

## THE SUPPLIER VIEW

# Expanding the Reach of Emerging Grains

Future growth for Barentz's L.I. Frank business will include lupin and soy as nutritional protein sources.

Barentz, which marked its 60th anniversary in 2013, has grown from being a local Dutch supplier into an international distributor in ingredients, raw materials and additives. In 2010, Barentz reported a turnover of €720 million, with the company expecting to exceed €1 billion in 2014. The growth that Barentz has experienced in the last decade has been particularly fueled by a series of acquisitions, including Vitablend (2008). This business move followed the 2007 purchase of L.I. Frank, a Netherlands based manufacturer of GM-free soy, lupin and maize, which is steeped in tradition, but eyeing innovation. Future growth for the L.I. Frank business will relate to the expansion of the production of lupin and soy as nutritional protein sources and gluten free grains (e.g. teff), with Flav-R Grain, being the latest innovation. General Manager, Erik Engbersen is ambitious in forecasting a quadrupling of production for this side of the business in the next 4-5 years.

Flav-R Grain is a natural flavor, taste and appearance enhancer based on toasted corn germ, that offers customers both flavor and crunch benefits, without actually using peanuts. It means saving costs in a formulation, while simplifying

allergen management. The company's toasting facility allows the company to add a very nutty flavor to the germ. "The germ is the tastemaker of a lot of grains. Most industrialized dry milled corn flours lose this taste, as these flours are produced without the germs," explains Carrie Lucassen, sales manager at L.I. Frank. "But if you look closely at corn germs, they taste like peanuts, but they are lower in fat [-50%] and higher in fiber [200%]," she explains.

So far, the early application for Flav-R Grain has mainly been in the tortilla section, where this type of concept does have tradition. "If you look at the tortilla industry in South America, before it was industrialized, home bakers would prepare the whole corn flake with the germ. In the current industry it is without the germ, so you can effectively make a new product based on the flavor part," Lucassen says. She notes that the corn-based snacks industry in Europe has enjoyed significant growth in recent years. "Diving into this, what we have seen is that in countries like Spain, where the tortilla industry has a tradition, we can see a lot of potential," Lucassen notes. Besides the tortilla snack industry, new opportunities are multiple. "For example, you can add it to cookies

to add a specific nutty flavor. In light of the allergy free market, there is a lot to be said around adding flavor without adding nuts, so that's a huge segment as well. We have developed a lot of other applications too," she notes. Another example is their creation of a nut free "peanut butter," with a lower calorie content. The concept is based on a combination of roasted sunflower kernel, Flav-R Grain and fats, in order to achieve a peanut butter like structure. "If you can produce a peanut butter you can also create a sauce. You could add it to breakfast cereals or cereal bars, which is also a healthy way to go," she adds. Barentz is not the only operator in this space. For example, Limagrain Céréales Ingrédients recently introduced Nutricorn Nuts - a toasted and granulated maize germ, which will decrease recipe costs in bars or mueslis. Nuts are expensive products with big price fluctuations due to harvests - by replacing 50% in a bar recipe, Nutricorn Nuts are claimed to allow you to decrease the recipe cost by nearly 28% and have a more assured view of future pricing.

Barentz has been active in the lupin space since the 1990s, with the grain traditionally being used as a soy replacer, with functional properties. If lupin is added to cakes it has good emulsifying properties during the process, but is also good for creating stability. Lupin flour's inherent beta-carotene content means that beta-carotene does not need to be added for color, as is the case with soy flour. A new, more health driven market is now opening up for lupin, however. "We have recently seen that its use goes beyond functionality, but more into the health, gluten free and other free from markets. The meat & dairy alternative markets are good examples of this," Lucassen says. In late-2013, Vivera's lupin-based meat alternative We Love Nature was awarded with the 2013 Healthy Food Product of the Year Award in the Netherlands. It is a new line of 100% vegetable-based products, made using lupin grown locally by Dutch farmers from the Holten region. For Lucassen, recent advances in production processes and knowledge of lupin-based ingredients are allowing for the creation of these types of products. Another highly exciting area of development is in dairy-free ice cream based on lupin. "Ice cream that is free from milk and lactose is an exciting area to target. We have created a new ingredient that is a spray-dried compound, which allows you to create ice creams based on lupin," she concludes. It has already been adopted in a dairy ice cream alternative in Italy. ■

### Taste Profile of Flav-R-Grain

