Media information

February 9, 2021

**FOOD UNION CREATES A FUSION OF FLAVOURS THAT ATTRACT CONSUMERS IN THE NORDIC REGION**

In the world of ice cream treats, being able to deliver delicious vanilla, chocolate and strawberry-flavored ice cream is just the starting point for any consumer-focused company. For Food Union, a global scale ice cream and dairy producing and distributing group, crafting original products featuring unique flavors tied to local preferences becomes still more crucial given it is actively growing brands and delivering ice cream and other delicacies to a myriad of markets across Nordics, the Baltic states and into central and Eastern Europe.

Food Union Group is represented in Nordics by ice cream producers Premier Is and Isbjorn Is in Denmark and Norway respectively, and by ice cream door-step-delivery service companies Hjem Is and Den Norske Isbilen in Denmark and Norway respectively.

“Any company trying to entice customers to its offerings needs to show that it goes above and beyond: that it grasps their taste preferences and is able to deliver a constant stream of new, enticing and innovative products based on distinctive taste sensations. Food Union’s mission is to deliver products that delight the taste buds and warm the hearts of our customers,” said **Normunds Staņēvičs, CEO of Food Union Europe**, which supplies a wide array of icy treats to consumers that span multiple geographies. “What appeals most to a customer in Nordics may be quite different from what a Lithuanian or Romanian consumer might prefer. Our teams are unlocking new preferences based on research so that we understand those nuances and deliver something to each group that they find delectable.”

**Boldly Combining Tradition and Innovation**

Like many Northen Europeans, Norwegians love tart, salty licorice. So it’s no surprise that they have become avid consumers of Lakrispinne, introduced to the market by Food Union’s company Isbjorn Is and based on research it undertook into local market trends.

“Lakrispinne is based on a delicious vanilla ice cream made from rich cream produced in western Norway, soft licorice sticks topped off with an enticing licorice glaze,” said **Marvel Skreien Stigen, Head of Marketing and Communications at Isbjorn Is.** And while Norwegians cherish ice cream products with deep roots in traditional flavors and food traditions, they also demonstrate a market interest in sampling bold new flavors formed on a fusion platform built on modern tastes. That’s where we’re strategically focusing on consumer segmentation and growth across our brands.”

**Creating Frozen Food Flavours to Bridge the Seasons**

In Denmark, consumers share the Norwegian craving for salty licorice. In Copenhagen and beyond, they snap up Premier Is’s Bourbon Vanilla ice cream, which offers them the one-two punch of licorice sauce and coating. Flavours that are richer and strike a self-indulgent note tend to appeal to customers regardless of what season it is: Danish ice cream aficionados enjoy creamy Bourbon Vanilla as much in winter as summer.

In other cases, Food Union has discovered, Danes have a distinctive preference for consuming certain kinds of flavors at specific times of the year. “In the summer time it’s the water based ice cream which is preferred, while in colder seasons it’s ice cream made on cream which is popular. Children are keen on ice cream in untraditional formats and shapes, has a distinctive taste and a pinch on surprise. A good example is our Astronaut ice cream which has a gummy bear gum in the ice cream, and our new Popstar with poping pieces inside launched for 2020 Summer season and has become one of our best sellers,” said **Thomas Duholm Marcher, Head of Marketing and Innovations at Premier Is**

“Although Denmark is a relatively small country, there is also a big difference in taste preference depending on geographical location – East, West, South, North, big cities or countryside. In big cities we see that vegan and organic ice cream are growing together with fusion flavours such as mint and chocolate, berries and traditional cake inclusions. In countryside most popular ice cream items are nougat, vanilla with blackcurrants and traditional stracciatella cones. At the same time Ice cream cakes are used as dessert and especially in the western part of Denmark we still love the danish lemon mousse which is sold under the brand Polar,” adds **Thomas Duholm Marcher.**

**Sweet and Savoury Combine, Producing Premium Frozen Snacks**

Dobbel, the premium product line ice cream, which in 2020 was enhanced by the flavor of sea salted potato chips quickly became popular among Norwegian ice cream fans. “The new twist on flavour was intended to surprise but build on ingredients rooted in Norway’s historic preference for distinctive flavor combinations and combining tart or salty tastes with the traditional sweetness of ice cream. We are currently working on similarly distinctive offerings for 2021 Summer season,” adds **Marvel Skreien Stigen.**

**Distinct Regional Origins; Global Potential**

Food Union’s success can be traced to its ability to give each local and national business the freedom and flexibility to research and develop products that will resonate deeply with customers in their specific region.

“We need to ensure that we create new brands based on flavours and tastes that appeal to each market,” **says Food Union’s CEO, Mr. Stanevics**. “Our goal isn’t to replicate, but to innovate, to produce locally and to deliver a premium product based on each innovation.”

While each of those products, from Lakrispinne to Popstar and beyond, traces its roots to the taste preferences in an individual locality, Food Union aims to introduce each to consumers in new markets, tapping their potential to appeal to consumers worldwide. Building on its deep understanding of why residents of a particular region gravitate to specific products, Food Union wants each of those national or regional brands to create the same kind of “wow” response among customers elsewhere.

**ABOUT FOOD UNION**

Food Union is currently the leading ice cream producer in the Baltics and Denmark, and the group holds a strong market position in Norway, Romania, Russia and Belarus. A leading, innovative consumer goods company, Food Union develops local brands and delivers delightful products in the premium snacking, ice-cream and dairy categories.

Food Union Group is a dynamic player in the European dairy sector. They paved the way by developing and focusing on the acquisition of leading national brands across Europe. The Group is made up of two of the largest dairy and ice-cream companies inLatvia – *Rīgas piena kombināts* and *Valmieras pien*s. The Group also includes companies such as: Estonia’s and Lithuania’s largest ice cream makers *Premia TKH* and *Premia KPC,* the leading Danish ice cream producer *Premier Is* and Danish doorstep-delivery ice cream company *Hjem I*s, Norway’s ice cream company *IsbjørnIs* and doorstep-delivery ice cream company *Den Norske Isbilen*, Romanian ice cream maker *Alpin57Lu*x, ice cream company *Ingman Ice Cream* in Belarus, and ice cream company *Khladokombinat No. 1* in Russia.

The leading dairy group is backed by Hong Kong-based investment company [Meridian Capital Limited](https://meridiancapitallimited.com/), and one of Asia’s largest private capital firms, [PAG](https://www.pag.com/en/). They became Food Union shareholders in 2015 and 2018 in order to finance the construction of two dairy plants in China and facilitate the company’s dynamic expansion to this market.

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