

Team Arla – InnovateFood Challenge 2017

InnovateFood Challenge is a case competition for students and graduates held for the first time in Aarhus. With over 2000 applications only 30 top-qualified and motivated students made it through to the final competition held 29th of August to 1st of September 2017.

The Arla Challenge

Six companies participated, among others Chr. Hansen, KMC and Arla. The Arla Challenge **“How to secure relevance of dairy in the sustainable diets of the future?”** put the five students on Team Arla to the test. The students were also given valuable insights and inputs from creative consultants from DesignIt, big data experts from IBM, as well as an in-depth introduction from Arla themselves.

The company representatives from Arla, Elin J. Boll , PhD, Nutrition Specialist, Global Nutrition, R&D and Anna-Karin Modin-Edman, Sustainability Manager elaborate about their incitement for participating: *“To be part of InnovateFood gave us an opportunity to meet and interact with bright minds of the future, and a possibility to better understand their drivers and motivations. For Arla, it is important to be constantly challenged in order to continue to develop and innovate - the setup of InnovateFood provided this possibility”*.

Team Arla

The team was composed of five students who were given five different roles: Innovation, Global Nutrition, Digital Marketing, Business Developer and Sustainability/Innovation. The roles represented the students' academic or professional competences, and each student was asked to do a personality test before arriving in Aarhus, in order to compose a strong and complimentary team.

Mads Kinch Clemmensen, head of the recruitment process and director of Foodjob Nordic explains; *“It has been overwhelming to see so much talent joined for this event. All students have been extremely motivated and have applied for this competition as an actual job position. We asked them to write a motivated cover letter, and tell us why food innovation is their passion and what they can contribute with in this type of innovation collaboration.”*

The student in charge of Innovation and sustainability on the team was Gro Koldborg Lundsvig from Denmark. She talks about her experience on team Arla: *“It has been a special experience and it has been very exciting to get to work with a real case – not just a theoretical concept. My wonderful team and I worked very well together and we got a good and usefull feedback from our company Arla. We used a lot of time on gaining a good understanding of Arla as a company and also understanding the task we had to compete. When this was clear we quickly found a solution to our challenge”,* Gro says.

The solution – “The Milk Bar”

Team Arla came up with the solution to create a “Milk bar” based on their research among young people. They wanted to create a concept that could contain both marketing, distribution, production, realization and design. The Milk bar should therefore be a concept store where both milk and other dairy products could be bought and consumed. In this way, the team found that dairy products could be secured in the future.

Kristian Østerling Eriknauer, Vice President of Corporate Responsibility at Arla, thinks there are definitely opportunities in participating in these kinds of competitions: *“Arla Foods believes that solutions are best created in collaboration with others - and Innovatefood offers the opportunity to develop ideas together with students, professional business people and science in a joint approach.”*

Also Gro is very content about the opportunities and new perspectives that this competition has given her:
“The entire experience for me personally has given me a better understanding of the things I can contribute with in a professional environment. I now know that the creative processes we went through in this challenge are interesting and stimulating to me and I would really like to work in this environment in the future.”