

Client overview

The client was a global food manufacturer that produces a variety of products including plant-based. Consumers are interested in plant-based foods because of the health benefits of reducing their meat intake, concerns about farm animal welfare, and the high CO₂ emissions linked to livestock farming. However, some consumers who have tried plant-based meat list **texture** as one of the reasons why they chose not to purchase the products again. Our client was therefore interested in seeking innovative approaches for introducing meaty texture into plant-based meat and fish. These potential technology solutions could include ingredients and/or manufacturing processes that can enable the client’s plant-based products to better resemble meat/fish textures in both appearance and physical structure.



The search

Strategic Allies Ltd (SAL) initiated a technology search (via secondary research and SAL’s network) to identify start-ups, established companies, universities, and research organisations, that are developing suitable or applicable technologies capable of creating authentic (look and feel) meaty textures in plant-based meat or fish products, preferably with good sustainability features.

Meaty textures of interest include fibrous, shredded, stringy, chewy or chunky textures that mimic different formats of beef, pork, lamb, chicken or fish (e.g. chunks, strips, flakes, etc.), as well as the textures of specific meat products e.g., beef jerky. A variety of animal-free protein sources such as soy, pea, fava bean, oat, wheat, fungi/mushroom, algae and crop / plant food waste were explored. Ideally, the potential partners had technology solutions that were already available commercially or close to commercialisation (i.e. within the next 5 years), with prototyping or pilot scale facilities for samples production, and were open to co-development with our client.

Outcome

SAL interviewed and **shortlisted 45 organisations with potential technology solutions to present to the client** over the 6-month search – a detailed overview of each solution, the organisation’s co-development capabilities and supporting literature were provided in addition to SAL’s insights of the market.

The client initially requested samples from 8 organisations for internal review – SAL supported the client with purchasing. Other opportunities were still being reviewed for potential introductions.

“Great companies found... appreciate the great work”

“Good find... like how the product looks... Can see fit with our products...to keep on our radar”

“Really nice to see high level details and key points of different areas we’ve looked at. Thank you for doing that”