



#FoodNextAfrica:

## The SA startup making ice cream from insect milk

**If creepy-crawlies give you the heebie-jeebies, then the ice-cream produced by Cape Town startup Gourmet Grubb, which is made using insects, may not be high up on your list of things to try. But the innovative group of entrepreneurs behind Gourmet Grubb are preparing for the (near) future – one which will require us to seek sustainable and nutritious food sources to feed the expanding population.**

Speaking at the FoodNext.Africa conference in Cape Town recently, Gourmet Grubb co-founder Leah Bessa explained that with the world's population projected to be 9,6 billion by 2050 – and more than half of that growth coming from Africa – traditional agriculture will struggle to keep up with the demand.

Armed with improved access to information, modern consumers have also become more mindful regarding what they put into their bodies and the effects of their consumption on the environment. In the search for eco-friendly food sources for the future, researchers have pinpointed insects as a viable alternative.

### Why insects?

Despite being pegged as a "superfood of the future", entomophagy – the human use of insects as food – is an age-old practice

in countries within Asia, South America and Africa.

"Over 2 000 insect species are eaten globally and form part of over 2 billion people's diets already. The Western culture is just slow to the uptake," noted Bessa, who holds a MSc in Food Science.

She explained that the global insect market is predicted to grow at a CAGR of 23,8% between 2018 and 2023. While currently it's valued at \$33 million, the market is predicted to grow to over \$1 billion in just five years.

The growth is driven by factors including food security, a growing population, decreasing food sources, increasing demand for nutrient-rich foods, the high cost of animal protein, and the fact that insects are sustainable to produce.

While traditional meat production is known to use a large chunk of the planet's

cultivable land, farming insects requires little land, water and resources. They're able to be farmed in both rural and urban environments and insects lend themselves to vertical farming. The insects used by Gourmet Grubb, namely Black Soldier Fly Larvae, do not produce greenhouse gases like typical agricultural animals, which are responsible for more than 60% of man-made greenhouse gases.

Insect breeding also doesn't experience the same animal welfare concerns associated with traditional livestock farming.

### Creating a market for insect-based food

While Bessa said that insects are still a novelty food source, having just entered the market in the US and Europe, it's the aim of Gourmet Grubb to turn insects

into a more commercial, everyday food source.

"Western consumers are not necessarily used to seeing where their food comes from. The way to incorporate insects into Westernised diets is to disguise it, so we've introduced it in a way that people can't see that they're eating insects necessarily," said Bessa.

And what better vessel to win over the average consumer than ice cream? Gourmet Grubb ice cream is made using Entomilk, which is the first insect milk produced globally. Only raw, natural products are used in the ice cream and it's available in enticing flavours like dark chocolate, peanut butter and chai latte. As somebody who's sampled the ice cream I can happily report that it was tasty, and I would never have known that insects were involved if Gourmet Grubb wasn't transparent about it.

Bessa explained that Entomilk is 5 times higher in protein than dairy; is rich in

minerals like iron, zinc and calcium; has an amino acid profile that fits human needs better than that of red meat, and is 100% lactose-free.

"The reason we've gone into dairy alternatives is because there is a need for nutritious and sustainable alternatives," said Bessa. Aside from catering to consumers with dairy allergies and intolerances, the time required to farm the insects used by Gourmet Grubb for Entomilk is measured in days, not months or years like other dairy or dairy alternative products.

While the dairy alternative market is growing due to the rise of veganism and plant-based diets, Bessa pointed to the emergence of the term Entoveganism, which refers to a lifestyle based on sustainable veganism boosted by the consumption of insects as food for protein and nutrition.

With no local market for insect-based foods to speak of at this point, Gourmet

Grubb is faced with the unique challenge of creating one. To do this they're focusing their efforts on building a brand that's honest and transparent, and informing consumers about the health and sustainability benefits of insects as a food source.

Alongside that, Bessa said smart product development is vital. "We knew we had to bring a product onto the market that when people taste it, it changes what they think about eating insects. The ice cream is just a vehicle to get consumers to try it – to demonstrate the palatability and the versatility of Entomilk, and to break down barriers and remove the association most people have around insects."

"Ultimately we want to introduce Entomilk as a healthy and environmentally conscious dairy alternative for the future. So we've created a brand that speaks very much to what consumers want right now, which is honest, transparent and ethical practices." – *bizcommunity*

## Ice Cream from around the world

Getting ice cream right in 2018 is a hard business. The "perfect ice cream" is a mythical beast expected to be moreish and indulgent, while having a permissible health halo. It has to play with texture and carry that unexpected "wow" factor that will make it go viral on social media, but it should also adopt a transparent approach to ingredient sourcing and stand up to consumers' scrutiny.



Using Mintel's Global New Products Database (GNPD), we look at 10 recent ice cream launches that truly embrace current and future trends.

### Halo Top, Cinnamon Roll Ice Cream, US

Perhaps the biggest news story in the ice cream industry in 2017, this low-calorie, added protein product became the best-selling ice cream in the US over a four week period in July 2017. It's vegan, low in sugar,

fat and calories, but it still offers a range of fun and decadent flavours.

### Snow Monkey Cacao Superfood Ice Treat, US

This gluten and dairy-free ice cream is positioned as "better-for-you". It claims to contain more fibre than four bowls of oatmeal, more protein than three eggs and more iron than a steak. It's also described as nutritious, delicious, sustainable, vegan and paleo.



### Over The Moo I Fell for Caramel Coconut Milk Ice Cream, Australia

Vegan ice cream is trying to shake off its slightly bland reputation by prioritising indulgence over health messages. This Australian brand uses indulgent language on-pack to convey a decadent appeal of its coconut-based ice cream, eg "oozing with ripples of salted caramel sauce".

### Morinaga The Crepe Chocolate & Vanilla Crepe Ice Cream, Japan

Ice cream is a rich area for innovative textures. Consumers want consumption experiences that appeal to all of the senses, not just taste and sight, and they want to feel wholly stimulated with the act of eating. This Japanese concoction comes in a chewy crepe instead of a wafer cone and features crunchy biscuits and chocolate.

### Foxy's Rocky Road Less Travelled Ice Cream, UK

Also jumping on the health bandwagon, this ice cream combines the indulgent appeal of chocolate and marshmallow, but it is also packed with over 5 billion probiotics, tapping into the gut health buzz.

### Noona's Toasted Rice Ice Cream, US

As ethnic ice creams such as Japanese mochi and Thai rolled ice cream become increasingly popular, brands have an opportunity to experiment with more international innovations. This Korean-inspired product comprises slowly-toasted premium rice steeped into fresh cream. It's inspired by Noo-Roong, the caramelised layer of crunchy rice that forms on the bottom of a pan of cooked rice, which is a traditional Korean rice snack.

### Le Sorbet Pitaya Cream Sorbet, Brazil

Flavoured with pitaya – or dragon fruit – this sorbet is sweetened with erythritol, just like Halo Top. It contains coconut oil, which provides a slower melting point, a smooth texture and a subtle coconut flavour.

### Wall's Cornetto Disc Rainbow Pop Ice Cream, Thailand

As mash-ups and the desire for sensory experiences become more popular, the good old popping candy is making a huge comeback in food innovation. This toffee flavoured ice cream is topped with a chocolate disc encrusted with multicoloured popping candy.

### Big Gay Ice Cream, US

From a humble ice cream truck in New York to a number of popular ice cream parlours and even a cookbook, packaged pints are a natural evolution for Big Gay Ice Cream. Taking mix-ins to the next level, this vanilla ice cream with blueberries contains chunks of pie crust in a product that blurs boundaries with the wider dessert category.

### Proud & Punch Paging Dr Green and Berry Passionate Variety Pack Mini Pops, Australia

With just 27 kcal per stick and flavours that seem inspired by detox juices, these mini pops are free from added sugar and are made with 100% Australian fruit and vegetable. Paging Dr. Green features Granny Smith apple, Packham pear, spinach and lime, while Berry Passionate is made with Packham pear, raspberry, strawberry & passionfruit. – [www.mintel.com](http://www.mintel.com)

