

## **Nordic Food Lab to serve insect snacks at first global conference on edible insects**

May 15 2014, by Prof.dr. M (Marcel) Dicke

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The famous Nordic Food Lab from Denmark will be serving a number of unusual insect snacks during the first global conference on edible insects, organised by Wageningen University and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). On 15 May, the non-profit research organisation from Copenhagen, which aims to promote diverse and tasty food, will be offering delegates a range of

insect delicacies at the start of the conference dinner.

Nordic Food Lab conducts research into new food alternatives on the basis of local availability. Insects play an important part in their research. The researchers focus on specific preparation methods to turn the [insects](#) into tasty dishes. The insects being used include crickets, grasshoppers, moths and bee larvae. Various cooking techniques are explored for each insect, from frying to fermenting and from boiling to frothing. The aim is to expand the range of flavours and develop new ideas and methods that will satisfy even the greatest connoisseurs.

Insects have a surprising pallet of flavours. In an interview in a recently published book entitled *The Insect Cookbook - Food for a Sustainable Planet*, René Redzepi, top chef in the world's best restaurant Noma (also in Copenhagen but independent of the Nordic Food Lab), recalls his reaction when he first tasted a meal consisting of ants from the Amazon. He had what he describes as a 'wow moment', and was amazed that such tiny creatures could produce such a fantastic taste sensation. Since then, he has used indigenous Danish insects in many of his dishes. Now that culinary research institutes like Nordic Food Lab and top restaurants like Noma are using insects, they are literally starting to appear on our menus.

## **First global conference**

The first global conference on edible insects, 'Insects to feed the World' from 14-17 May, highlights the latest developments in scientific research, entrepreneurship, gastronomy and policy about the use of insects for feeding both humans and animals. The 450 delegates from more than forty countries will present their research data, visions and ideas about the huge potential of insects and opportunities for businessmen and governments to start farming these 'mini livestock' for the production of animal protein and healthy oils. The basic principle is

that insects will generate a sustainable solution to the increasing demand for animal protein caused by an ever-growing world population.

Wageningen UR and FAO are organising the international 'Insects to feed the World' conference in Conference Centre De Reehorst in Ede.

Two billion people have been eating and enjoying insects for decades, just like people eat prawns in the Western world. The *Insectenkookboek* (Atlas Contact 2012) and *The Insect Cookbook – Food for a Sustainable Planet* (Columbia University Press 2014) written by the Wageningen authors Arnold van Huis, Henk van Gorp and Marcel Dicke, contain more than thirty recipes that anyone could make at home. The ingredients are on sale in Dutch delicatessens, warehouses and online. In addition to recipes the Cookbook has ample background information and interviews with influential people like Rene Redzepi and Kofi Annan.

Provided by Wageningen University

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