

MEDIA RELEASE

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Sophisticated nutrient-dense foods for healthy ageing

A major collaborative research project to develop nutrient dense foods has received funding through the latest round of PIRSA's Advanced Food Manufacturing (AFM) Grants Program. Potatoes South Australia, the representative voice for the potato industry value chain, in collaboration with the University of Adelaide, Test Kitchen SA Pty Ltd, dietician Joyce Gibson, Obela Fresh Dips & Spreads Pty Ltd and Thomas Farms Kitchen (Thomas Foods International), will receive \$320,000 over two years for research and product development. The Industry is co-funding the project.

The project goal is to develop a range of 10 nutrient-enriched, sophisticated and fun lifestyle-driven food products that support the social lifestyle experiences ageing South Australians desire, using potato puree as the base ingredient. Easy to swallow sauces, gravies, dips and spreads, desserts, breakfast preparations, smoothies and frozen block formats in 70 to 100g serves that meet up to 10 per cent of the RDI for calories and macronutrients for older people are some of the products that could be developed.

This research will build on current trends for developing food and beverage products that enhance health and wellness, but specifically for older Australians, which is a growing market segment. It will also build on a former AFM project which developed a pure 'skins-on' potato ingredient with a unique shelf life.

Potatoes SA CEO Robbie Davis said one of the elements of the research project will be to look at how healthy ageing is associated with maintaining muscle mass at a time when appetite is often decreasing, hence the inclusion of an accredited practising dietician, in Joyce Gibson.

"Many older people do not satisfy their increased demands for protein, so the foods developed in this project will help to address that. Using the base ingredient of a long shelf-life puree made from surplus potatoes provides an exceptional opportunity to demonstrate the nutrient-density of our favourite vegetable," said Ms Davis.

University of Adelaide Commercialisation Manager Dr John Carragher said the exciting project should put new products on the shelves for people to get the nutrients they need to stay healthy as they get older. There is also an opportunity via food service and home delivery using the expertise of Thomas Farms Kitchen.

The palatability of product concepts will be trialled on healthy volunteers during relevant meal experiences conducted by Test Kitchen at Lifestyle villages.

The Association which has a strong focus on R&D, particularly food waste loss reduction and transformation, is now a "Friend of Champions 12.3"- addressing the UN Sustainable development goal

(SDG) of halving per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer level, and reducing food losses along production and supply chains (including post-harvest losses) by 2030.

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