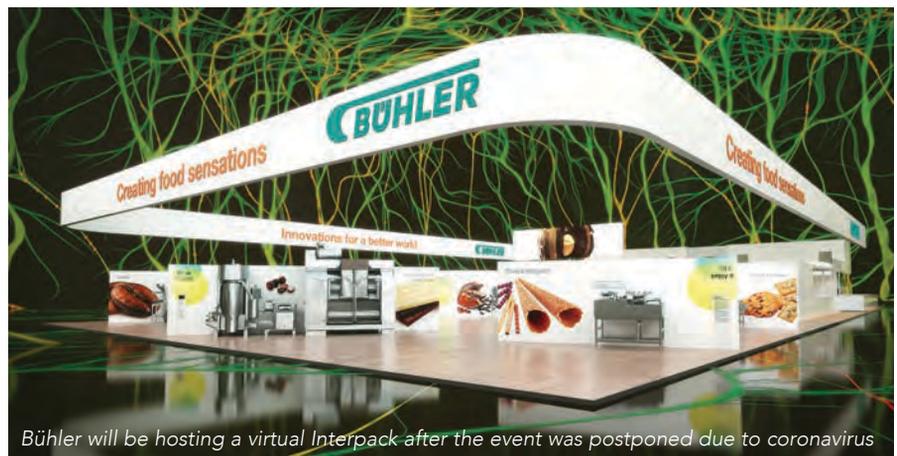
However, the unwelcome arrival of the coronavirus has postponed the key packaging and processing trade event in Düsseldorf until next February – but despite this, a number of businesses' innovations are ready and raring to be released this summer.

Among those releasing systems this summer is Bühler, which is staging its very own 'virtual Interpack' between 11-15 May, offering some major insights into where its technology development has been focused. As the company explains, its latest releases are set to be delivered under the motto, "Creating food sensations," aiming to inspire its customers with everything from chocolate mass to enrobed baked goods and moulded products, to wafers and biscuits.

Taking the form of digital showrooms, chats and webinars, some of its core themes will include sustainable innovations that help reduce waste, water, and energy usage in the bakery, chocolate, confectionery and roasting industries, that would have been presented physically at Interpack.

Furthermore, the company has also planned significant showcases covering

This year's Interpack may be facing a postponement until early next year, but as Neill Barston reports, there are still plenty of equipment and systems innovations released this summer



food safety, healthy ingredients and improved efficiency within its equipment ranges and solutions.

Since the last Interpack in 2017, the company has placed immense efforts into meeting the growing requirements on areas such as delivering higher energy-efficient solutions and less waste. Germar Wacker, CEO of Bühler's Consumer Foods business, says: "We will take this occasion to focus on digital communication alternatives, virtual presentations, and online conversations to keep our customers fully up-to-date.

"In every challenge is an opportunity. In a world of change, perhaps we will discover that virtual trade shows offer efficient, impressive, and modern platforms to communicate and exchange about the developments and the solutions for a prosperous future of the consumer food markets."

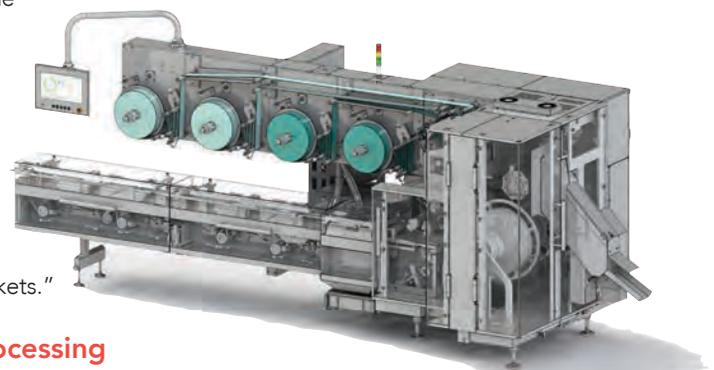
Packaging and processing

For its part, long-term Interpack exhibitor Theegarten-Pactec's latest systems include its CHS modular high-

performance packaging machine for chocolate ranges.

This is said to be capable of packing up to 1,800 products per minute instead of the previous figure of 1,200. It can also be adapted even more flexibly and therefore offer more efficiently to longer, higher or wider production items.

In addition, the company is also set to release its BLM line, which the first cartoner within its portfolio designed to match the pace of primary packaging machines, handling up to 2,000 individual products (at a total of 120 items per minute). ▶



Theegarten-Pactec is releasing two new lines of equipment including its CHS packaging series for chocolate

EQUIPMENT INNOVATION

For its part, Gerhard Schubert is approaching this summer addressing the increasingly complex market requirements of greater product diversity and smaller batch sizes.

As the business notes, additive manufacturing offers new opportunities. With 3D printing, processes can be entirely rethought and optimised. With the packaging industry presently facing several major challenges, in order to satisfy requirements for faster, flexible and sustainable machinery, the business has placed its focus in this area with the modular design of its TLM systems, which the group confirmed it is continuing to enhance by developing new robots and digital solutions.

The company explains that it has designed its present range of systems to accommodate higher performance in a small space or require more mobility in product handling – thus, Schubert's specialised T4 and T5 robots are the right solution, it noted.

They complement the proven F4 robot, which is used in numerous picker lines from Schubert. The design of the new pick & place robots is based on the well-known delta robot type.

Vertical packaging

As GEA says, its SmartPacker Twin Tube line has been redesigned as a modular system with increased functional efficiency promoting higher operational uptime and ease of use. The updated version reduces operational costs and energy use thanks to sealing technology advances. Plastic as well as functional paper can be used for bag production.



Schubert's TLM systems are designed to offer maximum flexibility for packaging operations)

The TwinTube is a continuous motion vertical machine, suitable for packaging small-sized, food products such as candy, nuts and dried fruits and other on-the-go products in pillow bags of different sizes. The machine is part of a complete packaging process with upstream and downstream equipment operating in a dry manufacturing facility. It operates with two parallel forming tubes, achieving combined speeds of up to 500 bags per minute.

It is also possible to run a different film reel for each tube, meaning calorie packs of different widths or designs

can be simultaneously filled. As the company adds, a new feature for the machine is the Jumbo Roll up to 100kg.

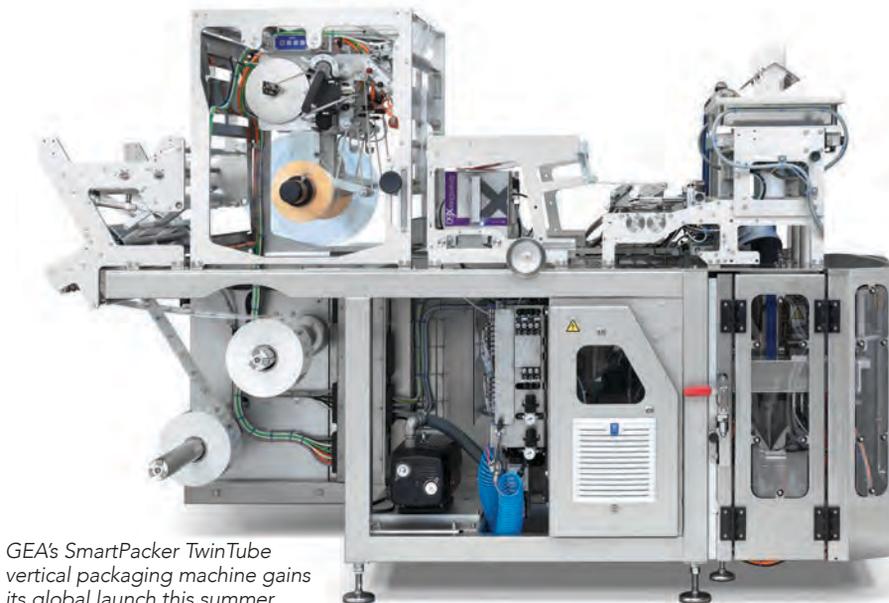
The line is also equipped with automated web tracking. If the film deviates from its path, due to, for example, variances in the film roll, the feature will correct the direction of the film automatically, without the need for manual adjustment.

The new SmartPacker also features a new jaw closing mechanism, optimised heating unit and a vertical rotational seal unit, promoting robust packing performance and excellent tightness of the pack seals.

The jaw closing mechanism offers more than triple sealing force as the previous one and can apply 6,000N.

Another key player within the packaging and processing segment is Australian-headquartered tna. The business had been anticipating using Interpack to demonstrate its full range of systems.

These include high-speed moguls, oiling and sugar-coating systems for confectionery, to flexible conveying, seasoning and high-performance packaging technology for a range of snack applications, such as its Intelliflav on-machine seasoning system that forms part of a range designed to offer complete solutions to its customers.



GEA's SmartPacker TwinTube vertical packaging machine gains its global launch this summer

A further notable set of releases this summer comes from the Italian-based Cama group, focusing on speed, productivity and reduction of downtime as core elements of its designs.

"Our new digital technologies will enable us to truly exploit Industry 4.0 capabilities, to create added value at every stage of our machines' life cycle," explains Massimo Monguzzi, R&D manager at Cama Group. "Indeed, we are now capable of defining a machine's value proposition even at the design stage, thanks to modern concepts such as simulation-based design and engineering and virtual commissioning.

"As well as making our concept more realistic, and the design and test phase a lot more robust, accurate and application specific, these digital technologies will deliver immense value to our end-user customers, thanks to core platforms upon which our machines are based," he continues.

The company explains that it has recently illustrated these capabilities at an event with a delta-robot-equipped loading unit, running – in real time – alongside its own digital twin. This highlighted how product flows can be simulated and then integrated into other upstream machines, also running in a virtual environment.

Augmented reality (AR) was another showcase technology at the event, with two machines highlighting its power and flexibility – one for a product-changeover cycle and the other for maintenance. In both cases, augmented reality removes the need for line operators to have intimate knowledge of the machines.

Instead, clear, easy-to-understand overlaid 3D renders will allow them to perform even the most complex task quickly. Cama's AR solution is also vital for training, giving operators concise and realistic experience of the machine before it has even left the company's factory.

"Cama is also prioritising its edge computing approach," Massimo explains further.

"This will offer an additional layer between the machines and the factory – between the control level and supervisor level – which will aggregate information from the field to form the basis of more pertinent and significant information for higher-level systems



Cama's latest releases include delta robots employed for its packaging systems

and personnel. This segregation will also boost security and help maintain intellectual property. Edge computing also opens a lot of possibilities for the future, including tailored data presentation and the analysis of historical data."

Personalised chocolate

Creating bold designs with packaging systems is something of increasing importance within the sector, and a requirement that Netherlands-based Lareka Confectionery Equipment is responding to, in unveiling a solution aimed at the premium chocolate segment of the market.

The business devises machinery for the low-volume, luxury product market, and is launching its 'personalised chocolate concept' (PCC) – an end-to-end solution using its established BTB25 wrapping machine. Its latest breakthrough enables businesses to offer smaller runs of customisable chocolate puzzles, single chocolates, as well as in bar format.

Customisable packaging in such small series allows companies to make optimal use of the added value of this packaging trend.

Besides the expected promotional opportunities it creates, bespoke chocolate packaging turns a regular

chocolate tablet in an exclusive treat, personal gift, or memorable souvenir.

As the company notes, the combination of positive customer experience and a unique end product is what makes consumers, Gen-Z in particular, willing to pay a higher price for the same product.

However, the issue with offering customisable chocolate packaging is that it requires equipment and services from different fields of industry: web and application development, digital printing, chocolate and manufacturing.

Chocolate companies that do offer customisable chocolate packaging use third parties. Lareka's personalised chocolate concept addresses this by bundling the required equipment and services together, resulting in a complete end-to-end solution for chocolate packaging.

The company's personalised chocolate concept contains all that is needed to take advantage of the added-value of customisable packaging: a web-based application, high-quality industrial printer, precision cutter and its own BTB25 wrapper line.

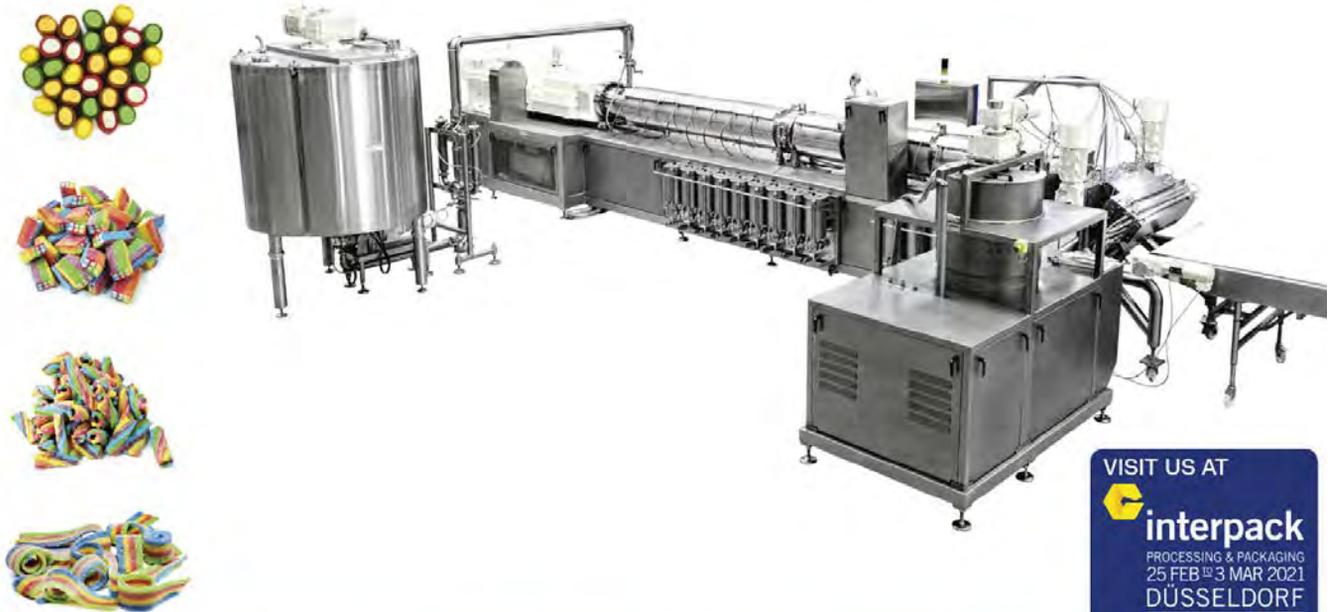
The entire process, from uploading a design online to the wrapping of the tablets, has been designed to be possible within three minutes. ▶



Lareka is set to use its BTB25 wrapping system in tandem with specialist web software to create personalised chocolates

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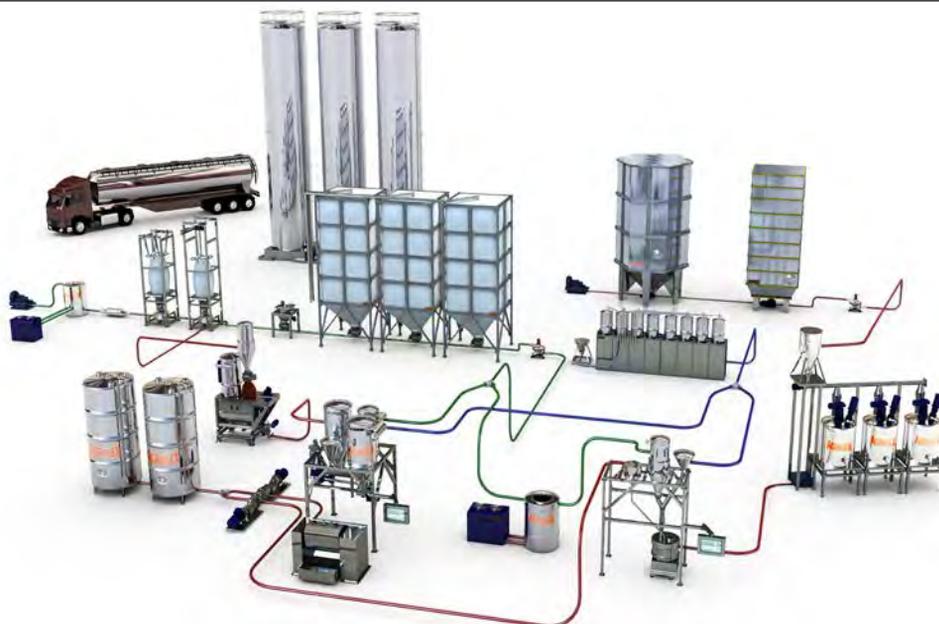
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A series of advanced multi-head weighers is to be released by Ishida this summer

Among Ishida's extensive ranges of equipment being released this year including advances in its multi-head weighing systems, x-ray inspection systems and tray sealing solutions that form part of the company's overall package of offerings.

The firm had been due to showcase one of its flagship multi-head weighers at Interpack, a top of the range 32 head system capable of handling up to eight different types of product at once, as well as a model designed for sugar extraction, preventing sugar compromising pack seals at high speed. With regard to quality control/inspection, Ishida has a completely new range of X-ray machine options for detecting low to high density foreign bodies in both packaged and unpackaged bulk flow formats.



Ishida is releasing upgraded systems monitoring as part of its equipment series

The hygienically designed machines and options will display a number of new features including easy to clean surfaces and easy to remove reject bins. In particular, the company is releasing its premium, high sensitivity IX-GN-4044 / 4043 models in both packaged and bulk format along with the low total cost of ownership IX-EN-4093 with drop belt reject.

Furthermore, the company is also delivering a new series of checkweigher models including the mid-range DACS-GN-S080, which is MID compliant and offers exceptional speeds and accuracies at an affordable price in the monitoring of packs up to 8kg in weight.

It features a control unit with an intuitive, easy-to-learn menu for fast operator training and quick set-up. Also on display will be a new top-of-the-range force balance checkweigher that delivers pinpoint accuracy and incorporates Ishida's RRC (Retail Reject Confirmation) software and hardware which checks and confirms that any out-of-spec product or pack has been successfully removed from the production and packing line.

Latest systems unveiled

Also serving across the confectionery and bakery markets, Italian-headquartered Sacmi Packaging and Chocolate is releasing two new innovations for the market. For the chocolate sector, the company is unveiling a new moulding line and an integrated system solution for

packaging. A buffer feeding both a foil wrapping or a flow-wrapping machine simultaneously; the flow-wrapping machine is intended to be integrated with a secondary packaging solution.

Furthermore, within confectionery, Sacmi will introduce an evolution of one of its machines for candies branded under its former incarnation as Carle& Montanari.

For bakery, it has also developed an "oven to case" packaging solution for the efficient management of the most delicate baked goods.

Another Italian business set to make a notable release this year is Agriflex, which has more than 40 years of experience with installations for handling raw materials within the sector, including a patented flour cooling system.

As the company notes, dough temperature control is a key factor in obtaining constant and ideal quality in the production of bakery products at industrial and small business level. In fact, the cooling process of the flours allows slowing down the rising of the dough and adequately adjusting it to the times of each production line.

The company believes that its system results in a greater degree of effectiveness owing to considerable temperature reduction, which makes it particularly energy efficient.

Its automation solution ensures correct temperature of the dough, compensating the temperature variations of the other components, as well as ambient temperature.

In addition, it is said to be easy to clean and maintain, as well as easily retrofitted on existing installations and it is designed to function within various production environments. ▶

Sacmi's latest integrated packaging system is set for a 2020 release



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SCAN ME



Syntegon is delivering a wide range of systems, including paper packaging machinery (pictured), production of jellies and dosing systems

This summer, Syntegon Technology is unveiling several key equipment ranges among its broad portfolio, which includes a diverse series of packaging and processing systems.

For candy masses, it has created BDS weighing, developed as a dosing and mixing range for delivering 50 per cent energy savings.

This comprises two systems with low energy consumption: the BDS system for batch production and the BDK system for continuous operation.

Furthermore, the company has also developed an advanced BMV mixing system, featuring a hygienic magnetic stirrer.

For the production of jellies, the business has devised its Makat mogul system with new components, including an inline weighing system, a newly designed chain-free de-stacker and innovative rotation nozzles for more effective cleaning processes.

"Cleanability, ease of operation and resource efficiency play a key role for confectionery manufacturers. These values feature in all our process solutions," Frank Jansen, product manager at Syntegon Technology, explains of its range.

Equipment development

As British equipment manufacturer BCH reveals, its flagship launch for the year is its VDM 6 (Viscous Dynamic Mixing System), a compact and efficient line of dynamic mixing chambers.

This is reportedly capable of

homogeneously mixing up to six colours and flavours of viscous products in-line with rapid changeover capabilities, minimising production downtime and waste. The other benefits of this system include reduced line operating pressures, (known to impact product texture and quality), as well as allowing continuous running without the need for any screening systems.

In addition, the system is fully incorporated into the BCH Extrusion System CIP Process, whereby effective cleaning can take place. The range of VDM machines covers one to six



BCH is unveiling its compact viscous dynamic mixing line

chambers dependent upon the user's requirements, and can be retrofitted to existing systems for customers to improve product quality and line efficiencies.

Furthermore, the company's latest flexible confectionery kitchen has been designed as a small-scale, low-volume (30kg batch) production facility for users that wish to manufacture confectionery items, without a comparatively significant initial outlay in capital equipment costs.

The system is said to be capable of manufacturing a range of syrups and jellies, as well as hard and soft candies. This could be used by start-up businesses, as well as larger manufacturers as an ideal addition to pilot facilities. New ranges can be developed quickly and efficiently with minimal raw material usage.

The company has also redesigned the Maxivap Fruit Processing System to increase its range of process capabilities. These updates have been developed following the ongoing demand of the evermore popular healthy snack food sector and a number of industrial partnering projects.

In terms of other key systems, fellow UK business Wymbis Engineering has reported success with its depositing systems that have served the sector for the past two decades.

This includes a flexible machine the company says is adaptable across sweets and bakery applications, according to customer demands.

Its manifold depositing system has been configured to finish produce ranging from eclairs and doughnuts, through to custard slices, and profiteroles, in terms of injecting fillings and decorating tasks. It features a bank of multi-station depositing units, cutters/slicers, transfer units and an integral custom-designed conveyor. It can be used in any industrial environment requiring multi-stage processing of product ranges. As the company notes, the level of automation that it generally provides (typically handling 9,000 products an hour for three shifts), saves on a considerable amount of manual labour, with the added benefit of pressurised, volumetric depositing maintaining an artisan process using industrial scale production operations. ▶



Aasted has produced a broad range of systems for chocolate production, including its StellaNova tempering line

In Denmark, Aasted's present equipment plans focus squarely on its four key moulding lines. These are supported by a high degree of functionality and can handle any product range. It can accustom all productions with customisable modules.

Additionally, the business offers a belt line and a bakery series. Its belt lines are fully automatic, which require only minimal operational supervision and deposit directly onto a cooling, plastic or steel belt. The series of lines produces flawless chocolate chips, chunks, chards, buttons and wafer lines.



MacIntyre's refiner/conche offers a versatile production solution for chocolate manufacturers

Meanwhile, its bakery line consists of high-quality elements of the firm's heating, extruding and cooling technologies. Its extruder and depositing system, Alice, has application within this sector, enabling a broad range of finished product options.

Refining ranges

UK-based business MacIntyre is reporting notable progress with its recently released new generation refiner/conche, which stands as one of its key focuses.

Designed as a compact and cost effective system for the manufacture of high quality pure chocolate, the system gives customers control of the quality of the product they deliver through manufacturing themselves in-house.

As the business notes, the system is continuing to prove itself in tackling a variety of products that can be processed using this machine.

According to the firm, new avenues are being explored and opened every day and many typical ones are unknown to most – even those that are using the MacIntyre refiner/conche system on a daily basis.

Biscuit and wafer rework, for example, is one area where companies can save significant money – turning waste into new product. It is able to grind down biscuit and wafer scrap – reworking it back into a mixture of 20-40 microns, which can again be introduced back into the main coating or crème filling formats.

In terms of cocoa processing, Italian machinery specialist GSR has delivered a key enhancement to its range of



GSR's cocoa presses have undergone technical improvements in terms of upgraded monitoring systems

presses through creating monitoring systems tracking energy use and reducing production waste.

As the company noted, devising such sustainability-focused solutions has been of core importance to the firm, which has exported its machinery across the world for more than 25 years. According to the business, its latest system will allow machine operators always have easy-to-read energy performance indicators of its cocoa presses. They are notified when there is a decrease in energy efficiency compared to the optimal settings and therefore they can intervene correctly to restore the right energy consumption.

In this way, machines are brought back to optimal performance, ensuring a low total cost per tonne of process. ♦

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Gum producer Alland & Robert has explored natural additives within confectionery



A perfect blend of plant-powered solutions

Following government recommendations to practice social distancing, now more than ever suppliers must work with limited resources and adapt their usual processes. Healthier and reduced-sugar products were already high on the agenda for confectionery and bakery suppliers, only this trend is forecasted to be accelerated by the ongoing pandemic.

According to AI-powered food intelligence start-up Tastewise, there has been a staggering growth in internet searches for foods that come with an added health boost, including a 66 per

An acceleration in demand for clean label and vegan products is driving recipe reformulation with healthier ingredient alternatives, particularly as the confectionery and bakery sectors are most at risk of de-prioritisation in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak. Daisy Phillipson reports

cent increase in those related to immune system benefits.

The subject of healthier confectionery encompasses a wide range of themes that are largely dependent on factors such as product type, distribution channel and geography. Although there's still room for indulgence, high sugar

content related to obesity is a severe concern among consumers across the globe.

Acacia gum for sugar reduction

The rise in demand for sugar reduced products has posed significant challenges for manufacturers, with a recent poll showing 64 per cent of the industry believes reducing sugar in confectionery and bakery to be most difficult. One of the biggest obstacles is that sugar delivers more than sweetness; colour, consistency and preservation are all tied into its ubiquity. This is where acacia gum, also known as gum arabic, comes into play.

The natural gum made of hardened



sap from two species of acacia tree has long been used in food applications. But, more recently, French natural gums company Alland & Robert released research into the role this 100 per cent natural additive can play in sugar-free and sugar-reduced confectionery products.

As the company explained, the functional properties of acacia gum improve the texture of medicated confectionery, boiled candies or pastilles, bringing thickness and acting as an anti-crystallisation agent when used in combination with sucrose and glucose. In association with polyols, the additive is extremely efficient for sugar-free coating, making it an essential tool for creating reduced sugar chewing gum or coated candy. The leading supplier of high quality shellac, waxes, natural gums and resins, notes that as well as use in sugar reduced products, gum arabic functions as a glazing agent to coat chocolate products thanks to its film forming ability, acts as a barrier coating to separate sugar and fat, and emulsifies oils and fats used as flavourings.

In terms of texture, the additive enables chewy candies to be chewed for a longer period without sticking to the teeth and is used in higher concentrations in reduced calorie soft candies. "In addition, it is used as a flavour carrier, imparting a clean, long-lasting fresh taste in chewing gum," comments Clive Roberts, customer relations manager, A. F. Suter. "Gum Arabic is also used in anti-cariogenic (anti-tooth decay) candies since it is resistant to degradation by microorganisms in the mouth."



A. F. Suter is among those making use of gum arabic systems

Plant-based additives

The use of acacia and other natural gums is forecasted to grow in 2020 and beyond as demand for clean label products continues to rise. Remarkable expansion of the processed food sector has propelled the utilisation of these inclusions, with market growth of thickening agents predicted to increase at a steady CAGR of four per cent between 2019 and 2028.

Plant-derived additives such as acacia and locust bean gum and seaweed-based thickening agents including carrageenan remain sought after, with a collective share of 50 per cent in market value. Their use in bakery and confectionery applications is predicted to grow by 1.6 times over the forecast period. One of the growth factors is due to dietary preferences shifting

towards plant-based options. In a DuPont-sponsored study conducted by HealthFocus, 42 per cent of respondents said they prefer more vegan foods in their daily diet. Also, the environmental component of this dietary shift is not negligible, as three out of four Millennials are willing to spend more on ethical products.

DuPont offers a wide range of vegan-friendly, functional solutions for confectionery production. Based on palm, soya or coconut oil, the company's Grindsted Acetem is widely used to provide gum softness, and also contributes to increased bubble size in bubble gum. Grindsted Carrageenan, derived from red seaweed, can be used in cold flow stability in caramel systems and provides a wide variety of textures in fruity jellies enabling good flavour release. In addition to confectionery, the widespread growth of veganism coupled with pervasive movement towards clean label and sustainability continue to impact the growth of 'better for you' bakery ingredients.

Matthew Bratt, patisserie chef from Puratos UK, comments: "We know from our Taste Tomorrow survey that consumers are looking for healthier options within their choice of treats and products such as our speciality fats help bakers and food manufacturers to achieve this, without sacrificing on taste and texture." Puratos' Aristo, for example, is a plant-based vegetable margarine that offers a tasty alternative



Cargill has released its series of filling fats supplying key confectionery markets

OILS, FATS & GUM

to butter and is suitable for laminated products such as croissants and danishes. One of the company's flagship products, Mimetic, is also vegan-friendly and can be used to create bakery and patisserie goods with workability, convenience and profitability.

Filled with flavour

Alongside vegan preferences, there are many factors impacting consumer behaviour nowadays such as food safety, product quality, taste, mouthfeel and appearance. These features are addressed by a number of Cargill's plant-based ingredients for bakery and confectionery such as CremoFLEX, a diverse range of filling fats. The customisable portfolio comes in four sub-categories to meet a wide variety of applications and functionalities. Within the range, CremoFLEX S can be used to create indulgent and sustainable treats, while its F series allows for the creation of bakery and confectionery items with multiple sensory experiences. For soft, creamy fillings with long-lasting flavour release, the L series is the ideal choice, and for sustainable, clean label



Vegan-friendly functional ingredients have been a key focus for DuPont

claims, the CremoFLEX E range offers a palm-free alternative for premium applications.

This is just one example of Cargill's extensive portfolio of ingredients utilised by the food industry to create products that cater to market trends. As is the case for all suppliers to the sector, the company is working around the clock with farmers and customers to feed the world safely and responsibly during

this unprecedented time. What impact the coronavirus outbreak will have on the food industry remains to be seen, but certainly a number of practical challenges lay ahead. Collaborating with ingredients suppliers who provide essential solutions and expertise will prove an essential tool to meet consumer demand while catering to the ongoing trends of sustainability, reduced sugar and plant-based alternatives. ♦

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It's all hands on deck for the food production sector amid the coronavirus pandemic. Following the news that both Interpack and Sweets and Snacks Expo have postponed this year's events, the economic impact of the ongoing crisis on the confectionery and bakery sectors is difficult to predict.

But amid the tumult, it's been heartening to witness ingredients, machinery and product manufacturers coming together to create solutions to minimise disruption and safeguard the industry. While we can't predict what to expect in the coming months, bakery and confectionery firms are forecasted to invest further in automating their processing and packaging lines to mitigate the disruption caused by the ongoing crisis.

Yes, investment may slow as end-users turn their focus to maintaining production amid ingredient shortages, travel restrictions and increasing shipping costs. But further down the line, the reverberations of these factors could result in a heavier reliance on integrated machinery.

Delivering maximum performance

Packaging and processing group tna has responded to the outbreak of Covid-19 by reducing travel and direct contact, securing product supply, cancelling trade show attendance and enhancing cleaning procedures. What's more, the company is increasing communications in a bid to stay connected and offer suppliers updates and advice on the ever-changing situation.

These actions mirror tna's customer-centric approach to address any production challenges and suggest innovative solutions to help customers stay ahead of the game and cater to the ever-changing demands of the bakery, snack and confectionery segments.

The industry is evolving at a rapid pace, with pressure mounting to maintain operational efficiency during the crisis. This was the message of Steven Wolfe, general manager at tna North America, who says: "In an industry where the real and virtual worlds are increasingly converging, digital control systems must become more sophisticated to deliver the levels of automation and performance expected."

Turning the Key to an Automated Future



tna has placed a key importance on user-friendly HMI system for its equipment

Confectionery Production examines a number of recent case studies showcasing suppliers optimising turnkey solutions for the sector, as well as those innovating with technology to merge processing and packaging solutions with existing production lines. Daisy Phillipson reports

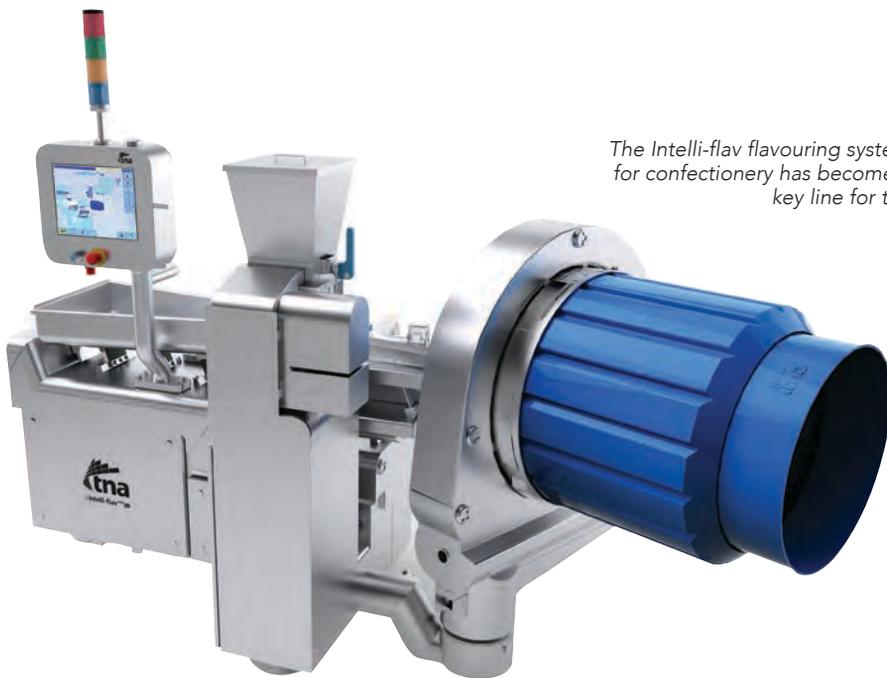
A recent example of the company's one-stop-shop approach arrived in its delivery of a pretzel seasoning, processing and packaging line for Egyptian snack manufacturer Future Foods. Opting for technology featuring a responsive variable mass seasoning mechanism with dynamic vibratory weigher, the tna intelli-flav OMS 5, the supplier can now precisely control seasoning application within the drum.

George Soussou, vice chairman and operations director at Future Foods, comments: "With the new seasoning

system our powder consumption never exceeds five per cent."

Further performance benefits were achieved through the distribution system, the tna roflo HM 3 horizontal motion conveyor, which ensures a smooth product transfer through the line while keeping product damages to a minimum.

With the installation of two tna robag FX 3ci vertical form, fill and seal (VFFS) packaging systems, the production line offers flexibility and improved performance. Rotary double jaws allow



The Intelli-flav flavouring system for confectionery has become a key line for tna

“In an industry where the real and virtual worlds are increasingly converging, digital control systems must become more sophisticated”

– Steven Wolfe, general manager, tna US

the new baggers to deliver speeds of up to 165 bags-per-minute, while quick-release formers ensure that Future Foods is able to change between bag sizes in less than three minutes, keeping downtime to a minimum.

Soussou adds: “The tna team was always on hand to support and train our team members throughout the entire commissioning, installation and start-up phase. That way, tna ensured that our new equipment always operates at its maximum level of performance.”

The art of flexible design

UK-based Loynds is another equipment business taking action to safeguard workers and customers during the pandemic, implementing home-working and social-distancing measures while updating procedures according to government instructions. By maintaining production, the company continues in its endeavours as a specialist in the equipment field for small and medium-sized candy and chocolate manufacturers.

In its latest venture, Loynds partnered with a leading machinery supplier in Asia to develop the CNC Chocolate Depositing Equipment, a range of compatible modules which can be put together to build entirely bespoke chocolate manufacturing production lines. The design of the systems ensures

market trend compliance, currently offering 12 interchangeable modules with over 50 variations, allowing for 300 possible line configurations.

Modules include 5-Axis CNC Depositing, aeration, lollipop stick inserting, flood filling, biscuit inserting, chocolate and nut mix depositing, whole nut inserting, vibrating and demoulding, among many others. Everything is on wheels, meaning each module can be moved into and out of the production line as required.

The range is fully automatic, including the demoulding of finished chocolates and packaging, while factory space is optimised as each module has been designed with a section of return conveyor at the bottom and the main process flow at the top.

Taking Industry 4.0 principles into consideration, all equipment can be connected to Wi-Fi for remote updating of the CNC programmes and troubleshooting. With automation and flexibility at the top of the list for confectioners, particularly in the current climate, the latest from Loynds illustrates how smart design can help overcome market challenges and ensure reliability across the board.

Minimising waste with turnkey packaging line

As discussed, state-of-the-art technology and connectivity with and between machines are powerful weapons for manufacturers in the battle against coronavirus. This rule applies to packaging equipment too, where Industry 4.0 solutions offering remote monitoring and assistance will continue to play their part in overcoming new and existing obstacles.

Weighing and packing line specialist Ishida is continuing its efforts to meet the challenges presented by confectionery and bakery production. Demonstrating the company's aptitude as a solutions provider, French snack manufacturer Belsia recently turned to Ishida to devise a complete turnkey potato crisp packing line, with Ishida assuming full responsibility for the entire installation and its performance.

The new set-up comprises a 10-head Ishida CCW-SE series multihead weigher and an Astro bagmaker equipped with special stripping plates that clear the seal area before sealing to ensure excellent pack quality and close to zero film waste. In addition, a bucket elevator was incorporated to feed crisps to the weigher, while a throat metal detector identifies and rejects any metal ▶



Loynds has kept its equipment operations going despite the coronavirus outbreak

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French snack company Belsia utilised Ishida for its latest range of equipment



contamination before the product is bagged. Thanks to the installation, Belsia reports production has increased to 800kg per day of processed potatoes, allowing for accuracy to within one gram of the target weight and subsequently avoiding costly product giveaway. Matthieu Maisons, director at Belsia, says: "In addition to the reliability and speed of the line, we also appreciate its ease of use thanks to the intuitive touch screens. Changing the bagmaker film reel takes only a few minutes and daily cleaning is easy."

The benefits of single-source solutions

In the context of turnkey packaging lines, Gerhard Schubert maintains its reputation as a pioneer in the field of automated packaging equipment. The firm's capability to deliver single-source solutions was demonstrated through a recent collaboration with De Wafelbakkers, supplier of frozen baked goods such as pancakes, waffles and French toast.

When investing in a new system for the primary packaging of its products, the bakery chose the TLM packaging machine from Gerhard Schubert. The system comprises a picker line and a flow-wrapping component, offering flexibility through the capability to package different products and formats in one single machine.

In the first step of the process, the products are transferred from a 1,000-mm-wide, multitrack product infeed band to a 1,200-millimeter spreading belt, which transfers the

products into the TLM system. Ten camera-guided F4 robots (four-axis robots) pick and place the products in the infeed chains for the two Flowmoduls.

Efficiency is achieved with its integrated 3D scanner that detects damaged products and excludes them from any further packaging process. The Flowmodul then gently packages the stacks of products into flowpacks and seals them directly.

The benefits of choosing a single-source solution were realised as all components of the TLM line can be managed easily and efficiently with just one operator guidance system. "Single-source solutions like our system offer clear potential for space savings, even better supply chain optimization and

they guarantee stronger service support. Because a single contact person is available to answer all your questions," explains Armin Klotz, sales account manager at Schubert North America.

Optimism ahead

Besides case studies, there have been a number of recent developments within the turnkey solutions sector for confectionery and bakery production, including initiatives aimed to overcome the hurdles presented by the spread of coronavirus. Bühler, for example, has invited the industry to a virtual Interpark under the description 'Creating Food Sensations,' while GEA, which took precautions at an early stage of the crisis – promised to continue assisting its customers with vital services. As one of the largest system providers for the food processing industry, the company maintains health and safety measures for its workforce while ensuring the delivery of ongoing orders and projects, as well as supply of spare parts and services for new and existing plants.

What has prevailed is an industry-wide unity, prompting machinery specialists to continue operations in a safe and compliant manner. No one can predict the impact of Covid-19 on the confectionery and bakery sectors in the coming months and, perhaps, even years. But those making efforts to both innovate with integrated technology and ensure essential services are maintained will hopefully pave the way for a brighter future for the sector. ♦



Gerhard Schubert teamed up with waffle business de Wafelbakkers to install one of its TLM flow packing systems



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From inspection to vital detection

As Fortress Technology notes, research has proved that Europeans love their snacks, which is keeping those in the machinery sector particularly occupied. According to research highlighted by the company, more than 60 per cent of shoppers add such treat-based foods into their weekly grocery baskets.

A sum of 30 per cent of consumers buying on-demand and 66 per cent trying healthier alternatives such as popped, rice-based and baked alternatives, which is reflected in heightened activity in the processing and packaging lines look set to get busier as many add additional flavour innovations.

According to recent studies, western Europe is the third-largest region in the global savoury snacks sector and is expected to grow from \$20.9 billion in 2018 to \$25.4 billion by 2023, at a CAGR of 3.9 per cent.

In response, Fortress has enhanced its own equipment range, including its Vertex metal detector, equipped with Halo automatic testing for contaminants.



The fast-developing snacks market is opening up opportunities for equipment manufacturers

The cost of product recalls can be particularly damaging to confectionery and snacks brands. Confectionery Production hears about several sorting and inspection systems aiming to deliver highly consistent quality control



Fortress has produced its Vertex metal detector to respond to requirements for greater efficiency of quality control

It is designed specifically to inspect free-falling snacks and ingredients.

As the company notes, its systems are now operating in a wide range of environments, protecting valuable snack, pretzel, nuts, popcorn, cereal and corn and potato crisp brands by supporting fast product changeovers.

According to the company, the Vertex unit when fitted with Halo reduces the time food factories dedicate to performing frequent routine verification checks. As many snack manufacturers have discovered, they swiftly realise major labour cost savings.

Its compact design means the inline system is designed to integrate with vertical form fill seal (VFFS) pouch-packing solutions. With a case through dimension that can be as little as 125mm (191mm including flanges) and a circular

aperture, the Vertex slots into existing VFFS packaging as well as weighing turnkey lines.

Super snackers

Fuelled by consumer 'snackification' demands for quick, on-the-go foods, snack brands are continually innovating and diversifying product portfolios.

Documenting the rise of the 'super snacker', Frito-Lay recently published its top 2020 forecasts indicating that spice, citrus, global influence, unexpected combinations and health benefits will drive new product developments (NPD).

With snacks becoming such a mainstream mode of eating, a number of manufacturers in the snack space are swiftly tapping into these trends and adding more packing and inspection lines, observes Fortress Technology's

SORTING & INSPECTION

European managing director Phil Brown.

He notes that it's not unusual to see more than 200 turnkey weighing, metal detectors and VFFS packing lines side-by-side in large snack factories.

Phil explains: "The addition of new ingredients, flavours, own-label, sub-brands, pack sizes and nutritional concepts means that a snack company's average portfolio can easily comprise 100+ stock keeping units (SKUs)."

Vertex with the addition of Halo is pretty much an off-the-shelf metal detector, enabling snack manufacturers to rapidly introduce new lines and speed up their time to market.

Similarly, the aperture sizes tend to be quite standard. "Small enough in diameter to ensure metal detection sensitivity is not compromised, yet wide enough to ensure there's no product choke-off," adds Phil.

Despite its slim stature, the Vertex meets, and in many instances exceeds, the sensitivities of comparable snack metal detection systems. Utilising the very latest digital signal processing technology, each unit inspects free-falling product at high speeds, detecting and rejecting the smallest metal contaminants including pieces of wire, shavings and swarf.

Rather than adding a side reject system, which would be too bulky for most snack packing lines, when the Vertex identifies a metal contaminant, a signal is sent to the PLC, or to the downstream bagging equipment.

Typically, the reject output is connected to the bagger, which then either stops the line or inhibits the cutting of bags. This means the contaminant is trapped and sealed in an

Tomra's sorting systems have been designed to make vital interventions to help prevent contaminants



extra long bag that is easily spotted and removed by personal, or more typically by a downstream checkweigher, which will reject it as overweight.

Key sorting development

In terms of product sorting, ensuring accuracy and quality of products is equally important for those working within the snacks sector.

Responding to this challenge, Tomra has implemented its advanced foreign material detector (AFMD), allowing product-specific properties to be added to enhance the overall requirements for a product range.

The company has developed special high-resolution cameras for optical food sorting based on colour and outline.

To ensure that individual products comply with the desired dimensions and shapes, a shape recognition module is used during the scanning process. The company's Nimbus free-fall sorter has the capability to sort a wide range

of products – such as sugar-free or with sugar as well as multivitamin sweets – with a variety of programs and applications, all on the same platform.

According to the business, the solution is in great demand in the European market, as many manufacturers alternately produce a large number of different confectionery products and at the same time.

They must guarantee their customers products that are free of cross-contamination. Furthermore the company's Genius optical belt sorter uses advanced high-resolution camera and laser technologies in different inspection zones.

X-ray vision

Ishida is releasing a completely new range of x-ray machine options for detecting low to high density foreign bodies in both packaged and unpackaged bulk flow formats.

The hygienically designed machines and options will display a number of new features including easy to clean surfaces and easy to remove reject bins.

Among its premium range are the high sensitivity IX-GN-4044/4043 models in both packaged and bulk format along with the low TCO (Total Cost of Ownership) IX-EN-4093.

It is also releasing its IX-GN-5523 for large size products and pack sizes. This offers a solution for the inspection of euro crates and cases, and large packs of food or non-food items up to 30kgs. Ishida's GA technology enables operators to optimise the x-ray system for greater sensitivity in the detection of specific low-density foreign bodies. ♦



One of Ishida's present range of inspection systems, the IX-En-2463 in operation

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The international Sweeteners Association has expressed concerns over European Food Safety Authority's potential assessment of products

Global group expresses concerns on sharing biomonitoring data with EU regulator

The international Sweeteners Association (ISA) has called for clear rules on how the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) may assess biomonitoring data in the agency's planned review of authorisations for sweeteners that are allowed in the EU.

For a public consultation on the issue, the organisation said that it "is critical to have clear and expert protocols issued by EFSA and/or OECD to appropriately respond to... interest in reviewing 'biomonitoring' data, if this is to be considered in the current re-evaluation of sweeteners."

In response, EFSA said biomonitoring data was not a specific requirement of its 2017 call for technical and toxicological

Keith Nuthall rounds up the latest international regulations affecting the confectionery and bakery market segments

data on sweeteners as it prepared for the review. However, it would appreciate them being shared with its experts, since the information would help assess the absorption, distribution, metabolism and excretion of sweeteners.

The ISA has also welcomed a new scientific report in the academic journal *Nutrition Research Reviews* arguing that low/no calorie sweeteners are safe, do not harm blood glucose regulation; can reduce net calorie intake; and should be included in public health strategies targeting reduced sugar consumption.

A 'stage-one' initial trade deal struck between the USA and China in December, authorised in January, includes commitments by China to buy more American exports of confectionery, chocolate, cocoa, sugar, ice cream and other food and drink products over the next two years. Beijing agreed that it would expand listed food and drink imports by a total of \$12.5 billion above the 2017 level in 2020, \$19.5 billion above for 2021.

This means, said the US Trade Representative (USTR), China will import

\$80 billion's worth of American food and drink in 2020/1. There are no specific commitments on importing specific products listed within the agreement.

The US Trade Representative (USTR) confirmed on February 14 it would maintain a 25% duties on UK and German exports of biscuits, waffles and wafers, and 25% duties on EU (including UK) citrus fruit exports, imposed in retaliation to the Airbus subsidies, which have been found to breach global trading rules by the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

EFSA has proposed that oat lecithin be approved by the European Commission as a new food additive for cocoa and chocolate products for use in the EU as there is no safety concern at proposed use levels and it might add antioxidants to a product.

An assessment has been released by EFSA of the potential exposure of consumers to the cannabis psychoactive chemical THC when heating chocolate products including hemp. The maximum exposure for high consumers was 0.67–1.07 (LB–UB) lg/kg of body weight in adults.

Meanwhile, the coronavirus outbreak has already hit global sugar prices, the International Sugar Organisation (ISO) has warned. In its latest market bulletin, it blamed the disease for a notably sharp fall in average prices paid from a figure of \$0.1521/lb on February 21 to \$0.1446/lb on February 29.

The Indian sugar industry has seen a sharp annual fall in production, with 19.48 million tonnes of output to

February 29 this season, compared to 24.93 million tonnes last season – ISO said around 10% of Indian sugar mills have closed in the meantime, leaving 385 in operation.

Mexican sugar output has also fallen – to 2.3 million tonnes to February 22, down from 2.92 million tonnes the previous season. Mexico's sugar industry committee CONADESECA (Comité Nacional para el Desarrollo Sustentable de la Caña de Azúcar) has blamed a late start to cultivation and processing.

The International Cocoa Organisation (ICCO) has predicted that global cocoa production will continue to rise in the 2019/20 growing season, with 4.82 million tonnes being produced, compared to the latest forecast for 2018/19 of 4.74 million tonnes (up 1.74% year-on-year). However, the ICCO forecasts that cocoa stocks will fall 5.3% to 1.53 million tonnes by season-end, down from 1.61 million tonnes in 2018/19.

European cocoa bean usage held steady in 2019 according to the annual figures from the European Cocoa Association (ECA), at 1.43 million tonnes – 99.8% of 2018's level.

Furthermore, the EU has proposed a trade deal with the UK after the current transitional period, where Britain follows EU rules, expires on 31 December of this year, that includes unfettered free trade in confectionery and sweet bakery products, without tariffs, restrictive quotas, authorisation requirements and mutual acceptance of food health controls.

EU food producers association Copa-

Cogeca has called on the European Commission to insist that honey exporters in China and Ukraine label their products when sold to the EU as being pure or containing additives. Copa-Cogeca wants EU food regulators to test these products, which are sold cheaply in the EU, ensuring this labelling is accurate.

The US-based National Confectioners Association (NCA) has released market data showing American sales of sugar-free chocolate grew 22% year-on-year in 2019 to reach \$160 million. America's largest confectionery segment was chocolate (\$14.5 billion sales); gums and breath fresheners USD3.9 bn; and chewy non-chocolate candy USD3.8 billion.

In addition, the NCA has released researching indicating the most popular filling in Valentine's Day specialist chocolates sold in the USA - caramel (32%), nuts (24%) or chocolate-based fillings (21%). Only 50% of US consumers use the flavour guide printed and placed inside heart-shaped Valentine's chocolate boxes.

Elsewhere, Cambodia's cane sugar exports to the EU of USD16 million-a-year (in 2017, according to international trade data) could be at risk, with the European Commission triggering a one year review of the southeast.]

Asian country's 'everything but arms' free market access over concerns about human rights abuses by the Cambodian government.

European sugar manufacturing association CEFS (Comité Européen des Fabricants de Sucre) and EFFAT, the European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions have released a joint report explaining how Europe's sugar sector practices corporate social responsibility across their activities.

CEFS has released statements combating claims within the EAT-Lancet Commission report 'Food in the Anthropocene: the EAT–Lancet Commission on healthy diets from sustainable food systems' that Europe has seen a sharp increase in sugar consumption in recent years. CEFS claimed that: "Sugar consumption has not skyrocketed in Europe. Sugar consumption and supply remain stable, while obesity and those who are overweight are increasing." ♦



A trade deal between the EU and the UK could finally be on the table in the coming months

When health and indulgence collide

With consumers becoming ever more health conscious in recent years, there has been a major boom in growth within this market sub-segment. This is set against the overall global confectionery and chocolate market, which has been forecast to be worth around \$232 billion by 2023, up from \$184 billion in 2015.

Undoubtedly, the need to appeal to consumers' desire for product ranges that are perceived as offering something different, appear natural, as well as being ethically produced, is now a major factor. Perhaps the Holy Grail in this respect is the major ongoing issue of sugar reduction. As we have reported over the past couple of years, the industry has tried its upmost to respond to this key issue with mixed results.

Notably, Nestlé's offering, Wowsome bars, featuring 30 per cent less sugar content, were discontinued at the end of last year after a less-than-overwhelming response. Mars also made a big noise about its protein-enhanced bars, yet you would be

There's no getting away from the fact that demand for snacks and confectionery branded as offering a healthier option is gaining major traction.

Neill Barston reports on this ever-shifting market

hard pushed to recall seeing them in anywhere other than health stores.

However, the category moves quickly, and there are other initiatives that may well open up the market through a combination of tracking consumer requirements and some smart marketing.

Step forward Cargill, with its premium chocolate series which it is now developing (of up to 30 per cent less sugar, or more), as well as Swiss-headquartered Barry Callebaut, which last September launched its cacaofruit experience chocolate concept (delivering up to 40 per cent less sugar, as well as being environmentally responsible through using the whole of the much prized cacaofruit.

In terms of campaigns, US-based Mondelez International, owner of

Cadbury, has led a well-received consumer awareness campaign for its portfolio. Based on the notion of 'snacking made right' the company has encouraged the public to enjoy its ranges – which span everything from BelVita breakfast bars to classic Dairy Milk chocolate bars, in a mindful manner as part of a balanced overall diet.

For its part, Caobisco, the European association for chocolate, biscuits and confectionery, launched its Treatwell campaign at the end of last year. This was based on a similar idea of responsible enjoyment of confectionery ranges, under the banner of 'responsibly product and mindfully enjoyed.'

Delivering on market trends

As Sensient Flavors notes, despite positive market developments in recent years, European confectionery producers still face multiple challenges, with the biggest of these being posed by rising consumer awareness of health and wellbeing, the rise in free-from expectations and low/no sugar claims.

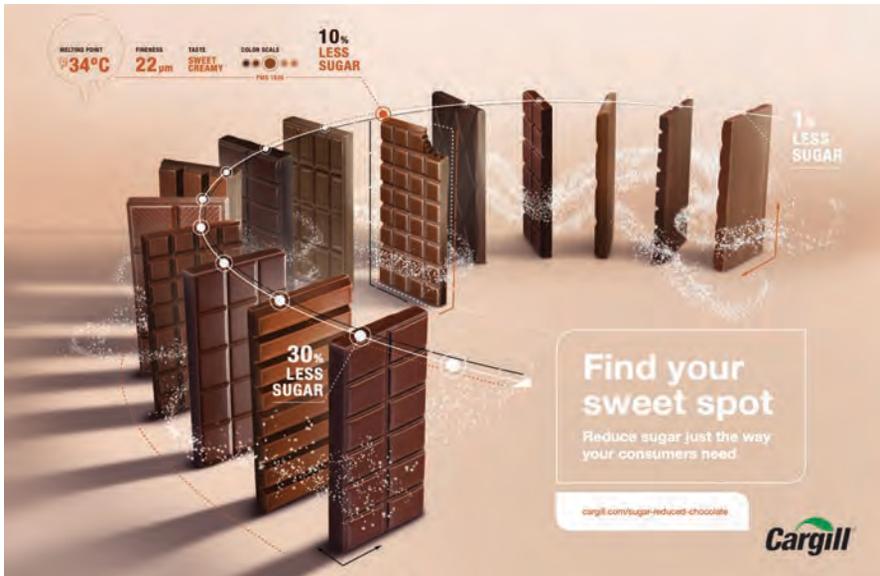
In response, the business has addressed these issues with its newly developed Confectionery Toolbox, which incorporates the company's latest technologies and market insights.

"We have explored new opportunities within vegan confectionery, providing clean label choices for those wishing to avoid meat-based products," explains Ranbir Kooner, Sensient Flavors Marketing Manager EMEA.

For instance, the Sensient Toolbox presents jellies made with pectin, a type of starch that occurs naturally in the cell



Sensient Flavors has developed a confectionery toolkit targeting vegan offerings



Cargill's premium chocolate production includes options for more than 30% sugar reduced ranges

walls of fruits and vegetables, and gives them structure. In addition to offering an alternative to animal-derived gelling agents, pectin is completely natural, so it supports the current trend for natural ingredients.

The firm also offers technological solutions that address vegan claims including its vegan Dairyboost dairy-free flavour solution replicating a creamy sensation, without the use of cream or any other dairy ingredients. Among its many applications, it can be added to cream-flavoured sweets to boost overall creaminess. The company adds that adventurous flavour pairings are also. For example, flavour pairings of Aloe Vera & Cucamelon or Juniper Berry & Cucumber in jellies appeal to adults seeking inspirational, fresh new combinations.

According to the business, another factor that remains a strong consideration is in tapping into nostalgic tastes, with flavours being a powerful emotional driver. It is with this in mind it developed its Toolbox



Responding to consumer demand for natural, healthier products has posed key challenges

birthday cake, Cookies & Cream, and Popcorn flavoured hard-boiled candies help to bring back happy memories.

For its part, German-based Capol, specialising in glazing, sealing and anti-sticking agents, notes that creation of "less guilty" confectionery is a major trend. Ann-Christin Meier, marketing manager, said: "Consumers are more mindful than ever before about food choices and have higher expectations of the products they buy. This starts with carefully selected ingredients, which they expect to be of premium quality and well known.

"We support the clean-label efforts of the confectionery manufacturing industry by providing our customers with dedicated label-friendly solutions. One aligned example is the creation of our label-friendly glazing agents for chocolate dragées. The formulation range is specifically designed to match the ingredients commonly used in chocolate manufacturing and thus negate the need for additional labelling," she adds, revealing that changes in lifestyle have given rise to requirements for sugar-free or a greater number of vegan or plant-based options.

She explains that while moving away from animal-derived ingredients in confectionery, manufacturers still need to preserve the texture and sensory appeal of products: matching its non-vegan equivalents. Notably, she says that this is especially the

case in middle and western European countries, where there an increasing number of requests for vegan surface treatments, which Capol has responded to. Within the UK, Plamil has been at the forefront of the vegan and dairy free movement, enjoying a successful launch of its So Free chocolate range.

Julian Lucas, marketing manager, concedes that there has always been a conflict between health and confectionery, but one that they have addressed by viewing the company's offering as cocoa and chocolate rather than sugar. Consequently, many of its bars are sweetened with organic raw cane sugar, to as low a level as possible. He says: "For many years we have also produced a range of chocolate with no added sugar especially for those who cannot have, or do not want to consumer sugar.

"With the country in lockdown, I see many consumers looking for more ethically sourced and locally produced items. I can imagine that some retailers are struggling to buy from certain parts of the world at the moment.

"They may also want to look closer to home for the confectionery they stock. I believe the present situation will have a lasting impact on the way many consumers shop. I can see a growth in the organic market with sustainability an important reason to purchase. Plamil only uses certified cocoa to avoid bonded and child slave labour and do not buy from countries with oppressive regimes.

"We are vegan because we do not wish to exploit animals or the planet and our factory is powered by 100 per cent renewable energy," adds Lucas, who says the company deliberately wanted to make the right choice for the sake of the planet, which is a trend he felt consumers would continue to seek out in other businesses. ♦



Plamil continues its work in the dairy-free and vegan market with its range of confectionery

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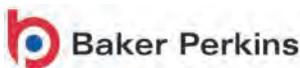


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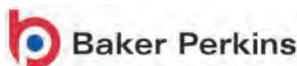
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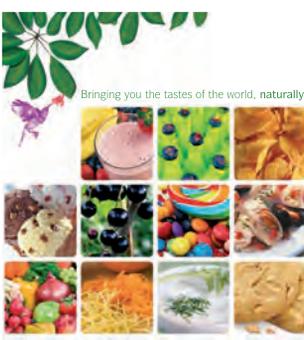
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