

Van Eeghen Group: almost four centuries of strategic changes

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The Van Eeghen Group is now a functional food company from the Netherland, member of the Henokiens Association, as a 351 years old company. Founded in 1662 by Jacob van Eeghen, the Van Eeghen group started as a trading company, shipping wool, wine, salt, sugar in Baltic Sea, England, Mediterranean Sea and West Indies (see appendix 1). A typical quality of the company has been its strategy and capacity to change its activities numerous times whenever it felt the need to adapt itself to new circumstances. It has therefore subsequently expanded or contracted the size of its operations many times. However, it always kept its basic and main capability: understanding customer needs and market requirements and finding the best supply partners to match with them. The philosophy of the company is centered on continuity. Such a long term objective deeply influences the strategic decisions along its existence over the last four centuries.

In the seventies, they become leaders on the market of dehydrated food ingredients. Meanwhile, after having divested the dehydrated ingredients business in 2006 their core activity consists entirely of functional food ingredients: infant & clinical formulae and sports & nutritional supplements. Their customers comprise of small, medium and multinational companies mostly in Western Europe. Until recent the company was managed by Willem van Eeghen and the shareholders are still the Van Eeghen family.

Continuity philosophy and innovation

Dehydrated product history

During the early 1960's Van Eeghen commenced to invest in the niche market of dehydrated vegetables and culinary herbs. In those days dehydration, both by means of freeze drying and high temperature drying, was a new, unique and safe preservation method to apply to mass produced vegetables, herbs and fruits which regardless of crop seasons enables consumption year around. The dehydrated vegetables and herbs fitted in very well with VE's existing spice business as they could be targeted at the same customers. Simultaneously, the market of all these products was expected to grow along with the nascent convenience food market (dry soups and sauces, exotic meals, foreign influences and new eating habits).

Origins of these ingredients were mostly in developing/emerging countries in Asia and South America, but also in the USA and Eastern Europe. VE's sales activities soon expanded to all continents and VE stocked their products on various strategic locations. Eventually VE became one of the worldwide major players in this market.

As so often, niche markets after a period of time tend to turn into commodity markets where margins come under pressure and disequilibrium develops between profitability and risk. In our case these risks consisted of ever growing stringent product specifications, difficult to control production at origins (traceability from farm to fork)

and growing costs in order to control quality. All this eventually after 45 years amounted to eroding margins which finally led to VE's decision to disinvest from this market and wind down its European operations in 2006, followed by the sale of its equivalent activities Canadian a few years later.

Replication with functional food

Meanwhile, during early 1990's VE had invested in the newly developing functional foods market which had already commenced in Japan and the USA. Functional food ingredients describe meant to enhance individual health. It includes such products as vitamins, mineral, fatty acids like Omega 3, pre- and probiotics, etc. More information about the definition of functional food and the evolutions of the markets can be found in *appendix 2*.

The functional food replicates the dehydrated food story. VE was confident that these health enhancing products would become popular in Europe as well. It did so, on the basis of the following hypotheses:

- changing demography with an increasingly aging population prone to illnesses;
- Changing attitude towards prevention rather than cure of diseases;
- Higher degree of health consciousness amongst younger population;
- Privatization of health care and encouraging maintenance of health;
- Supplements are often consumed as a counterweight against eating of unhealthy foods (sugar and fats).

Thus VE's functional food ingredients Business Unit forms the beginning of yet a new cycle in the evolution of its niche activities. A new niche market which on this occasion has its roots in Japan and the USA. Indeed, Van Eeghen pioneered the market in Western Europe on the intuition that functional foods would eventually take off there as well. And indeed after a few years this market started showing steady growth rates and now has become common place in this part of the world. And as this market matures Van Eeghen continuously searches for those products possessing a niche character before they may turn into commodities.

Within the functional food ingredients market Van Eeghen chose to address two sectors: Infant Foods and Sport & Nutrition. The infant food market is difficult as it serves a highly vulnerable population. Total quality is required and no risk allowed. The number of baby food manufacturers of reasonable size worldwide remains limited (approx. 25) and therefore is highly concentrated. Most are located in Europe and the USA. The Netherlands is a large source as it is one of the largest milk powder producers. The infant food market is difficult to penetrate for new comers.

Van Eeghen diversified to a second niche: sport nutrition. This market is expanding enough to accommodate new entrants. Van Eeghen entered the market by developing new specialized functional ingredients with their clients. They are closely related to a research laboratory to develop prototypes and have adequate knowledge to comply with food safety regulations.

Van Eeghen's strategy on functional food can be summed up as follow: high quality products complying with European and American food regulations. They are able to

compete on costs/prices by outsourcing the production in low cost countries. They are also performing research to offer differentiated products. Finally, they are innovating to be ahead of the competitors. (See appendix 2: The evolution of functional food)

The functional food activity becomes the main activity of the company which is designed to be lean and highly adaptive. Lean as the company outsources all production activities. However, it handles logistics and storage to maintain traceability and to be able to guaranty quality. Adaptive as the main asset of the company is to be able to scan and identify quickly the needs of the customers, to work with them to develop and finalize the product formulation and to find the right producers. Today, the turnover of VE is about 15 millions euros, with an EBITA about 26-27% and 20 employees.

Van Eeghen competes on the traditional logistics criteria like delivering the right product just in time with a good supply chain management and storage capacities. It also targets high margin niches by sourcing new materials and by providing new product formulations which comply with food regulations. Finally, van Eeghen is moving to high intensive knowledge products, selling simultaneously the concept and the product as solutions to emergent problems. The proximity of Food Valley, a high quality food research cluster near the Agricultural University of Wageningen in the Netherlands, has been a key asset to Van Eeghen's innovation strategy.

Questions

The emergence of the functional food is now almost 20 years old. What next? The CEO of the company asks you to explore different avenues (developing niches to functional foods, moving from functional to "smart" food which includes more information, personal nutrition markets, ...) and to propose evolutions compatible with the philosophy of van Eeghen Group.

The genetic code of van Eeghen Group

Van Eeghen is a family business held 100% by the van Eeghen family since its inception 350 years ago. The genetic code of Van Eeghen is continuity. It has been a corner stone of the strategy: limiting risk, maintaining recovery capabilities in case of market slow down by limiting sunk costs and over investment within one market. The company may limit profits to maintain continuity and prefer adaptability to market creation. The company also keeps a reasonable degree of diversification to balance the risks.

Willem van Eeghen started as a CEO in 1989. He was nominated by his father who was the previous CEO. The transition has been very smooth, Willem's father managing a long and fruitful overlapping period before retiring. Willem has four kids who are training in management. The family tradition suggests hiring the elder son as the new CEO.

XXXXX exhibit genealogy of the van Eeghen family (one page – 100 years)

The choice of a new CEO in a non-family business follows generally a different process: non-executive directors are commissioned to manage the process which is technically handled by a consulting company which opens and advertises the position and selects potential candidates based on profiles and interviews. A short list is presented to the shareholders who finally decide.

Willem wonders which way to follow: either hiring his elder son who seems capable to run the business properly as he already set up his own company. Willem is willing to help him to continue van Eeghen Group and to transmit his know how; or to ask consultants to run the selection. It may end up with a CEO who does not belong to the van Eeghen family. It also supposes to have formal procedures and commitments on a short overlap period and official stepping down.

Question

Can you help Willem van Eeghen in his choice? Which is the best process? Under which conditions? To what extent being an Henokeins (see appendix 3) may influence the choice?

Appendix 1: The initial days

Jacob van Eeghen found the Van Eeghen Merchant Company in Amsterdam. The products sold are linen, linseed, wool, wine, timber, salt and sugar. They are sold in the Baltic, England, the Mediterranean and in the West Indies.



Christiaan van Eeghen

1705: Christiaan van Eeghen dies. His wife Suzanna takes over and leads the Business with success. And does so again when her eldest son dies early.

First succession crises of the company overcome.

1785: Van Eeghen provides loans to newly independent USA.

1792: Van Eeghen, through a newly founded venture called the Holland Land Company, acquires land in the states of New-York and Pennsylvania in order to diversify the business. They buy shares in new infrastructure ventures in the USA (*see also Wikipedia on Holland Land Company*)



Van Eeghen Company in the USA

1797: Founding of Bank Oyens & Van Eeghen. In the 18th and 19th century, Van Eeghen reduced risk with geographical diversification first (developing in Europe, North America and West Indies), and also by diversifying the activities. They started selling goods, especially food, during one century. Just after the period of the French revolution, Van Eeghen tried to reduce the risk of the French domination (Continental System) on Europe by developing the business in North American. Therefore, they start loaning in North America, and then founded a Bank. They also bought lands in New York and Pennsylvania and invested in new infrastructure ventures.

They keep doing this activity as business in Europe stopped during the Napoleonic wars. In parallel, they continued developing business in tobacco and cotton in North America. To sustain the trade with the America's during the 19th century, company invests in a new shipping fleet.



Later, with the introduction of steamships and accompanying huge investments, Van Eeghen withdrew from shipping (which never was its core business) and moved into niche markets. It has been reducing the company's exposure to crisis (1929).

The after WWII

1952: new import-export company founded in east Africa and founding of Kilombero sugar company, the beginning of the agro-food involvement.

1976: While the banking division has been sold (for legal reason) in 1965, Van Eeghen founded the International procurement and consulting company (co-operates with World Bank and UN financed projects in Africa and Far East). After the Second World War they start specializing in food ingredient products, especially the market of dehydrated spices, vegetables and herbs. Since the Second World War and until today, they kept investing in emerging markets or niche markets: they invested in import-export Company in the new countries that just got independence and then they invested in servicing company for project financed by the World Bank.

Appendix 2: Functional Foods 2.0: A Natural Evolution

The category has moved in some unexpected directions, but ultimately, consumers are demanding products that fit naturally into their lifestyles are convenient and taste good.

By Julian Mellentin, New Nutrition Business

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Over the last 20 years the term “functional foods” has evolved to be industry shorthand for the marketing of any food or beverage with health benefits. It’s not an expression that consumers use. And while in industry we can easily get excited about “the next hit ingredient,” consumers are driven by benefits. Ingredients only take off when consumers see the benefit as credible, and when the product is relevant to their lifestyles, available in a convenient format and tastes good.

‘Naturally Functional’

Functional foods have taken off in some unexpected directions. For example, there has been a confluence between health benefits and being “naturally functional”—now the most influential driver in functional foods. Here are the two best examples:

- 1. Coconut Water** has rocketed from zero in 2007 to a \$400 million market today in the U.S., where Vita Coco holds a 60% market share. Sales have surged both in Europe and the U.S. on the back of its strong image as an “all-natural” sports recovery beverage—“nature’s answer to Gatorade,” as one industry executive put it. When you use an ingredient with a strong “naturally functional” image you don’t need to worry about health claims. In Europe, where coconut water is not allowed to make any health claims, one of the biggest brands, Green Coco, saw sales jump 60%, “with no advertising, no marketing, no health claim,” as its CEO explained, driven solely by its positive image.
- 2. Almond Milk** is another category that has emerged from almost zero. U.S. sales of almond milk rose 51% in the year to \$497 million as of August 2013 (SPINS and Nielsen). By contrast, sales of soy milk slid by more than 12% to \$408 million.

The great nutritional profile and health halo of almonds (which in whole form can use an FDA-approved heart health claim) in the minds of consumers extends to most things that contain almonds, including almond milk. However, as an industry executive explained: “A single serving of almonds would have a very beneficial nutritional profile. But a serving of almond milk contains less than a single almond.” Put simply, almond milk is not the best way to get the health benefits of almonds. However, that’s not front-of-mind for consumers. It tastes good, it’s convenient and it has a health halo.

Functional Dairy: Dairy 1.0 to Dairy 2.0

The power of “naturalness” can be seen very clearly in the dairy category. Internationally, dairy has long been at the leading edge of functional food development, with brands such as Yakult and Danone Activia achieving global success. **Dairy 1.0**—the first wave of functional dairy products—was a two-decade-long effort to shoehorn ingredients such as plant sterols, omega 3s, conjugated linoleic acid (CLA), glucosamine and many others into dairy products in order to market medicalized benefits, such as lowering cholesterol and supporting heart health and joint health. The added ingredients provided the health benefit, rather than a “whole dairy food” product format.

Some attempts were very successful, such as probiotics. Others, such as marine omega 3s, were not. Among the reasons were: 1) ingredient was not a logical fit with the carrier (fish oil in yogurt); 2) the product didn’t deliver an effective dose (you can supply a full dose of probiotics in a yogurt easily enough, but a significant dose of omega 3s, magnesium, etc. may have a negative taste effect and turn consumers away).

But this period is over. The new direction is what some companies are calling “**Dairy 2.0**.” In this new wave, innovation is no-longer focused on positioning dairy as a competitor with dietary supplements. Instead, emphasis is being placed on:

- Ingredients and benefits that are a more logical and “easy-to-accept” fit with dairy;
- New and more interesting product formats—usually in the form of companies reinventing “old formats” or taking traditional, regional dairy products from one geography and launching them into new markets where they are “new and exciting,” but adapted to suit the tastes of the new demographics.

Here are three examples of Dairy 2.0 in action:

1. Greek Yogurt. An entrepreneur took what is an everyday and unexciting product in Europe and presented it as new and exciting to consumers in the U.S. under the brand Chobani. The Greek segment has grown to about \$1.6 billion in the U.S., from essentially nothing five years ago. Naturalness, great texture, a focus on great flavors and the perceived benefits of naturally high protein content have all contributed to the Greek success story. Danone launched its own Oikos brand in 2012; since then it has become the most successful new product launch ever in the U.S., according to IRI, with \$400 million in sales in 2013.

2. Kefir. Originated in Eurasia, where its digestive health benefits have been known for centuries, kefir was introduced to Americans by Lifeway Foods, Morton Grove, IL, which has created a successful business with \$100 million in sales in 2012.

3. Quark. A soft fresh cheese, quark is commonplace in many parts of northern Europe. In the last 12 months, its all-natural, high-protein, low-fat credentials have produced 100% growth in some markets. But it’s a little-known product in the U.K., where the Lake District Dairy Company, a farmer-owned co-op, has launched the U.K.’s first quark brand.

	DAIRY 1.0	DAIRY 2.0
Ingredient focus	Calcium Added science-based ingredients	Protein "Natural" ingredients that are easy to accept in dairy
Benefit focus	Zero fat/fat reduced Medicalized benefits (heart, blood pressure) Probiotics for immunity and gut health	Better taste and texture Natural benefits Weight management Sugar reduced Probiotics retain a place as they are a logical fit with dairy
Innovation focus	1. Take "bad" ingredients (specifically fat) out of existing product types 2. Add ingredients with a high science content to existing product types	1. Reinvent old product types 2. Bring unfamiliar product types from "far away" and present them in new markets as new and exciting new product types
Complexity	Complex: adding functional ingredients (sterols, omega 3s)	Simple: only added ingredients are the ones the consumer accepts as natural for dairy (protein for example) Probiotics are the only "complex" ingredient to have made the transition from Dairy 1.0 to Dairy 2.0, because after 20 years the consumer now accepts them as "natural" in dairy foods.
Consumer	Products that can be difficult to understand; High content of communication needed about ingredients and benefits	Simple products, easier to understand; High content of communication needed about new and unfamiliar types, re-assurance about tastes

Table 1: Characteristics of Dairy 1.0 and 2.0 Compared

Protein

Protein went "mainstream" in 2012 in the U.S., where General Mills' Nature Valley protein bar was one of the 10 most-successful new products, earning \$95 million in sales, according to IRI.

The Nature Valley brand has been one of the most successful growth stories. Launched back in 1975, it was marketed from the outset as "100% Natural" long before this idea became ubiquitous in our industry.

With more than \$740 million in retail sales, Nature Valley's growth rate of almost 30% over the period 2010-2012 is an amazing achievement for any brand.

Nature Valley was the first mainstream bar brand to seize the protein opportunity, launching its Protein Granola bar, with 10 grams of protein per 40-gram bar. The product boldly proclaims "Protein" on the front and features a circle around the 10 grams attribute below it.

The brand's strong "natural" identity in the mind of the mainstream consumer legitimizes the protein. "Consumers think 'If it's in Nature Valley it must be natural,'" as one executive said.

In the wake of this success, there has been a surge in launches of products featuring protein. At the moment, the dairy category is in the lead, according to Mintel's Global New Product Database (GNPD), with more "high protein" claims on new products than any other category (other than meats).

This trend is adding pressure on what was already a growing global demand for protein. We are likely to see companies increasingly experiment with protein forms other than the traditional mainstays of dairy and soy as they look for price stability, higher quality and sustainability.

Microalgae, for example, is attracting intense industry interest for its excellent nutritional profile; some varieties can be as much as 50% protein, as well as having essential fatty acids and more than 20 different vitamins and minerals.

In some parts of Asia it is an established part of the diet, but for western consumers, basic acceptance remains a challenge and that is not something that can be resolved overnight.

Netherlands-based algae producer Phycom is one of the companies working on this challenge. Its first step has been to create a bakery mix for fresh bread with microalgae integrated into the recipe, with 5% by weight *Chlorella pyrenoidosa* microalgae. Called Meerbrood, today it's produced by 125 Dutch bakeries; its success has led to requests for the Meerbrood mix from the Nordic countries, Germany, France, the U.K. and the U.S. It's a first step on the way to "normalizing" algae as a source of good nutrition, and enabling manufacturers in a variety of categories to use it. (For more on the Marine Nutraceuticals market, [click here.](#))

We are at Day 1 of a new market for protein. At the moment, it has the virtue of being seen as a "good ingredient" by a wide range of consumers willing to respond to a variety of messages about it, which, according to consumer research by a leading beverage company, include:

- Helps you meet your weight goals
- For a firmer, healthier body
- Balanced diet
- Feel fuller
- Energy to get through your busy day

Slow Energy

A number of factors have come together to make "slow energy" one of the key areas of interest for some companies, although most are still figuring out how to make the message work in practice. Among the three most important factors were:

1. The Diogenes Study. The benefits of both slow blood sugar response—also known as low glycemic index—and high-quality protein got a shot in the arm from a New England Journal of Medicine article, which detailed the results of the world's largest-ever diet study. Called Diogenes, it involved 14 universities and research institutes and investigated the optimum diet composition for preventing and treating obesity. Researchers found that high-protein, low-glycemic index (GI) diets were the most effective for weight management. The quality and scale of the study is slowly gaining media attention and it is already having an impact on food marketing.

2. Breakfast Transformation. Breakfast cereal is no longer convenient enough and breakfast itself is undergoing a shift, with urban dwellers—the majority of the world's population—increasingly looking for something that is:

- Convenient and easy to eat in a hurry
- Delicious
- Satisfying
- Provides an energy boost to "keep you going" all morning
- Healthy (or has a halo of health)

These changes have made the breakfast meal occasion ripe for “disruptive innovation.”

3. Kraft Belvita. Belvita is just such a disruptive innovation. Mondelez International—the new name for Kraft Foods—debuted its belVita Breakfast Biscuits in Europe in 2003, where they grew into a mega-brand, with \$400 million in sales. Launched in the U.S. in 2012, the cookies offering “sustained energy” became an instant success, with sales of \$67 million in 2012.

The idea behind Belvita was to meet the unmet breakfast need by providing sustained energy to fuel the body throughout the morning. A graphic on the side of the package in Europe reinforces the balanced breakfast message and adds: “They are carefully made and gently baked so that, as part of a balanced breakfast, the carbohydrates are regularly released over 4 hours to keep you going all morning. This has been proven in several clinical studies.”

The brand’s message reassures people they can eat sweet biscuits for breakfast and still feel virtuous by emphasizing slow energy-release carbohydrates. It was a formula that already proved successful in Europe, where the brand has benefited from an approval of the science underpinning its slow release energy claims by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). Fruit sugars, too, can use an approved slow release energy health claim in Europe.

It is slow release energy, not “diabetes,” that presents our industry with a big functional foods opportunity. Ingredion, maker of one of the ingredients in Belvita, has already recommended that manufacturers don’t make explicit connections between their products and diabetes. “If a healthy blood-sugar claim gives you an easy to understand message that consumers gravitate to, why put on a scary medical-sounding label?” said an executive. “You don’t need to put a medical diagnosis on it. It has to be friendly and easy to understand.”

Weight Management

The subjects of protein and “slow energy” are tied strongly to people’s desire to maintain a healthy weight. So you can say that people’s desire to maintain their weight by eating “regular foods,” rather than “specially formulated” foods, is now a driver across all food categories.

When you look specifically at clear weight management positioning, there’s no brand in the world that does it better than Kellogg’s Special K. In recent years, its growth rate has never dipped below 8% annually, despite a down economy. Sales in the U.S. alone have grown from \$1.1 billion in 2010 to \$1.38 billion in 2013. Globally, it’s a \$2 billion-plus brand.

Special K is based on no clever science or amazing ingredients; its success is based on a clear, consistent communications strategy, with a tangible promise of “drop a jeans size,” a promise backed by a full (and free) service of information, advice and motivational groups.

What’s more, Special K challenges the myth that a brand that works in one country won’t work in another. The positioning is the same whether it’s France or the U.S.—two very different countries—or Mexico or Dubai. The flavors are the same—with red fruits and chocolate (this last one developed for France originally) leading in most markets.

Digestion

For the past decade, digestive health has rivaled energy as one of the biggest and most important trends, ranking consistently among consumers’ top needs.

It has demographics on its side. The core consumer is 40+ and the largest growth will be among the growing number of people 60+.

The story so far has been dominated by probiotics, with Danone's Activia yogurt the world's biggest digestive health brand; but the opportunity is opening for other ingredients.

Many products now communicate that they deliver 20% of the RDA of fiber per serving. However, this message isn't a point of difference, as it's so widely used and there's little evidence that it does much for sales.

Much more successful has been General Mills' Fiber One, positioned as "the expert brand" for fiber, with its bars and cereals delivering 25-55% of the RDA per serving. It's a dose that enables people to "feel the benefit"—another key success factor. From \$35 million in 2005, the brand grew to \$420 million in 2010, according to IRI InfoScan data, and to \$500 million in 2013, when sales were up 8% over the previous year.

Other digestive health ingredients are emerging. One example is a French ingredients start-up that was spun off from a major multinational chemical company. Solactis has already had its GalactoFructose product—based on lactulose—approved for digestive health claims in foods and beverages in South Korea and Europe. One of the first significant applications of GalactoFructose is in Korea in a 100 ml, shot-style, fermented-dairy product called "Gut," which contains 5 grams of GalactoFructose. The claim enables a 40% higher price for Gut than a typical shot product.

Food vs. Supplements

Many companies have been misled over the last 15 years to think the functional food category must compete with supplements—offering the same benefits but in a food form. However, the biggest successes have come where functional foods and beverages have focused instead on benefits that are a strong and logical fit to food, or on benefits that supplements cannot yet provide.

Trying to carve out a slice of an already established supplements market has proven a hard road. The hype over joint health beverages for example—drinks offering the clinically effective dose of 1,500 mg of glucosamine and 200 grams of chondroitin sulphate—remains steady, even while sales of joint health beverages are in free-fall. The two leading U.S. brands, for example, had combined sales of \$50 million in 2010, plunging to \$20 million by 2013.

The reason is simple: the \$900 million joint health supplements market already has "share of mind" with consumers as the most effective way to obtain the benefit. It's also the cheapest, with the cost per day of supplements about 35% below that of beverages. In France, for example, magnesium milks were briefly marketed, and have largely disappeared, because French people were already spending \$110 million a year on magnesium supplements, which offered a higher (and more effective) dose than a glass of milk and at a lower cost per dose.

Foods and beverages cannot be a carrier for every benefit—taste, dose and format all play a role in success—and if the benefit the food is offering is already "owned" by a supplement category, the challenge becomes even greater, as supplements may be significantly cheaper per dose. It's better to focus on "food values" and "beverage values" and offer benefits where foods and beverages have a competitive advantage (as with dairy and protein), or seem "more natural" as a way of getting the benefit.

Asian Ideas Work in the West

Lastly, one of the great, exciting opportunities about functional foods is how ideas can be found in faraway places and made to work in totally new markets. It's a fact that some of the most successful ideas of the last 20 years are ones that originated in Asia, such as:

- Energy Drinks. Red Bull, first launched in Thailand in 1973, has created a \$50 billion category, worldwide. And it was first inspired by energy drinks launched in Japan in the 1950s.
- Energy Shots. 5-Hour Energy's 100 ml shot format, launched in the U.S. in 2007, has created a \$1.5 billion business in the U.S. But the idea is an old Asian one; energy shots first appeared in Japan in 1962.

Other Asian ideas that have succeeded in other markets include: probiotic dairy products, soy milk, green tea (and indeed black tea), Kombucha (a fermented tea drink with probiotics and yeast widely consumed for its health benefits in north Asia and already a \$300 million business in the U.S.).

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- See more at: http://www.nutraceuticalsworld.com/issues/2013-11/view_features/functional-foods-20-a-natural-evolution/#sthash.RlqdirH0.dpuf

To know more

<http://www.nutrition.org.uk/>

<http://www.food.gov.uk/>

http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/statistics/agri-food/canada_functional_foods_en.pdf

<http://www.fdin.org.uk/output/Brigid%20McKevith's%20Definitions.pdf>

Appendix 3 : The Henokiens

An association of family and bicentenary companies, the Henokiens intend to enlarge their family circle.

Henokiens Association membership criteria are:

- company longevity – a minimum age of 200 years
- permanence – the family must be owner of the company or the majority share holder - one member of the founder must still manage the company or be a member of the board – and the company must be in good financial health.

In addition, being modern is a final requirement.

Created in 1981, the objective of the Association is the development of its membership throughout the world around a common philosophy: the value of the concept of the family company, real alternative to the multinationals.

It is not a brotherhood, the sectors in which the members carry on their activities are in fact highly diversified: craft industries, trades, services, publishing, heavy industry...

Nor is it a businesses club (certain firms may even be competitors). The Henokiens do not exchange services, they exchange only ideas.

Why Henokiens?

In 1981, the idea of creating an association of bicentenary family companies came from the Chairman of Marie Brizard, a descendant of the creator (in 1755) of the first anisette. He decided to place it under the aegis of Henok (or Enoch) a name coming from the Bible.

Henok (or Enoch) was one of the greatest patriarchs. Cain's son and Methuselah's father, he lived before the flood, and was 365 years old when he ascended to Heaven without having died. After a year of research, Gérard Glotin, Chairman of Marie Brizard (with the help of 164 Chambers of Commerce and 25 embassy attachés) was able to identify 74 companies and among them made a selection of about thirty.

The first meeting took place in 1981 in Bordeaux. Since then, the Henokiens meet each year in a different country for their general meeting. For the year 2008 it was in Japan, 2009 in Switzerland and 2010 in Italy.

Each of the companies has a fascinating history. One can find at various times characters of legend and industrial adventures which could serve as inspiration for literature, television or film, all three media being great amateurs of dynasties.

Despite or perhaps because of their illustrious ancestors, the Henokiens are deeply rooted in the economic realities of the present and they manage their companies with talent, navigating between modernism and tradition, between know-how transmitted from the past and innovation or diversification.

Not resting on their laurels, always trying to do better than the previous generation, such are the guiding principles of the descendants. The development of their firms has been continuous.

But the power of a company is not a criterion to become an Henokien; preference is given to solidity.

That is why companies of very different sizes may be found among them, famous names or others less known by the general public.