

Hear from Matthew...

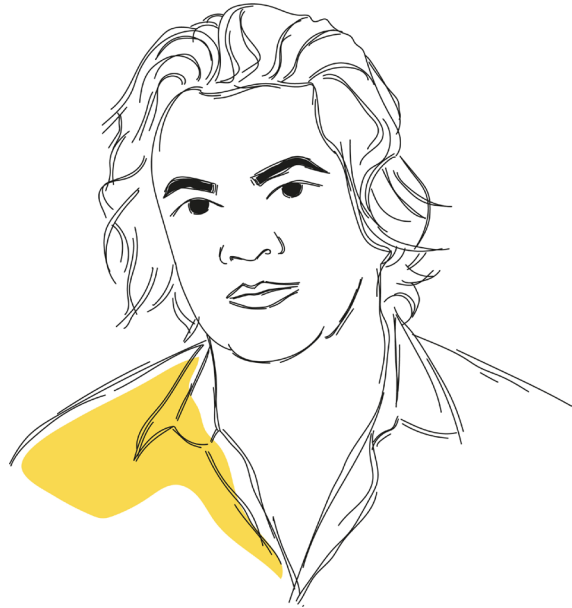
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Matthew Walter

// Director of Global Culinary Business Development, Princeton, Firmenich



“ The flexitarian lifestyle is gaining momentum, but it’s driven by different factors regionally. In Europe, environmental concerns are key, in the US and Latin America health is a primary driver, within Asia, where plant proteins are long established the notion of ‘caring’ is central. These differences are why we focus our innovation at a regional level through our four culinary centers in Princeton, Vienna, Bangkok and Mexico City.

At these centers our chefs play a pivotal role as the ‘guardians’ of the eating experience. Scientists focus on food at a molecular level, flavorists on flavor and food engineers on functionality, but our chefs focus on every aspect - how foods look and smell when you open a pack, their characteristics when cooked and their aroma, color, texture, mouthfeel and taste when enjoyed.

Our desire to satisfy ‘unmet’ consumer needs drives this ‘chef to shelf’ approach. We innovate with purpose, focusing on defined consumer and customer needs. Our chefs practice ‘Culinary Anthropology,’ monitoring how consumers prepare and enjoy food, they’re always scouting new practices and new trends.

What are we excited about right now? The potential of fungi protein, the promise of fermentation, including algae, the way cooking techniques can change flavor as much as ingredients can, and the challenges of reducing salt, sugar and fat – because health and wellbeing are always top of mind.

We’re also excited about the key takeaways from our global conference we held in October 2019 at the Campus headquarters in Parma, Italy. We brought together customers and a range of specialists, including chefs, to debate ‘The Flexitarian Challenge’ – most importantly, the future of plant proteins beyond meat analogues. I think their potential is almost limitless, as long as we innovate with purpose – always working to meet unmet needs. And where does our own purpose fit in? We wouldn’t be where we are today, if we didn’t hold this strong line. Our purpose distinguishes us with potential recruits, colleagues, customers and consumers. ”

