Why Are Big Food Companies Concerned?

A New Consumer Is Driving the Marketplace

A recent article appeared in the New York Times telling us something that we already know is happening. From the beginning of this year, you will find recipes and articles about the Slow Food Movement, Lots of Healthy Eating Ideas, Farm-Fresh Foods, Farmer's Markets, Community Gardens, Gluten Free Products, Nature-Loving New Products, and the birth of new supermarkets with smaller center sections but lots of freshness around the perimeter. This means that people, like you and me, are making a difference and the big companies are finally listening.

Let's look at what those big companies are trying to do. General Mills will drop all artificial colors and flavors from its cereals. Perdue, Tyson, and Foster Farm have begun to limit the use of antibiotics in their chicken. Kraft was dropping artificial dyes from macaroni and cheese. Hershey wants to use simple and easy-to-understand ingredients like local farm fresh milk. There seems to be a new reality as consumers are shunning those processed preserved products and purchasing more raw produce, meats, bakery items, and fresh prepared foods. Lots of fresh fruits and vegetables are finding their way onto our children's plates too. Just think about how many bags of fresh carrots you buy now compared with ten years ago.

Because of deceptive marketing and one-sided lobbying efforts, many of today's consumers don't trust the big companies. Perhaps, big business should look carefully at the global markets, establish new supply chains, and make significant changes in their core products.

Let's explore some of the ideas shared by various countries at Expo2015 to increase food security and create nutritious food of the future.

Italy

1. Sterile greenhouses with hydroponic plantings, allowing the cultivation so high quality plants in the absence of pathogens and external weather conditions.
2. Also, the Ocean Reef project allows basil to grow under water through a system of biosphere balloons anchored to the seabed, where large amounts of carbon dioxide act as steroids for the plants, increasing growth.

Belgium

1. Hydroponics and aquaponics with authentic fish tanks;
2. The use of insects; the rediscovery of common wild plants.

United Arab Emirates

Studying edible plants that are resistant to saline conditions specific of the Emirates.

Germany

1. Recovery of phosphorus as fertilizer
2. Agroforestry to prevent erosion and to stabilize the water balance.

3. Agricultural solar panels or combining the use of surface energy and agriculture.
4. Preservation and promotion of biodiversity, including the Gatersleben Gene Bank.

Japan

1. Utilize umami and fermentation techniques; operate in harmony with nature,
2. Table for Two International

Israel

1. Patented irrigation system with low environmental impact
2. The cultivation of higher quality grain for pasta and automated milking methods

Kazakhstan

1. Aquaculture, a method, called milking, extracts the eggs of sturgeon without killing the animal.
2 Developed a monitoring system using drones to identify areas affected by outbreaks.

Kuwait

A vertical garden made with hundreds of hydroponic plants

Oman

1. Agricultural heritage", with the "one million palm trees" project
2. An installation reproduces a simplified aquaponics system; the country is building an artificial reef, through completely natural installations on the seabed, around which will form calcifications.

Qatar

1. The Qatar National Food Security Program (QNFSP) including: a hydroponic system, desalination and water production from atmospheric moisture (Agriverde) and microalgae for aquaculture
2. Building a hub port for efficient transport.
3. The Filaha project, the government is promoting the publishing of some ancient texts on traditional farming methods, to check their applicability in the present day.

Slovakia

1. Smart hydroponic systems for growing at home (Croptech),
2. Energy drinks that can be achieved through the liquefaction of farro for a natural cereal drink (Functional food) or plastic material made from 100 percent natural materials such as corn and sugar beets (Biodegradable bioplastic).

United States

1. The vertical garden is the feature that best represents American Food 2.0: a large wall made of motorized panels that turn towards the sun. Through a hydroponic method and water recovery, the system nourishes over 40 varieties of crops.
2. Inside hanging pots are equipped with a system of lights capable of stimulating the growth of plants.

France

1. Innovation in the food industry; products are integrated into the design of a building.
2. The "Prêt à Pousser" project - organic mushrooms grown in a cardboard box - selected as winner of a competition, indicative of the trend "cook and grow at home."

The Netherlands

Nutritional concept of "sharing", the country believes that the solutions to global challenges require international collaboration and the sharing of knowledge and resources by all.

Monaco

First oyster nursery in the Mediterranean was built; the good quality of the water that is constantly controlled by xenia coral, used on farms as a natural alarm that monitors conditions, while phytoplankton serves as food for the oysters.
The oysters provide an example of the methods and technologies capable of obtaining healthy products in urban environments.

Belarus

The innovative idea that the country offers is related to a new form of food packaging. The protective films are developed in new edible ways, so as to avoid waste, applicable to almost every kind of food that can be wrapped in portioned packages and cooked in boiling water: tea, coffee, oatmeal, soups, pasta, spices and herbs. In addition, all raw and ready to eat food can be packaged like this, including meat, cheese, fruit and vegetables. Bio-on sustainable packaging and floating structures capable of producing foods,

Arid Zones Cluster

1. Processes of desertification and soil degradation, policies for sustainable land management and soil regeneration techniques.
2. The Desert Green Wall project, the realization of a "green belt" of trees, and The Acacia Operation Project.
3. To capture and transport water various examples are shown including
    - The Vallerani System, the mechanical plow that creates micro basins and pockets in the ground;
    - The Watercone, a cone which, through the condensation principle, obtains drinking water from brackish or polluted water;
    - The Solar Bottle, a flat sided bottle with a transparent face and an aluminum one to capture the sun's rays, obtaining fresh water purified by exposure to direct sunlight for at least six hours;
    - The Dew Bank Bottle is an example of biomimicry, and works due to its dome shape and the strong temperature differences between day and night, it can be left outside overnight, collecting condensation;
    - The Hippo Roller, a cylindrical tank able to roll like a wheel and which can hold up to 90 liters of water.

http://magazine.expo2015.org/cs/Exponet/en/innovation/food-of-the-future--innovation-presented-at-expo-milano-2015