

Zirņu biezpiens brokastīm – Pea-based curd cheese for breakfast (Latvia)

Product developed in EIT Food RIS Consumer Engagement Labs project

Traditional products and recipes serve as a great source of inspiration when designing innovative food products. Sometimes, it is not necessarily to invent an entire new product. Instead, a food producer could an improved alternative to an already existing product. With such an approach the Latvian start up – Got Foods – decided to offer consumers a new version of the well-known curd cheese – but in their own take – as a plant-based version that contains more proteins than its milk-based origin. This enabled consumers to have their favourite meals while enhancing health benefits and promoting sustainable consumption.

Innovative food product

Zirņu biezpiens brokastīm – Pea-based curd cheese for breakfast – offers a new take on the popular dairy product in Latvia. It is fully plant-based with high amount of proteins. Thanks to technologies applied for production, it offers a tasty product with improved health benefits and texture adjusted to the needs of older consumers.

Good for health

The product does not contain any artificial additives or preservatives. Instead, it is based on bacteria cultures and a probiotic blend, which supports gut microbiome of consumers. Moreover, it is lactose free, facilitating digestion. It also contains yellow pea protein, which is a plant based high-quality, easily digested protein source. It's rich in iron, arginine and branched-chain amino acids and offers benefits like feelings of fullness and heart health.

Preferred by older adults / Co-designed with older adults for older adults

Pea-based curd cheese serves as an innovative, upgraded version of a well-known Latvian product. It is familiar, yet has improved nutritional qualities. The vegetable-based curd has a good microbiome profile improving digestion, due to natural fermentation used in production processes. The product is also free from allergens such as lactose, gluten, nuts, or soy. Furthermore, the product texture is light, easy to chew and swallow. It can be consumed in a variety of ways – as a breakfast accompaniment for sandwich, as a starter or a dip for potatoes – to re-create the popular Latvian dish in a refined way.

Different from existing products

Thanks to used technology, *Pea-based curd cheese for breakfast* is characterised by reduced acidity levels compared to products derived from cow milk, which makes it particularly suitable for older consumers. Moreover, the unique processing technology results in very creamy and smooth texture, which is pleasing to the palate. The product is fully plant-based, which makes it easy to digest and suitable for all sorts of diets. At the same time, it has a high protein level, thanks to yellow pea proteins. By proposing a dairy-free version of the popular Latvian product, it promotes a more sustainable plant-based diet among older consumers.

Additional information about the project:

Zirņu biežpiens brokastīm is a product designed during the co-creation processes, held as a part of the RIS Consumer Engagement Labs project. The project is coordinated by the University of Warsaw and financed by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), under the Horizon 2020/Horizon Europe, the EU Framework Programmes for Research and Innovation, as a part of EIT Regional Innovation Scheme. The project's main aim is to address the needs of elderly consumers in the food and beverages market by applying novel methodology which engages consumers, stimulates creativity, and fosters the acceptance of new products. The concept of *Zirņu biežpiens brokastīm* was designed in 2021 through co-creation processes, which involved the identification of consumer preferences and new product ideas put forward by older consumers from multiple European countries and the subsequent formulation and design of the final product by the representatives of food producer from Latvia – Got Foods. Following the co-creation process, the actual product was developed and introduced to the market by Got Foods in 2022.

Find out more about the project at: <http://timo.wz.uw.edu.pl/cel>