**EIT Food Fight Podcast - S3 E4B - Menutech V4.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 and agrifood start ups and hear about their efforts to fight for a better food future. This week, we're handing over to Laure Joumier to tell us about Menutech, a start-up who've created a menu planning software solution for the restaurant care and hospitality sectors.

**Laure Joumier** [00:00:36] Hi, my name is Laure Joumier, I'm the co-founder and CEO at Menutech, we're part of EIT Food Accelerator Network alumni and we are fighting for the future of food because we want to make personalised nutrition a reality for every single patient out there. Menutech is the software to automatically generate food menus that are allergy friendly for restaurants, hotels, as well as hospitals and care homes, and I like to call ourselves the most European Start-Up I know because we are available in French, English, Italian, Spanish and German and we have teams from all across Europe. Our customers use Menutech to write down their food menus and then have that menu automatically translated, designed, and with all the mandatory allergen icons added into it. For hospitals and care homes, we go one step further as we also automate the meal planning, a.k.a. the choices of meals that constitute a meal plan that is suited for everyone in the patient population. And we also automate order taking.

[00:01:45] So back in 2016, the European Union passed an allergen declaration law, so my family and 17 million Europeans who suffer from food allergies were really excited to have allergens declared for every single food sold in restaurants, for example. And on the other hand, restaurant owners felt left on their own when it came to having to declare allergens on their food menus. Gluten, lactose and peanuts are three pretty straightforward allergens, but the 11 mandatory others are more complicated, such as identifying lupin or sulphites, understanding the difference between molluscs and crustaceans, or realising how often celery is used in sauces. So back in 2016, when I was running a web agency, my clients in the hospitality industry asked me for a digital way to automatically declare allergens on our food menus. And so I built it.

[00:02:44] So some of the benefits of Menutech are for the consumer themselves. You'll have a food menu that has all the allergens declared, making it very easy for you to take your order independently. It avoids you having to constantly ask your waiter, does this contain gluten? Does this contain lupin, you know, everything from scratch all by yourself and this is always a nice, reassuring service when you go to restaurants and for the restaurant owners themselves, it saves them up to 75 percent of the time it takes them to prepare allergy friendly and translated food menus. This is a topic that has been increasingly important over the last five years is that nutrition has a huge impact on patients health and well-being. So poor food choices lead to food waste. Up to 65 percent of the food in hospitals is not eaten and thrown away. And as the risk of complications increases, the length of the hospitalisation also increases and the hospital incurs an additional cost of up to 6000 euro per malnourished patient. In the European Union alone, it is 20 million patients who are affected by malnutrition, costing EU governments 120 billion euros annually.

[00:03:59] Well over the last five years, with many takes existence, we have identified a specific setting in which we create most value, and that is for the 15000 patients we serve over 30 hospitals and care homes every day. With this, we really see an empowerment, so to speak, for patients in the hospital or in the care home, ordering food is an important part of the day, not only in terms of well-being, but also for the speed of recovery. And this is something that we have heard not just from patients themselves, but doctors, nurses really appreciate being able to empower their patients to take their own food decisions. In summer 2019, we have joined the EIT Food Accelerator Network in Switzerland, and this has been great for us because we were literally at a 10 minutes drive away from one of our very first enterprise clients, which is the second largest private clinic network in Switzerland. So this has helped us a lot to develop our health care offering, especially for automated order taking and automatically personalising the meal plans to every single patient in these establishments. EIT Food has helped us a lot in bringing our solution for restaurants, hotels, but also for the health care sector. So my hope for the future is that we are able to provide a diverse food offering for everyone, regardless of their dietary restrictions, regardless of their food allergies. And I am very hopeful on this topic because I see that the patients themselves are ready for a more personalised nutrition in state hospital and the care home. The only challenge, so to speak, is to equip the food service teams with the right tools to operationalise this personalised nutrition. And so the challenge is really, from what we've seen over the last five years, is that Menutech is one of the first, if not the first cloud based tools for food service teams, especially for small and mid-sized establishments. And so, you know, we work close to our clients to accompany them in their digital transformation. And so over the last five years, so we've built the best solution on the market to automatically generate food menus for everyone who suffers from a food allergy or follows a medical treatment. And in the next five years, we want to be the number one solution for meal planning in the health care industry to fully operationalise personalised nutrition for five million patients every day.

[00:06:36] The one message I'd like to share with food professionals is to keep fighting so that food transparency does not come at the expense of food diversity. We work with amazing clients and they have an incredible gastronomical offering and are very ambitious. And we meet them really right from the data to finish hotel every school until they work in those really prestigious kitchens. And the topic of declaring allergens, the topic of making the recipes transparent, so to speak, or at least the ingredients, the allergenic ingredients transparent. This should not make them afraid in any way. We should be able to offer something diverse and everyone should be able to find what they like on the plate.

**Lukxmi Balathasan** [00:07:24] Thanks for listening to this bonus episode of The Food Fight podcast

**Matt Eastland** [00:07:28] to find out more and to learn how you can get involved in the fight for a better food future, head over to eitfood.eu/podcast and join the conversation via #EITFoodFight on our Twitter channel @EITFood. For more information on many tech, head over to menutech.com.