



CASE STUDY

Cereal revolution

Agrasys is a spin-off of the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC), located in Barcelona, and founded in 2005 by a group of scientists from the Institute of Sustainable Agriculture of Córdoba (IAS-CSIC) and professionals from the Agri-food sector.

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grasys is dedicated to contributing to society through the development of crops with added value for human consumption, like Tritordeum (www.tritordeum.com).

Its activity has been mainly focussed on the development and commercialisation of Tritordeum since 2006, when it obtained the rights of exploitation of this non gmo cereal, but also it is developing other projects directed to the sector of natural functional foods and crops for biomass and forage. In its shareholding are two venture capital companies: Uninvest, since 2008, and Inveready, since 2015.

The company in recent events has been chosen in PepsiCo's Nutrition Greenhouse Program. They will receive EU€20,000 and expert advice to promote and accelerate its growth. Agrasys has been the only Spanish start-up selected by PepsiCo within the 2018 incubation programme in the field of nutrition and wellness in Europe.

This start-up is one of the 10 finalists of the 2018 second edition of PepsiCo's Nutrition Greenhouse Programme. This programme was launched in 2017 to support emerging companies in the food and beverage sector.

This year, PepsiCo offers EU€20,000 in funding to the 10 participating companies, as well as the opportunity to work with PepsiCo mentors and experts to accelerate their businesses.

Agrasys, with its sustainable and more digestible cereal Tritordeum has been one of the innovative nutrition brands chosen by the PepsiCo incubator. The finalists of this year were selected according to the quality of their products and their

positioning, their focus on health and wellness, as well as their scalable business models.

"Being among the 10 finalists – out of 174 candidates – means great recognition for us within the food and beverage industry, regarding nutrition, wellness and health aspects", says Verónica Guerra, Agrasys' head of marketing and communication.

The remaining selected companies are from Israel, France, the UK, and Bulgaria. At the end of the programme, one of them will receive an additional EU€100,000 prize.

"Tritordeum's potential is huge but we need to accelerate its growth. We will certainly take full advantage of this opportunity that PepsiCo gives us to continue the expansion of our cereal in Europe", explains Guerra.

More than a cereal

Agrasys is focused on promoting Tritordeum, a Mediterranean cereal – the son of durum wheat (*Triticum durum*) and a wild barley (*Hordeum chilense*) – with real benefits for the environment, farmers and consumers.

This new cereal allows the elaboration of a wide range of products such as flour, bread, biscuits, pasta, pizza or even beer. Tritordeum products are already available in 9 countries including Spain, Italy, France, Switzerland, Turkey, Sweden, Denmark, Germany and The Netherlands.

"Tritordeum is currently conquering Spain and other countries of the old continent thanks to its nutritional advantages: high levels of fibre, fatty acids, antioxidants such as lutein and more digestible gluten", says the communication manager of the company.

Compared to wheat, it has high levels of dietary fibre with positive effects in cardiovascular health; 10 times more lutein – an antioxidant related to eye health that protects the retina from UV



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rays and the ageing effects -; more fatty acids of the oleic type – considered as a central pillar in our Mediterranean diet. In addition, it contains more digestible gluten.

According to a recent study, Tritordeum has a significant reduction of gluten proteins associated with food intolerances (gliadins) compared to wheat. Although it contains gluten and is not suitable for celiacs, it can be an alternative cereal for those who want to reduce their gluten intake or also for people with non-celiac gluten sensitivity. *Source: Vaquero et. al., (2017).*

As a crop, Tritordeum is more sustainable and has a lower environmental footprint. It has recently received the

first prize in the “Sustainable Ingredient” category during the Sustainable Food Awards 2018, organised by Ecovia Intelligence. It is about a robust cereal that adapts to the inclemency of climate change and resists well to drought and high temperatures.

The fact that Tritordeum makes efficient use of water and has a good resistance to some diseases makes Tritordeum a sustainable cereal with a lower environmental impact. It is grown in the Mediterranean area – Spain, Italy and Southern France – in conventional and ecological systems. At the moment, 70 percent of the production comes from local farmers with ecological certification.



About the programme

The Nutrition Greenhouse programme of PepsiCo (www.nutritiongreenhouse.com) is back for the second consecutive year in June 2018 and is focused on food and nutritional beverages designed for European consumers with a turnover of five million euros or less.

Besides receiving a financial support of EU€20,000, the 10 companies will receive assistance of experts from some of PepsiCo’s leading brands, who will help them to achieve their growth objectives. During the programme, some face-to-face workshops and virtual training will be carried out, designed to address business problems of these embryonic

stages and thus, overcome with immediacy the challenges that the market presents.

At the end of the programme, the company that will demonstrate the most effective scalable and sustainable approach will be rewarded with a prize of EU€100,000 to continue with their business expansion.

The Nutrition Greenhouse programme is part of PepsiCo’s commitment with innovation and also of their interest in collaborating with the entrepreneurs that are contributing to build a food and beverage industry for today’s and tomorrow’s consumers.

www.agrasyes.es