

## Food Fight - S1E10B - Spotlight Banabooms.mp3

**Lukxmi Balathanan** [00:00:06] Welcome to this bonus episode of The Food Fight podcast from EIT Food.

**Matt Eastland** [00:00:11] In these episodes, we want to shine a light on new projects and agrifood start-ups and hear about their efforts to fight for a better food future. This week, we're handing over to Inna Zhuralova to tell us about Banabooms. Banabooms are a start-up grown out from an EIT Food project and believe that no food should be wasted. They're giving a second chance to bananas by turning them into a breakfast cereal.

**Inna Zhuravlova** [00:00:40] Hi I'm Inna Zhuravlova and I'm a cofounder of Banabooms. Banabooms is a breakfast cereal made from saved bananas. Our breakfast cereal is crunchy, tasty, vegan, gluten free and contains no added sugar.

[00:00:54] One third of all food that is produced is never, ever eaten and we decided that we cannot stand by anymore and we decided to do something about it. We figured out that the most abundant fruit in retail are bananas. So we came up with an idea of creating a new food product from it. And that is our Banabooms breakfast cereal from bananas, which are saved. The moment bananas are turning slightly yellow, or get this brown spots, they are not optically and visually attractive for consumers and retailers are throwing them away. What do we do? We take these bananas from supermarkets and turn them into crunchy, tasty breakfast cereal for your great start in a day. Our product is not just sustainable, but also crunchy, vegan, gluten-free and contains no added sugar at all. All sugar that is in our product is naturally sourced sugar from bananas.

[00:01:58] Our mission is to reduce unnecessary food waste and we want to help consumers to actively fight food waste, just enjoying their breakfast.

[00:02:12] For the first time when I've heard about this project, I was in the second year of my bio-economy Masters and I realised that this great opportunity to leave the lecture halls and the slides, just theoretical slides and go to talk with people from industry and solve the real life problem. This project was a great opportunity to put together the academics and people who are really making business and we students could help them to make a change to solve their problems. This was a great experience, not just for CV, but to go out there, meet amazing specialists and do something that you won't ever do just sitting at the university.

[00:02:57] After winning the first place in the competition, a lot of things happened. It hasn't been even a year, but feels like much, much longer. I think, first of all, I need to mention that that was a huge personal involvement. After that, of course, we were participating in many, many, many pitches and presentations, participating in many competitions, and also made contacts with retailers so that when our product is final, we can put it on the shelves and get the feedback from consumers. University gives you a lot of time to develop a new product but in business, you need to be fast.

[00:03:37] I strongly encourage other students to participate in such projects that EIT Food launches, because that takes you out from a lecture halls, from theoretical books to go and help industry make an impact to help them solve problems. You're a student, you are not a specialist yet you're full of energetic new ideas and you go and you make your contribution and the impact.

[00:04:04] EIT Food and partners helped us to take our idea from the university project to the real life by, first of all, helping us financially. We got the seed money for our Start-Up, which is entrepreneurialism, innovation, prise, and also along the hallway there were consulting hours answering all our questions and providing the data to make our product work. I joined EIT Food community because I believe this is a great opportunity to solve real life problems. Saving the world problems of our society, together, we as professionals and industry.

**Lukxmi Balathasan** [00:04:53] Thanks for listening to this bonus episode of The Food Fight podcast.

**Matt Eastland** [00:04:57] To find out more and to learn how you can get involved in the fight for better food future head over to [eitfood.eu.podcast](http://eitfood.eu.podcast).