

Hear from Laurent ...



Laurent Daviet

// Distinguished Scientist, Director of Research & Development, San Diego, Firmenich

“ What brings me to San Diego? To establish our fifth research center, following our recent acquisition of the biotech company Senomyx. In fact, we have been collaborating with Senomyx for more than 10 years, and the acquisition has given us exclusive access to their expertise and technology platform in the area of taste receptors.

The Senomyx technology builds on our industry-leading receptor biology research, adding taste receptors to our extensive knowledge of olfactory receptors.

To explain the technology very simply, the human senses of smell and taste are related to the interaction between receptors in our mouth and nose with flavor and fragrance molecules present in our environment. In San Diego, we focus primarily on the discovery of new taste molecules across the spectrum, covering sweet, bitter, cool and umami. Senomyx technology enables us to better understand this biological process. This knowledge can be leveraged to discover, for example, natural low calorie sweeteners and bitter blockers that increase the palatability of pediatric medicines.

What drives our research? Delivering healthier solutions that taste great and will benefit both consumers and our business. This includes a new natural sweetener discovered in our San Diego labs. Extracting it would

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be uneconomical but we now intend to produce it using our white biotechnology platform, in a sustainable and cost efficient way.

Firmenich has invested significantly over the past three decades in biotechnology and we are the leaders in the industry in bringing renewable, biotech ingredients to market. White Biotechnology uses natural processes such as fermentation, and renewable feedstocks, including sugar to produce ingredients. Sustainability is one advantage of white biotech solutions; additional advantages include reliability of supply and consistency of the product quality. One example of where white biotech can play a critical role is as an alternative to naturals that are overexploited, such as Sandalwood.

What particularly excites me are the possibilities for further innovation where different disciplines intersect, such as, white biotech, receptor biology and green chemistry. Firmenich is driven by multi-disciplinary innovation - bringing scientists from diverse fields, flavorists, perfumers and other experts together to fulfill our purpose - ‘For Good, Naturally.’ For me, that purpose captures this unique spirit of Firmenich. ”

Go behind the scenes to discover our unique ingredient palette.



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