

NEW & NOTABLE

TEA & COFFEE REPORTS BREWING WORLDWIDE

Automation, Robotics & Nitro Remain on Trend in Foodservice



Robotic drink server.

The National Restaurant Association Show returned to Chicago, Illinois in May (21-24) for the first time in three years. This show is the largest foodservice event in the Western Hemisphere and is often the place where new food and beverage trends are discovered.

Robots stole the show and were showcased across the foodservice experience, from automated ordering touchpads to robotic chefs and baristas. Labour issues are top of mind in the foodservice industry so automation as a possible solution should not come as a surprise.

Robotic drink servers seem likely to be the first to appear at mass scale. Consumers still prefer the human touch of a barista or bartender preparing their drinks but may want the convenience of having a robot bring a drink to their table (or even possibly their home).

With coffee shops, in particular, focused on optimising speed in an era of customised, complex online orders, these robots were a glimpse into the industry's future.

Plant-based items continued to dominate F&B trends at the show. Though category sales slowed recently, innovative meat alternatives and substitutes were abundant. The most notable highlight for coffee and tea was fermented dairy brand Perfect Day, which served lattes made from animal-free dairy. The brand ferments whey protein to develop its lactose-free dairy products.

While not plant-based by definition, these products very much represent the next phase of this trend. Based on the trajectory of other new dairy products like oat milk, coffee shops will be the critical channel to bring animal-free dairy products to the mainstream, making this a trend worth watching.

Cold coffees and teas were also widely visible, but no innovation comparable to cold brew or nitro is set to revolutionise the space as in years past.



The brand Rise had a new nitro tea on display, which was the most interesting product development seen within the category. The cold revolution in US coffee has been underway for some time, so all leading players have an established strategy in the cold space. Instead, exhibiting companies were working on refining cold options rather than offering entirely new ones. Lavazza, for example, focused on demoing its new RTD line, consisting of four

varieties with nitro and oat milk-based options.

The 2023 NRA Show will take place in Chicago, 20-23 May.

Matthew Barry, senior consultant,
Euromonitor International

Anuga FoodTec 2022 – Successful Re-launch with High Tech at its Core

After a two-year break, the food and beverage technology industry met in Cologne, Germany from 26-29 April, for Anuga FoodTec. Over 1,000 exhibitors and around 25,000 trade visitors from 120 countries attended the trade show. Compact, innovative formats, intelligent automation of production processes in the food and beverage industry as well as new technologies and concepts were presented. All these innovations push the sustainable use of natural resources and offer solutions to meet the challenges facing food and beverage producers worldwide.

'Smart Solutions - Higher Flexibility' was the guiding theme of the trade show and its technical program. Among the well-known exhibitors in the coffee segment, was German equipment maker Netzsch. The company keeps working to improve coffee processing through hundreds of ingredients such as flavours, minerals, vitamins and antioxidants. The finer the coffee is ground the greater the amount of ingredients released, influencing the flavour positively. Netzsch is presenting its fluidized bed jet mill range targeted at very fine grinding. The equipment can grind with a mixture of roasted and instant coffee.

Another German manufacturer, GEA, is a major equipment builder of complete lines dedicated to



All images courtesy of Matthew Barry

Netzsch's fluidized bed Jet Mill CGS 50.



coffee. "In the beverage industry, coffee is a niche product. And so it is for us – at GEA, we make EUR €2-5 million turnover for coffee equipment, for a total of €500 million for other applications. We make standardised equipment in three sizes," said Stefan Pecoroni, GEA's vp of process technology & innovation. "Twenty years ago, we had the monopoly, however, today China and Turkey also produce this equipment."

Pecoroni said that GEA stays on top thanks to knowledge and experience, especially because coffee is a tricky product to produce. "We have installed GEA instant coffee processing lines in many countries like Ivory Coast, Thailand and Nigeria. We have counted that worldwide, every second 30ml of instant coffee has passed through GEA equipment."

Well aware that RTD coffee remains a promising market growth and that Asia Pacific is by far the largest market for RTD, GEA was keen to get back to one of its major successes of last year. In the middle of the pandemic, GEA remotely put into operation a ready-to-drink coffee production line for Nestlé in Japan.

"This was a big project for us, when you know that Japan consumes half of the RTD coffee traded on the planet. But getting the entire production up and running virtually and on schedule in Japan was a serious challenge. Joint efforts made it work and production started six months later," he explained.

The UHT (ultra-heat temperature) treatment system was transported from Germany to Japan in one piece after extensive factory acceptance testing in the workshop. Using digital tools like remote service desktops along with digital control rooms allowed GEA's commissioning experts from Germany, Pakistan and Singapore to guide the team in Japan remotely as it did the actual hands-on work. "We are becoming more agile and adaptable. This opened up new, more sustainable ways of collaboration between globally dispersed project teams," Pecoroni shared.

Founded 25 years ago by an American engineer, the French company Revtech presented an innovative concept of continuous heat treatment of dry ingredients. The combination of electrical heat generation and vibrational transport techniques in a closed stainless steel spiral, allows rapid and highly efficient heating to take place. The flow rates vary from 100 kg/h to eight tonnes/h and provide a wide range of product tastes and colours.

The technology has been approved by the US Food & Drug Administration (FDA) and the Technical Expert Review Panel of the Almond Board of California. For the moment, most of Revtech's roasting applications go to cereals and nuts, but coffee is picking up and so are flakes. The rising energy prices are playing in favour of this energy-saving equipment.



Small batch roaster with touch screen.

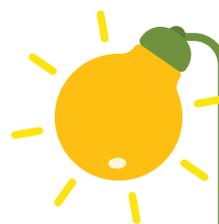


Small but stylish, Gulmak was to be noticed at the show. This 15-people Turkish company produces small roasting and grinding equipment, made of 100 percent German stainless steel. There are four sizes for batches ranging from 6 to 30 kg priced from €12,500 to €16,000. In addition to a very elegant craftsman design, Gulmak makes all the equipment in house. One new feature was a touch screen application that was demonstrated at the show.

The next Anuga FoodTec will be held in Cologne 19-22 March 2024.

Dominique Huret

DID YOU KNOW?



Adventurer and tea lover, Andrew Hughes is credited with holding the highest tea party in history: on Mount Everest Camp 2, Nepal, on 5 May 2021, at a height of 6,496 metres. Andrew, with a team of 15 climbers, ascended Mt Everest and took a selection of teas including black and green teas, as well as peppermint and chamomile to help aid digestion and sleep.

Source: UK Tea & Infusions Association