



December 1, 2015

Ashland supports rise of the gluten-free baked goods market in Europe

BeneceTM HPMC hydrocolloid, demonstrated to improve the volume, softness, and crumb structure of gluten-free bread, is presented at the Food Ingredients Europe exhibition

WILMINGTON, DE - Gluten-free foods, established approximately 15 years ago to provide consumers with celiac disease additional food choices free of wheat, barley, and rye, today have become a mainstream product category. Last year, food and beverage companies introduced more than 20,000 products into the global marketplace with a gluten-free label designation.

Ashland Specialty Ingredients, a commercial unit of Ashland Inc. (NYSE: ASH) and a major producer of hydrocolloids, is helping the gluten-free baked goods industry to produce products every consumer will enjoy. At the Food Ingredients Europe exhibition, Ashland is demonstrating how one hydrocolloid ingredient improves both the qualitative and quantitative attributes of gluten-free foods such as bread.

"Rapidly growing demand in Europe and throughout the world is giving rise to new opportunities to use highly functional hydrocolloids to improve the eating experience for all consumers of gluten-free baked goods," said Maxine Weber, global marketing manager, nutrition, Ashland Specialty Ingredients. "Only one percent of the population is estimated to have celiac disease, yet as many as 30 percent of consumers are estimated to buy at least one gluten-free food product."

Hydrocolloids, derived from plant sources and known within the food industry as ingredients that influence texture or viscosity, also serve to restore the functional attributes of gluten-free baked goods.

"Typically, bakers will use xanthan gum, guar gum, cellulose gum, or locust bean gum as a replacement for gluten in gluten-free baked goods. However, food scientists have published studies over the past few years that suggest quantitative attributes, such as bread loaf volume, is improved when modified cellulose serves as the replacement for gluten in bread recipes," Weber explained.

She said that hydrocolloids such as Ashland's BeneceTM HPMC modified cellulose also improve the softness of bread and the structure of crumbs.

"Now more than ever, this hydrocolloid is accepted by popular bread and food merchants for the sensational qualities it brings to gluten-free bread," Weber added.

From Science to Sensational

Ashland, a strategic supplier of hydrocolloids that improve the functionality and allure of products such as low-fat creamy toppings, dairy and beverage products, syrups and sauces, and baked goods, is staffed by food scientists with expertise in food chemistry. Understanding how hydrocolloids function in foods at a molecular level, Ashland scientists design the ingredient solutions required to control rheology, volume and moisture, improve texture and mouthfeel, stabilize prepared foods, deliver great taste, and maintain visual allure.

For more information about Ashland's ingredient portfolio that enable the food industry to move today's culinary trends to commercial scale with ease and efficiency, visit Ashland at the Food Ingredients Europe exhibition today through December 3, at Ashland Stand 6M119, or on the web at www.ashland.com/food-beverage.

About Ashland Specialty Ingredients

Ashland Specialty Ingredients is the leading global producer of cellulose ethers and a global leader in vinyl pyrrolidones. It offers industry-leading products, technologies and resources for solving formulation and product-performance challenges. Using natural, synthetic and semisynthetic polymers derived from plant and seed extract, cellulose ethers and vinyl pyrrolidones, as well as acrylic and polyurethane-based adhesives, Specialty Ingredients offers comprehensive and innovative solutions for today's demanding consumer and industrial applications. Key customers include: pharmaceutical companies; makers of personal care products, food and beverages; manufacturers of paint, coatings and construction materials; packaging and converting; and oilfield service companies.

About Ashland

Ashland Inc. (NYSE: ASH) is a global leader in providing specialty chemical solutions to customers in a wide range of consumer and industrial markets, including adhesives, architectural coatings, automotive, construction, energy, food and beverage, personal care and pharmaceutical. Through our three business units - Ashland Specialty Ingredients, Ashland Performance

Materials and Valvoline - we use good chemistry to make great things happen for customers in more than 100 countries. Visit ashland.com to learn more.

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