Press release

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#AnugaFoodTec2027

Producing liquid variety efficiently: Anuga FoodTec shows flexible system concepts for liquid food

Hybrid process engineering on the advance. Cologne trade fair shows the appropriate upstream and downstream equipment

Whether sauces, dressings, dairy products or plant-based alternatives: liquid food today goes well beyond classic beverages. The challenge for manufacturers: the most varied raw materials, whether in liquid, powder or paste form, must be precisely dosed and stably processed. Under the key theme of "Navigate Complexity. Smart. Safe. Sustainable.", Anuga FoodTec is reflecting the entire process chain from 23 to 26 February 2027: from raw material preparation through mixing and homogenisation to thermal processing and filling.

The present requirements for flexible process systems become clear with the manufacture of plant-based products on the basis of oats, soy, rice or nuts. Milling and chopping already provide the foundation here for particle size, mouthfeel and the subsequent processing. During subsequent mixing, high powder ratios must often be incorporated without clumps, and oils, fats and functional ingredients must be distributed evenly.

"New raw materials and shorter product cycles always mean stricter requirements for the process systems. At Anuga FoodTec, the exhibitors show how various processing steps can be flexibly connected with one another and adapt to changing recipes“, says Roland Thiemann, Director Anuga FoodTec.

Between recipe and process control

How differently such solutions can be designed in practice is shown by the system concepts of ProXES and Glass. Depending upon the application, ProXES combines processing steps like milling, cutting, mixing, homogenisation, heating and cooling in batches or continuous systems. In the case of Glass, the focus is on flexibly configurable mixing and process systems. They can process liquid, paste and high-viscosity products and, depending upon the tool arrangement, both gently mix and intensively chop, disperse or emulsify. The system spectrum extends from laboratory and small systems to industrial vacuum process systems with volumes of up to 2,700 litres.

Which system structure is suitable depends upon, among other aspects, product variety, throughput, available space and investment strategy. Batch systems are primarily advantageous for frequently changing recipes, smaller production quantities and a broad variety of variants. Several process steps like mixing, heating and cooling can be combined with one another in compact all-in-one systems.

Anuga FoodTec
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Continuous systems are on the other hand designed for high throughputs and consistent product quality. That such processes can also be realised at a large industrial scale is shown by ProXES with systems for the manufacture of full-fat-mayonnaise, which, depending upon the size, can achieve throughputs of up to 7,200 kilograms per hour.

"Manufacturers that enter into new fields with plant-based products, and especially startups, are confronted with a full range of questions: which process parameters must be adjusted for a scale-up, and how can texture, keepability and flavour also be maintained with high throughputs? At Anuga FoodTec, exhibitors show which solutions are available for this“, says Carola K. Herbst, Deputy Managing Director of the Competence Center Agriculture and Food of the German Agricultural Society (DLG.)

One line for two worlds

Among the trends also reflected at Anuga FoodTec are hybrid lines for the manufacture of classic dairy products and plant-based alternatives on the same system. Many processing steps are similar – from formulation, homogenisation and thermal processing through fermentation and cooling to fruit dosing and filling. Of decisive importance is laying out the line to suit the respective more sophisticated process. Plant-based recipes often require a more intensive mixing technology, adapted temperature programmes and, depending upon the fibre or particle ratio, a suitable heat exchanger.

The benefit of hybrid lines lies in higher utilisation and greater product flexibility. Existing systems can be expanded to this purpose through additional or exchanged components, changed process parameters and adjusted CIP programmes. The required flexibility thereby affects not only different raw material bases, but also the texture of the products. That liquid food does not of necessity need to be homogenous is shown by continuous lines for chunky products. Depending upon the execution, particles with diameters of up to 25 millimetres can be processed.

Securely controlling product flows

The systems presented on the Cologne fair grounds are supplemented by the appropriate upstream and downstream equipment. This includes pumps that securely and gently transport the product between the individual process steps. Hygienic axial-flow pumps, like those shown by, among others, Fristam, Jung Process Systems, CSF Inox and INOXPA, cover a broad spectrum of applications: they are suited for low-viscosity but also high-viscosity, shear-sensitive or chunky products. A retrofit project of Jung Process Systems shows the practical uses: ten threaded spindle pumps replace the existing helical rotor pumps in delicatessen production. The new aggregates achieve outputs of up to ten cubic metres per hour and transport products ranging from ketchup to high-viscosity mayonnaise as well as chunky sauces. They also carry out the CIP process.

However, the secure mastery of complex liquid food processes is not concluded with conveyance alone. Automation and monitoring systems coordinate the product

routes between the individual system parts, record process data and document production. Product losses, product changes and CIP times as well as temperature and capacity stability can be monitored in this way. Deviations thus become visible earlier and recipe changes more reproducible.

Liquid food in the specialised programme

The supporting programme of Anuga FoodTec also addresses this area of focus. The Innovation Stage is dedicating 25 February 2027 completely to the "Processing of Liquid Food". In focus are technological and strategic questions along the entire value creation chain - also including the themes of water and energy efficiency as central adjusting screws of resource-conserving production. Complementing this, an around one-hour guided tour leads to select solutions for liquid and viscous foods.

Koelnmesse – industry trade fairs for the food technology sector: Koelnmesse is an international leader in organising trade fairs in the field of food and beverage processing. Anuga FoodTec, ISM Manufacturing (formerly ProSweets Cologne) and ISM Ingredients are established, world-leading trade fairs, hosted in Cologne/Germany. In addition to the events at its Cologne headquarters, Koelnmesse also stages further food technology trade fairs with different sector-specific areas of focus and content in key markets across the world, including Brazil, Colombia, India and Italy. These global activities enable Koelnmesse to offer its customers bespoke events and leading regional trade fairs in a variety of markets, thus creating the foundation for sustainable international business. Koelnmesse is also ideally positioned in the field of food and beverages with its leading international trade fairs Anuga and ISM and its global network of satellite events.
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