

17.5.2016

Lactose intolerance is real and common

The rapid growth in “free-from” foods is testament to a sizable consumer segment’s continued hunger for healthier products. When it comes to dairy, lactose intolerance is the main medical reason some people avoid consumption. Lactose-intolerance in adulthood is in fact the norm for humans (as with other mammals). The high prevalence of tolerance to lactose in populations of northern European descent represents a relatively recent variation in evolutionary terms. In contrast, the rates of lactose intolerance in the Middle-East, Asia and Africa can be over 90%. Fortunately, there are technological solutions to remove the offending lactose from dairy so that consumers need not miss out on the nutritional and taste benefits of dairy products.

But not all technologies are equal

Traditional enzymatic technologies to produce low lactose milks have been available for decades, but result in milks that are overly sweet. Dr. Ross Crittenden, who leads Valio’s research and technology development, explains that “Valio recognized that consumers want lactose-free solutions that don’t compromise on taste or the breadth of dairy products they can enjoy. They also wanted products that the whole family could enjoy. Valio’s Nobel Prize-winning R&D centre in Helsinki pioneered the development of zero-lactose milk that tastes exactly like regular milk. This milk has the added benefit of reduced carbohydrates since it uses microfiltration to remove a portion of the offending lactose. Over the past 15 years Valio has worked to deliver the widest selection of premium zero-lactose products across all dairy categories of any dairy company.”

From medical solution to premium taste

Dr Crittenden continues, “The commitment to deliver best taste in this category has contributed to Valio’s lactose-free brand *Valio Eila* evolving over time from a medical solution brand to a premium taste position for all consumers, whether lactose intolerant or not”. *Valio Eila* has grown to a turnover in excess of €160 million in Finland and Sweden, and in Finland Zero-lactose milks represent a whopping 17% of all milk purchases. Besides licensing its patented zero-lactose technologies to a number of dairy companies around the world, Valio also provides zero-lactose ingredient solutions to food businesses.

The global value of lactose free foods rose 8% in 2015 to total of US\$6,7 billion. (Source: Euromonitor)

About Valio Ltd

Valio is the biggest dairy business and a brand leader in Finland by net turnover of € 1718 million. The company employs 3942 people and is owned by dairy cooperatives comprising over 6,500 dairy farmers. Valio brings taste to life with world leading technology innovations, expertise, and products made from some of the EU’s cleanest milk. So consumers and customers can be certain of their origin, safety and high quality. Valio’s pioneering R&D unit has produced a number of innovative consumer products and technologies, working with ambition that predicts a bright future. Valio exports to 60 countries all over the world and consumer products are sold in Finland and nearby markets. We sell ingredients and our technologies globally. The company has subsidiaries in Russia, Sweden, the Baltics, USA and China.

To find out more, please contact Paavo Salminen, Export Director, Valio Ltd, sales@valio.fi Welcome to meet us at stand B06

