

Chapter 4

New Food Industries Toward a New Level of Sustainable Supply: Success Stories, Business Models, and Strategies

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ABSTRACT

“Novel foods” indicates all those foods that do not fall within the traditional western diet. The authors underline that there is an important economic potential linked to this new sector. After having introduced the topic by identifying what is meant by new food, food sustainability, and entrepreneurship in this sector, the analysis focuses on the qualitative aspects of novel foods. The authors emphasize the advantages of these sources, their qualities, and the impact on the environment. In this chapter, the authors demonstrate that novel food sources can be a substitute for other food that require production processes, and thus make a big impact on the environment. After figuring out the advantages of novel food sources, the authors analyze some success stories from the companies that already operate in this area. They also investigate existing business models on the novel food market and the way they operate and create wealth. Summarizing the results of their research, the authors underline the economic potential of the new foods exploitation in the Mediterranean area.

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INTRODUCTION

Feeding is needful but the relationship between people and food is different from country to country, depending on the culture of the population and evolving changes in the different historical periods. The term “new foods” or “novel foods” concerns the use of non-conventional Western and Mediterranean sources of food (Burlingame, Charrondiere, & Mouille, 2009), which are already used since ancient times in other countries of Southeast-Asia area, for example, India, China, and Thailand. It is statistically estimated that in 2050 the world population could grow to about 9 billion people (Brookes, 2007), consequently, the food request could rise enormously. Therefore, there is a need to spread information about the existence of the alternative food sources, which will enrich those which are currently in use. In particular, the economic experts think (World Economic Forum and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)) that the food request could increase so high, that a new farmland larger than the territory of Brazil would be needed. The paucity of food resources could be a big problem for whole humanity in the imminent future, and novel foods could provide a possible solution. An example: the oceans cover about the 70% of the Earth even if actually they supply only a smaller quantity of food in comparison to the land surface. Therefore, from Southeast Asian Sea we could import Jellyfishes as a new potential future worldwide food. In fact, actually, the economists estimated (FAO and World Economic Forum) that the potential of this food is enormous. Some countries could import insects or breed them like a new source of food proteins, while African countries could use algae like a supplement of proteins. Spirulina microalgae is an example of food used like a nutrient supplement against the food shortages in many African countries. Hopefully, new farms concentrated in South America and other countries like China and Thailand could be established in other countries as soon as possible

BACKGROUND

Food Market Trends

Before evaluating the aspects of the new supply in detail, it is important to underline the food market trends to better understand the perspective of the global market. Therefore, the authors emphasize the following trends:

- Healthier food. More responsibility regards to animal welfare and land sustainability and more attention to the environment (environmentally friendly).
- Consumer needs access to detailed and clear information.
- Necessity to adapt the alimentation to the lifestyle of everyone.
- More and more consumers would like to feel connected to nature using some natural products.
- Homemade products named “0-kilometer foods” which are provided from their homeland.
- New consumption experience and opportunity to test new flavors like artisanal treats.
- Increase in home-cooking and home entertaining.

World economic traders could try to approach to these new trends and to expand existing market across new consumption occasions. New start-up companies related to “novel foods” should adapt their products to new market requirements.

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