

SUSTAINABLE NUTRITION –



Dairy and plant based nutrition can complement each other

New Zealand produces enough food for 50 million people. Pretty impressive for a country of five million. But with an estimated nine billion mouths to feed by 2050, the world needs to produce more nutrition – 30% more.

At the same time, consumer preferences are evolving, with the rise of flexitarians and keto diets to name but a few.

So, how does New Zealand play its vital part in helping feed the world and meeting consumers' needs, when we, like many other food producing nations, are facing some social and environmental challenges?

The answer is sustainable nutrition – producing some of the high value, sustainable products that the world needs.

Global nutrition

The World Health Organisation's (WHO) latest Global Nutrition Report highlights the unacceptably high rate of malnutrition – and every country in the world is affected in some way.

Malnutrition is often only seen as starvation, but there are many other forms of malnutrition – including obesity. Over one-fifth of the world's children under five years are stunted as a result of malnutrition, and overweight and obesity among adults are at record levels with almost 40% of adults overweight, and about 13% obese globally. And these levels just continue to rise.

Good nutrition isn't just about having food, it's about having the right food. Essential vitamins and minerals are vital to boosting immunity and healthy development. However, vitamin and mineral deficiencies are prevalent worldwide, thanks to not only a lack of food supply in some areas, but also an overload of processed food in other communities.

Despite this grim outlook, the WHO is confident that if we act now, we have an opportunity to end malnutrition in all its forms.

New Zealand's position

Milk and dairy products are recommended in New Zealand's dietary guidelines as part of healthy, balanced diets for optimal health.

Head of Nutrition, Laura Anderson says this is because it is packed with essential nutrients that helps people lead a healthy life.

"There's a unique combination of nutrients in dairy, and they play an important role in growing and maintaining healthy bones, your immunity, the functioning of your nervous system including your brain, preventing tiredness, maintaining healthy eyes, and so much more."

But there's also power in the individual components of milk in helping manage and recover from injuries and illnesses.

"For example, dairy proteins are used in advanced medical nutrition products and help nourish and rehabilitate patients. There's even a unique dairy-derived probiotic which has shown promising results in lowering the risk of postnatal depression and anxiety."

And our milk and dairy products can play a valuable role in addressing deficiencies in diets and improving the health and wellbeing of people around the world.

"Milk is a natural source of many of the valuable nutrients people need. It is one of the richest sources of readily available dietary calcium and also contributes many other essential nutrients including protein, phosphorus, potassium, vitamin A, riboflavin (vitamin B2), niacin (vitamin B3) and vitamin B12."

NOW AND INTO THE FUTURE

Evolving consumer preferences

Many global consumers believe in the power of a variety of nutritious foods, with the likes of vegetables, fruit, dairy and meat helping us live healthier lives.

As we move forward, it's no longer a 'one size fits all' world. Consumer needs are varied, and as diets evolve it's up to food producers to meet needs and provide choices.

The International Food Information Council Foundation's Food & Health Survey showed that the increase of people on specific diets rose nearly 22% between 2017 and 2018, from 14% to 36% of people.

Director Category, Strategy & Innovation, Mark Piper says this is why it's so important for our Co-op to stay ahead of the game.

"We know farming, dairy, proteins and manufacturing – and we know how to get our food safely to the world.

"By collaborating and fostering partnerships, we can harness our creativity and knowledge to produce new nutritional products which extend the reach of our food."

The future of food

Although we're firm believers that consumers around the world will continue to want natural, grass-fed dairy as a premium source of nutrition, there will also be a place for plant, insect, algae and fermentation-produced nutrition – a sector we call 'complementary nutrition'.

It's not a case of either/or, but both – and we're interested in its potential.

Dairy nutrition will always be at our core. But complementary nutrition isn't new to us – plant derived ingredients are already used in some of our products including milk powder blends, butter blends, healthy living products, infant formula and milk powder. Insects and algae, on the other hand, are new, and we are keeping a watching brief on their potential as a source of nutrition.



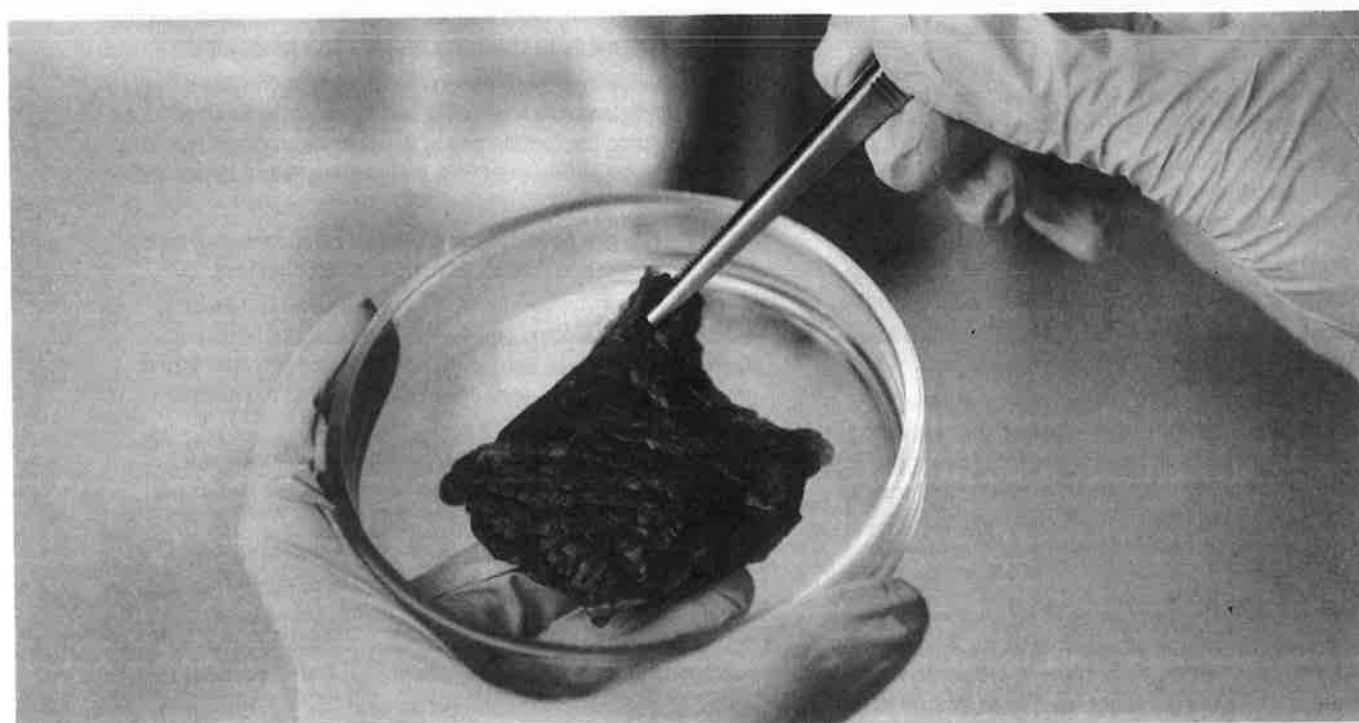
Dairy contains a unique combination of vital nutrients

Mark Piper says that across the world, science and new technologies are being used to delve into the viability and practicality of lab based and gene edited food. Gene-edited oil is being sold commercially for the first time in the United States and the first burger with a lab grown 'meat' patty is due to go on sale in the UK.

That's part of the reason why we've taken a minority stake in Motif Ingredients, a US-based food ingredients company.

"Our stake in Motif will help us be part of this emerging next-generation fermentation-produced nutrition sector and understand its potential role in the future food ecosystem," says Mark.

"Motif's team of world leading biotech experts will harness state-of-the-art genetic science and fermentation technology to re-create and sell animal proteins and food ingredients, including those similar to dairy ingredients."



Exploring the world of lab grown protein