**EIT Food Fight Podcast - S3 E2B - Probitat V1.mp3**

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

**Matt Eastland** [00:00:10] In these episodes, we want to shine a light on new projects, agri food, start-ups and hear about their efforts to fight for a better food future. This week, we're handing over to Carme Plumed-Ferrer to tell us about Probitat, at a start up helping people live healthier lives with their gut friendly products.

**Carme Plumed-Ferrer** [00:00:36] Hi, my name is Carme Plumed-Ferrer and I'm the founder and CEO at Probitat. We are part of the EIT Food Accelerator Network alumni and we are fighting for the future of food because we can offer our know how to transform the food in a more sustainable and nutritious way.

[00:00:57] We are Probitat and we are using our know-how in fermentation technology to develop foods that are more sustainable and nutritious. We use our more than 20 years know-how into understanding how microbes work, and we use them to transform plant-based ingredients so that we can have a more nutritious, tastier and more sustainable end product. So our products can be many things, we have like three categories. One is how we use the fermentation for drinks and yoghurts, plant based drinks and yoghurts. These ones we use a probiotic bacteria, so we offer better gut health to the consumers. But then we have other line of products, which are the vegan cheeses. The third line of products are the bake products where we use fermented flowers to improve the flavour and the nutritional value of any kind of baked products. So as you can see, it's not that we have only one product is how we use the technology to create better end products.

[00:02:16] Probitat started two years ago, but I used to be a researcher before I spent 18 years at university building the know how of what Probitat is about today. I was at university a little bit frustrated because I was developing food products. And as a researcher, we want to publish. So we have to publish. But the products were not really reaching the consumer, which is what I was mostly interested about. So that's why I was a bit frustrated and the university encouraged actually to spin off and create this company. And I thought that it was the best way. I never thought they would do it myself, but I wanted somebody to continue developing and upscale the product I design already at the university. It was too long probably ahaha.

[00:03:17] Our consumers have a product that is easier to digest, it contains probiotics or they might get a better gut health. What we offer also and corporates are very interested is the taste! So plant based products like protein alternatives, you have to hide the taste with a lot of fat and carbohydrates. So we try to offer much healthier, good taste to evolve these plant based alternatives.

[00:03:52] The biggest challenge? How long do you have? The biggest challenge is that I am a researcher and I'm the only founder of the company. I don't have a business background, entrepreneur background, so learning all this has been very challenging and there's a lot still to learn. But it's like you have to divide your mind into different positions. So today I'm a researcher. Tomorrow I'm a marketing person. And the third day I'm business, I'm pitching to investors and so on. So I think this is the most difficult part that you have to a little bit understand every single of these details if you want to run a company.

[00:04:48] When we started EIT Food Accelerator, we were quite young, so we were only one year old and we thought that we were a little bit too early for this accelerator, but actually turned out to be just the perfect timing accelerator gave us a lot of tools of how to understand the business part, the marketing part, the IP part. So it was just a huge, intense period, but with all the necessary information we needed. So it was perfect timing for us.

[00:05:30] I think if I had to send a message to the food industry, I would tell them, don't be afraid to work with microbes. I know it sounds scary and usually we try to posterize everything and kill everything. But microbes can be an excellent tool for many things, for solving many of the food, developing challenges to improving the shelf life and the safety of the foods to even get the consumers better health and digestibility. So I think that would be my message. Just be familiar with bacteria they are, or microbes, they are not our enemies. They are our friends. And we can utilise them for a better future.

**Lukxmi Balathasan** [00:06:24] Thanks for listening to this bonus episode of The Food Fight podcast

**Matt Eastland** [00:06:28] to find out more and to learn how you can get involved in the fight for a better future, head over to eitfood.eu/podcast and join the conversation via #EITFoodFight on our Twitter channel @EITFood. For more information on Probitat, head over to probitat.eu.