

“FINEST Food” Programme for Local SME food manufacturers Information Sheet

FINEST Food Programme in partnership with Singapore Food Manufacturers’ Association (SFMA) and SPRING Singapore

Background

The FINEST Food programme aims to build capability among food manufacturing industry with knowledge and skills to develop healthier, functional food products, to address nutritional and health needs of the Singapore population, like an aging population, obesity and chronic diseases like diabetes, high blood pressure and heart health.

It is a tri-partite initiative helmed by HPB’s Centre of Excellence (Nutrition), in collaboration with enterprise development agency, SPRING Singapore, and Singapore Food Manufacturers’ Association (SFMA), to drive the co-innovation of healthier functional food solutions with the food industry in Singapore.

Harnessing on the food science and engineering expertise of the Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs) like, the Food Innovation and Resource Centre (FIRC@SP), Temasek Polytechnic and Republic Polytechnic, the programme, as its name suggest catalyses the development of Functional, Innovative, Nutritious, Effective, Science-based and Tasty Food.

Roles of each party : HPB, SPRING, SFMA

HPB’s Centre of Excellence for Nutrition (CoEN) seeks to be a leading regional industry-oriented Food & Nutrition Centre to drive the co-innovation of functional healthier food solutions with the food industry in Singapore. It will identify key and emerging areas of nutritional concern in Singapore to provide guidance to the food industry in the development of healthier functional foods. The new Healthier Choice Symbol grant would be given to companies to encourage the development of healthier functional products.

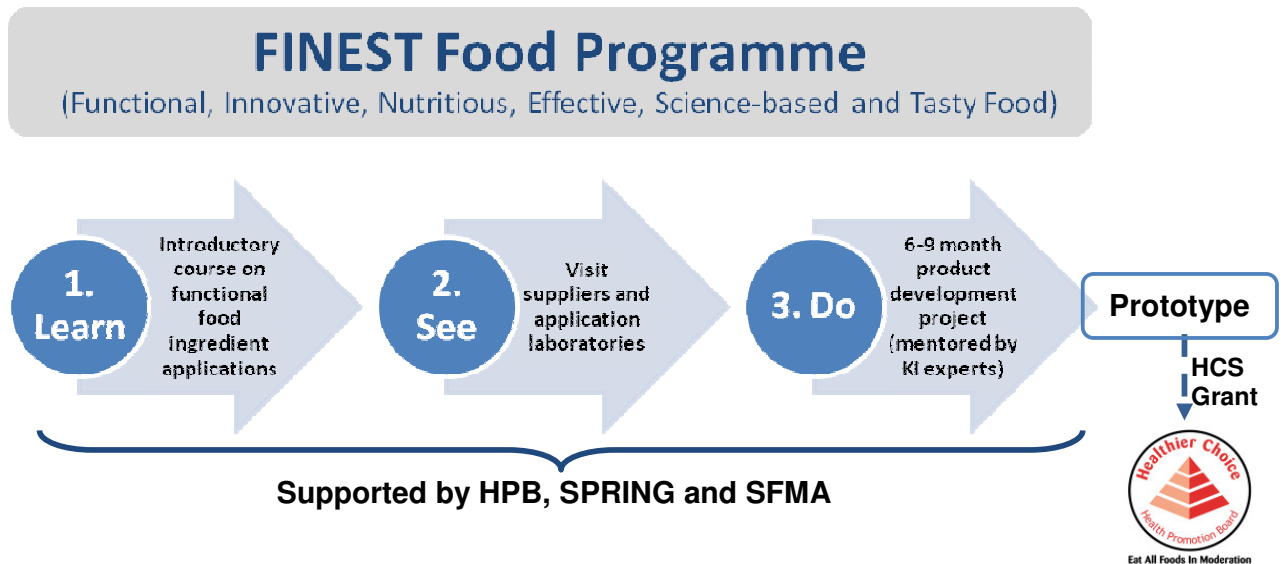
SPRING Singapore is the enterprise development agency responsible for helping Singapore enterprises grow. As the lead agency for the food sector, SPRING Singapore work with partners to help enterprises in financing, capability and management development, technology and innovation, and accessing new markets. Companies interested to create and develop innovative food products can apply for support through the Technology Innovation Programme and Innovative Voucher Scheme.

SFMA is an active trade association formed by members of local food manufacturers with the purpose of developing and promoting the local food manufacturing industry. Its mission is to act as a bridge between relevant government authorities and food manufacturers to respond effectively to the

government's policies and initiatives to promote the development of the food industry. SFMA will continue to be a conduit reaching out to, providing platforms, and driving initiatives among the food industry community to develop healthier, functional food products.

Programme Overview

The programme comprises of three phases :



Timeline

The first run of the FINEST programme will commence February 2012. More details on registration, programme outline, can be obtained from the Healthier Choice Symbol Programme website:

<http://www.hpb.gov.sg/foodforhealth/article.aspx?id=2780&specialgroup=Food+%26+Beverage+Industry>.

Scope of healthier functional food development projects

Priority areas are evaluated on a year by year basis, in response to the nutritional and health needs of the population, primarily to address gaps in the supply of healthier foods.

For projects commencing in 2012, the priority areas for health and nutrition are:

1. Elderly and Aging

- Fortification with Omega 3, Calcium, Vitamin B6, B12, Vitamin D
- Protein

2. Obesity and Diabetes management

- Low glycemic index (GI) Whole-grain products
- Reduced calorie products
- Sugar replacers and alternatives (excluding intense sweeteners)

3. Chronic Disease management

a. Hypertension (e.g. Sodium reduction)

Food categories

- i. Sauces, paste, bullions, soups, recipe mixes, convenience meals
- ii. Canned and processed foods
- iii. Noodles
- iv. Surimi based products

b. Heart health

- i. Replacement of saturated fatty acids with unsaturated fatty acids,
- ii. Cholesterol-lowering active ingredients

Definition of “Functional Foods”

There is no universally agreed definition of ‘functional foods’. However, the generally accepted working definition can be taken as

“Food ingredients or composition that may provide a health benefit beyond basic nutritional value”ⁱ

For clarity, the health benefit should translate to address key public health issues listed above e.g. Obesity, chronic disease management, aging population. These may include incorporating bioactive ingredients into mainstream food products, improving current processing technologies and platforms to achieve the functionality. Some categories are listed below

a. Phytochemical and Botanical extracts

e.g natural pigments, phenolics, polyphenols, thio compounds, phytosterols etc.

b. Zoochemicals (dietary components found in animal sources)

e.g. Omega 3 Fatty acids, bioactive proteins and peptides

c. Probiotics (live organisms which can confer a specific health benefit when administered in adequate amount to a host (FAO, WHO 2001)

e.g *Bifidobacterium*, *Lactobacillus* species

In addition to the priority areas, projects are also evaluated based on

i. Public health impact

- a. Product aligned within key public health concerns mentioned above
- b. Widely consumed by population

ii. Cost effectiveness and value

- a. Affordable by general population for the value-added benefit

iii. Market potential of product

- a. High potential to be exported
- b. Commonly found and consumed across Asia

iv. Innovativeness and novelty

- a. Unique, first of its kind, demonstrates a significant technological breakthrough

Contact Information

Companies interested in taking part in the programme can contact the following below

Health Promotion Board
Center of Excellence, Nutrition
Adult Health Division
Email : hpb_nutrition_Dept@hpb.gov.sg

EnterpriseOne
www.enterpriseone.gov.sg
Hotline: (65) 6898 1800
(Mon – Fri: 8:30 am – 5:30 pm, excluding Public Holidays)

Singapore Food Manufacturers' Association
Address: 7, Teo Hong, Rd, Singapore 088324
Tel: +65 6221 2438
Fax: +65 6223 7235
Email: enquiries@sfma.org.sg
Web: www.sfma.org.sg

ⁱ Food Standards Australia New Zealand
(<http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/scienceandeducation/publications/annualreport/fsanzannualreport20052006/ourregulatorymeasures2006/foodstandardsdevelop3352.cfm>)