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Givaudan pioneers new salt technology to drive consumer preference in low sodium food products

Dübendorf, Switzerland, 25 February 2009: Givaudan has developed new proprietary technology that will help food manufacturers address the issue of high salt levels in processed foods.

As part of its TasteSolutions™ programme, Givaudan has developed an extensive portfolio of building blocks and ingredients to help its flavourists enhance salt perception in low sodium applications.

“Givaudan understands that high levels of salt in foods are no longer acceptable to the consumer, but we also know that great tasting food does not have to be high in salt,” says Andreas Haenni, Givaudan’s Global Head of Savoury. “Our approach is one of asking what makes food taste great rather than just thinking of salt in isolation.”

Givaudan continues to invest in sensory validation techniques to prove and measure flavour performance and is developing a salt curve: a visual representation of the taste effects of sodium chloride over time. The taste impact of salt is broken down into a number of phases: first delivering a distinctive initial mineral ‘bite’, then a ‘body’ or ‘mouth-feel’ phase, followed by a characteristic clean, lingering profile.

Rather than trying to replace salt, Givaudan looks first to understand its taste functionality in the customer’s application. Then a flavour is created which builds back those important taste aspects of the salt curve needed to drive consumer preference when sodium levels are reduced.

Taste is a very complex area to work in and reducing sodium provides several technical challenges. Close collaboration between Givaudan’s Application and Sensory scientists ensures that Givaudan has a complete understanding of the flavour and food matrix interactions.

This deep knowledge of food science and sensory validation has enabled Givaudan’s flavourists to develop solutions for customers’ products from soups and sauces, to snacks and meat as well as for cereals and bakery.

“The best results are obtained through close customer collaboration to optimize flavour performance, maintain or improve label integrity and minimise the cost impact of reformulated products,” adds Haenni.

Givaudan tailors solutions to meet regulatory and cost constraints, including natural flavours which can also be allergen and MSG free or kosher and halal, if required. Significantly, Givaudan has technology which enables it to develop flavours that, unlike most other companies' alternatives, do not rely on the use of potassium chloride, if the customer prefers not to use it.

"Givaudan's multi-faceted approach to ingredient development underpins our proprietary taste technology," explains Bob Eilerman, Givaudan's Global Head of Science and Technology. "We harness the full spectrum of our research capabilities including molecular biology, biochemistry, natural products analysis and reaction technology to meet customer needs." Furthermore, Givaudan's network of industrial and academic partners provides unmatched opportunities for future taste development. In 2007-8, 70% of the patents Givaudan filed related to taste perception and modulation.

Givaudan's TasteSolutionsTM programme has already realized a catalogue of commercial successes for customers who are reducing their reliance on salt, delivering double digit growth for the company in this area during 2008.

Notes to editors:
Givaudan Flavours is a trusted partner to the world's leading food and beverage companies, combining its global expertise in sensory understanding and analysis and consumer-led innovation in support of unique product applications and new market opportunities. From concept to store shelves and quick serve restaurants, Givaudan works with food and beverage manufacturers to develop flavours and tastes for market leading products across five continents.

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