

First bag of chips from fully automatic chip machine

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Dutch start-up Caenator, in collaboration with StartLife and Wageningen University & Research Centre, presented a new generation of fully automatic chip vending machines. On 2 September, in the Restaurant of the Future on the Wageningen Campus, the President of the Executive Board of Wageningen UR, prof. Louise Fresco, tried the first bag of chips from the machine. By doing so, she gave the starting shot for the

first market test.

In the presence of the press, Louise Fresco took the first bag of chips from the machine. After paying one euro and a single click on the 32-inch screen, the machine immediately started to deep-fry the fresh chips. Mayonnaise, curry ketchup or ketchup, a fork and some salt are supplied separately in a box.

High-tech chip machine

Caenator developed and produced the fully automatic [chip](#) machine in close [collaboration](#) with StartLife and Wageningen UR. The machine is a combination of high-tech and astonishing simplicity. For the first time, the chip machine makes it possible to obtain a freshly fried portion of chips fully automatically, at any time of day. The chip machine fries fresh chips in 110 seconds and is already profitable if it fries 40 portions of chips a day. Moreover, it is soundless, odour free and safe.

The machine's magnetic lock is opened using a digital key. The chip reservoir, the internal transport system, the frying unit and the controller. The freezer compartment has room for 25 kg of frozen chips. Via an ingenious system, the chips are weighed and are held ready for frying in a refrigerated area. After being fried, a lift transports the chips to the dispenser. A double door separates the hot section of the machine from the freezer, the sauces and the screen. The latter was developed in close collaboration with specialists from Wageningen UR.

Caenator has applied for two patents. One for the chip distribution system, which does not break or mash the chips, and one for the odour scrubber. The vapour that is released is scrubbed twice.

Prototype

The prototype is currently installed in the Restaurant of the Future on the Wageningen Campus. Together with Sodexo (the caterer) and other partners, the machine is now being tested on the public. Interest has been shown in the chip machine from both home and abroad, says Bastiaan Roest from Caenator: "Caterers and bar and restaurant owners see the machine as a way to retain or increase their turnover. Public transport companies see the machine as a way to make waiting less annoying. For various budget hotels, it is a way to offer a service to their guests 24/7."

Technical innovation

For the technical innovation, Caenator collaborated closely with Wageningen UR and its partners in the Food Valley region. Hans van Trijp, Professor of Marketing and Consumer Behaviour at Wageningen University, calls the chip dispenser an interesting product. "It creates the opportunity in a new, out-of-doors, setting to be less dependent on staff".

The business case was developed in collaboration with StartLife, a Wageningen based organisation dedicated to serving starting, innovative entrepreneurs in the agro, food and living environment sectors. The entrepreneurs behind the Caenator concept were coached and financially supported in the start-up phase by the StartLife incubation programme. Jan Meiling, director of StartLife is proud that their programme has been able to contribute with coaching and financial support to this successful market introduction. "Caenator is currently looking for strategic partners."

Provided by Wageningen University

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