



PODCAST: THE FUTURE OF FOOD

AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

Christina Senn-Jakobsen: Nobody loves nature more than the Swiss and yet we are the black sheep of Europe when it comes to food waste. We waste almost double of the average here. And it's not because we want to damage the planet, it's because we don't know we do that, and we don't know it better. So, here we need digitalization. We need a digital tool to help the households understand.

Intro: This is a podcast from Accenture.

Stephan Lendi: You're listening to the Digitaltag Podcast, about the Future of Food and how to co-create for systemic change in the food sector. Now, this is a podcast by Accenture.

I am Stephan Lendi, today's host as we delve into the future of food as we get to know the actors who shape the future food value chain. From farmers to companies to institutions redefining how we grow, how we process, how we package and how we consume our food. Down to governments who set our food policies and retailers who shortlist the products we buy. And last but surely not least - the role of the consumer in driving new markets. Now more than ever we are living in a complex world. Climate change, geopolitical, economic, and demographic developments are all interconnected drivers of the short- and long-term need for innovation in the food realities we live in. If we fast forward to the future of food, these external drivers short- as well as long-term must be accounted for in how we re-define our food systems. But before we kick off, I would like to introduce you to my two guests that are with me here today. It is Christina Senn-Jakobsen, Managing Director at Swiss Food & Nutrition Valley. Thanks for joining us today.

Christina Senn-Jakobsen: Thank you, great to be here Stephan!

Stephan Lendi: And with me Sebastian Günther, Senior Manager, Innovation & Design at Accenture.

Sebastian Günther: Hey Stephan! Thanks for having me.

Stephan: It is a pleasure to have the two of you here. Now, this is a topic with a huge impact.

Sebastian: Yes, absolutely and I am happy to share a bit of the work we do from an innovation consulting perspective at Accenture and hopefully I can shine a bit of light on how the future food will look like. And I think it's also a great opportunity to make an addition to last year's Swiss food ecosystem reports. So, I am happy to share a bit around that.

Stephan: That report is definitely worth a read. Now, Christina you're not just a food lover, you are more than that, you're a food passionata. What does that mean exactly?

Christina: It encompasses it all. I mean it starts with the needed chains and then it's all the people involved in these chains that I love. It's the technologies that I love, it's the farming that I love, you name it... [anything connected to food]

Stephan: ...so everything connected in the food ecosystem

Christina: Exactly.

Stephan: So, how are you organized as the Swiss Food & Nutrition Valley?



Christina: The Swiss Food & Nutrition Valley is an association not for profit and we are set out to collaboration, to unleash the food innovation powers of Switzerland, so the belief is that we should pioneer for a future proof food system together.

Stephan: Now, before we start with our questions in our talks, let's give our audience an amuse-bouche or an amuse-gueule, which ever you want to call it. Now, I'm sure a lot of us love having good food and there are real foodies even or food passionatas like Christina, but what exactly is the future of food? Where is the problem? Where are the issues? And why do our food systems need to change an evolve, Sebastian?

Sebastian: I think to define it a bit, the future of food really describes the whole system, on how we engage, all of us engage with food and the whole value chain of the near and far future.

Stephan: And everything is getting faster now, right?

Sebastian: Yes, absolutely. I think we see so many changes, uhm, or we have seen so many changes over the past years. And I think it really through Covid and a lot of other circumstances and now it's really time for this kind of system shift to really change from the linear model to a really re-generative and circular model around food production.

Stephan: Help me understand about the stakeholders that are involved here.

Sebastian: So, I think at the end of the day, it really touches all of us. So, me, myself, and all of us as a consumer but obviously also a lot of co-operations, start-ups, academia, the whole ecosystem, scientists who bring a lot of value to the community and at the end of the day it's really an engagement for everyone.

Stephan: There are four mature clusters that you have defined that drive and influence the future of food what are those?

Sebastian: Yes, the first one I think is in everyone's mind right now. It's around sustainability. The second one I think which was

already mentioned by Christina is around agriculture.

The efficiency part is also really important. At the end of the day, it's also about transparency and traceability, specifically along the supply chains because people want to understand what they are buying and what they are consuming.

Stephan: And can we call these clusters, as we said everything is going faster and faster, can we call them accelerators, would that be suitable?

Sebastian: Yes, absolutely. And I think they all accelerate through technology at the end of the day. So, that's the really important part to move to the future and use technology.

Stephan: Holistically speaking, we have to talk about consumers, and we have to talk about the corporate world. What changes, what specific examples are you anticipating for the consumers side of things?

Sebastian: Let me give you two very concrete examples: So, the first one is around agriculture and precision farming. I think there's a lot of stuff which can be done around using drones, using AI, in order to increase the efficiency how the crop yield, what we use, how much we use, how much fertilizer we use, and at the end of the day, how does the ecological footprint really look like.

And from consumer perspective as I already mentioned I think it's really important for consumers to understand what they are buying, how the things are produced, and I think there are already a couple of retailers for example who are showcasing the ecological footprint, you visit the store, and I think that's the first step to give more transparency, to give people the understanding what they are buying and how things are produced.

Stephan: So, what about global acting co-operations on the other end of the spectrum.

Sebastian: I think at the end of the day, they also need to change and I think they can't change alone. So, I think there's where the value of the Swiss Food & Nutrition Valley comes in because it's really about bringing all of the different partners together and having a real



impact on the food ecosystem.

Stephan: You have mentioned transparency and traceability. Help me understand those two terms specifically. What does they actually mean for consumers?

Sebastian: So, at the end of the day I think a transparency really means that I understand where is the stuff coming from. And coming from meaning, where is the stuff produced? Is it transparent to the producers, is it transparent to the retailers and at the end of the day to us customers.

And traceability is basically following the whole journey around the food from the start to the end.

Stephan: Are there any best practices that you can mention?

Sebastian: Yes, absolutely. So, there are a couple of retailers who already took the right steps. There is for example a retail chain in Sweden who has built a system to track the whole coming footprint of the products they are selling in their store. And at the end of the day the consumer gets an overview about the ecological footprint they actually have bought, and I think it's a great first step to make people aware and help them understanding what they are buying and what they are producing.

Stephan: That is something that is so important. It seems Christina that today we are living as if our resources were inexhaustible as if our resources were unlimited?

Christina: Exactly Stephan. It's a place where this example that we just heard is gonna help us because our consumers are very smart, but they need to have inform choices. And as long as they are deciding in the dark we can not chase that.

Stephan: So, we got to give them information?

Christina: Yes, the status quo is that the whole food system is responsible for 30% of our greenhouse gas emissions. We spent 70% of fresh water in our agriculture and we are responsible for the bio-diversity loss.

Stephan: But we also have other issues. We are talking obesity, we are talking starvation, there is an imbalance on our planet if we look at different parts of the world?

Christina: Yeah, absolutely, we can talk about two big food crises. One is the climate and the other one is the health crisis which we haven't talked to much about. We have two billion people who are overweight and beyond, we have another two billion people who do not have access to nutritious healthy food on a daily base. Diabetes has been the fastest growing decease and I could continue a long list here.

Stephan: So, is a sustainable food system the ideal solution then?

Christina: We have to be careful now with the word sustainable because it's not about sustaining the status quo. I much prefer the re-generative formulation here. We need to on do what we have done wrong so far. We didn't know better since the industrial revolution, we produced all we could. Now, we understand that we can not continue this way.

Stephan: So, it's about a re-generative system and not just about sustainable food. I love the term re-generative system. Now, you work with the Swiss Food & Nutrition Valley, help me understand what that is?

Christina: Yes. As we all know, Switzerland is a small country if we mess our square kilometers here. But we are a very large food nation. We have well-classed universities, we have some of the biggest and the biggest food player, we have lots of technology, talents, we have a start-up environment growing and tons I could go on. We have everything it takes.

Stephan: So, all the resources are there.

Christina: It's here. We are ready to open the kitchen and bake the cake.

Stephan: (laughing)

Christina: And the Swiss Food & Nutrition Valley is the kitchen.

Stephan: You have mentioned some of the



projects that you are undertaking, some of the challenges, some of the issues that you are tackling.

Christina: So, maybe before we... In the Swiss Food & Nutrition Valley we are around 120 members across all the different sectors in the food value chain. We have start-ups, we have a lot of corporates, we have research institutes, we have canton politicians in there, we have everybody who plays a role here in there.

We work around 5 impact platforms. Those are precision nutrition, precision farming, sustainable packaging, future proteins, and future farming.

Stephan: Then help me understand why you need to reunite all the different stakeholders in the food and nutrition valley?

Christina: Yeah, absolutely. And only that way we can move fast enough and good enough forward to change the food system.

Stephan: So, it's all about collaboration and co-creation in that sense?

Christina: Change is a team sport Stephan.

Stephan: Now, Sebastian it is really exciting to hear about the Swiss Food & Nutrition Valley like this. But from your experience and consulting what are some of the drivers of the future of food. How do players of the respective sectors react?

Sebastian: So, I think all players in the market have constantly to adapt to changes. And I think that has been the way the past years, but I think if we look into the market right now, the competition, the challenges everybody is facing not only through covid, through all the macro-economical challenges over the past years and specifically the past months. Everybody is really focused to bring innovation to the whole food market. And if we look at the challenges, I think Christina already mentioned them, the scarcity of resources and costs the challenges around food and security to all of the geopolitical challenges we have, the regulatory pressure... I think there is a lot of stuff which is really accelerating this right now.

Stephan: Christina has mentioned, co-creation, collaboration, so, acting systemically has becoming important. Would you consider that as a factor that is crucial to access?

Sebastian: A 100%. But I think we also have to understand that for the corporate world that's sometimes a bit more difficult to change old behaviors and they are absolutely forced to it right now. And I think that's also really really good that we have such an active start-up environment, start-up ecosystem, so great academia, not only in Switzerland but also globally who are really forcing them to move and who are really engaging with them on a day-to-day basis.

Stephan: So, start-ups have a clear advantage on the market?

Sebastian: I think they have an advantage in terms of speed but at the end of the day, they also need to scale and that's also where we then need the big players to jump in and help them to scale to work together collaboratively because at the end of the day, that's also what they need.

Stephan: So, you are seeing that systemic changes are truly complex and because it is so complex, we need all the different players to collaborate and to co-create across the entire ecosystem?

Sebastian: A 100%. And I think that's why we need certain associations, certain ways on how to bring them together.

Stephan: We can talk about a mind-shift in generally. You said that changes getting faster and faster, we need to make different decisions, inform decisions. So, we are rethinking our behavior, we are rethinking our mindset. We are re-innovating.

Sebastian: A 100%. And I think everybody needs to rethink. It starts with the corporates; it starts with everybody who is on the food value chain. But at the end of the day, it is also important for the consumer because we are also a part of that and we are consuming food and we obviously have an impact with that.



Stephan: It is important, but it is a lot of hard work then?

Sebastian: Yes, a 100%. But I think at the end of the day, it's really about everybody bringing together, using technology and incorporate all of the learnings we have so far.

Stephan: Incorporate all of the learnings and Christina as you said leveraging the strength of the ecosystems, that is what is crucial?

Christina: It absolutely is in the time we are writing 2022 and it's so exciting because everybody acknowledges this. The not invented in Germany has died. We are all out there, we acknowledge, we are part of the problem, and we are the solution. So, people, industries, large, small, from the side, want to collaborate.

Stephan: You said we are the solution but there is not one solution. We have to explore different solutions, different options

14:09 Christina: Luckily so, that there are many pathways. We can not put everything on one horse but we have to move fast and I think that's the critical thing. Will we move fast enough when we hear there is 65 harvesters left in this world. And all these threats we hear, can we move fast enough and change food systems.

Stephan: We have heard a lot about digitalization. How can digital solutions impact, benefit this collaboration, the co-creation?

Christina: It is key. I mentioned that 5 impact platforms. And it is key throughout all impact platforms that digitalization is needed. We need data to make our decision to understanding which direction to go, we need data to communicate with each other and we need all these digital tools whether it's drones or it's devices that measure our information level in the bottle. But we need that to make decisions and to move.

Stephan: Digitalization and technologies they are the bases of informed decisions making, that's what you are saying, so, it's all about the mindset?

Christina: It's about the mindset, it's about the

trust, it's about recognizing that, actually our consumers should not be referred to as consumers. They don't like that, they are citizens. They vote with their money, they make decisions through these informed choices and that's what the digital world can empower them with.

Stephan: Consumers are citizens, but consumers are also employees, and they are part of the corporate world, Sebastian?

Sebastian: Yes, and I think, now is really the time that for everybody and specifically the corporate world to incorporate sustainability and innovation at the core of the strategy. And that's the time more than ever and they really think that all of those efforts, they felt very slow in the past and I think now we really need to accelerate and scale them.

Stephan: So, Sebastian, we all want to be more sustainable, but we actually need to be more innovative in order to be more sustainable

Sebastian: Yes, and I think that's where we lacked in the past. If we look to the corporate world, there are a lot of ideas around in order to be more sustainable. But we often lacking the scaling, we often lacking the right governments in order to move things forward.

Stephan: So, execution is the issue.

Sebastian: Yes.

Stephan: How do we get there, how do we execute on all these ideas and all the potential for innovation out there?

Sebastian: So, I think you can see these on the numbers. If you look at the climate leadership study by the United Nations, you see that nearly 3 or 4 CEO's globally agree that sustainability is their immediate priority but they don't see really clear way forward and how to do that. And I think asking the way how we move forward I think the key important point is having the right mindset and having the right way within a corporate and the right operating model to move innovation forward and scale it really across the different players and cross the value chain.

Stephan: Yeah, because all that that study says is they consider sustainability to be important. That doesn't mean that they act, that they have the resources to act and that they are actually acting and making the necessary difference that we need.

Sebastian: Yes. I think there is sometimes that misbelief that innovation is stopping growth or sustainability is stopping growth and they don't think that's the way. It's really about, at the end of the day, bringing the different players together and moving things forward.

Christina: I so agree with that Sebastian this misconception is to change and also that sustainability cannot go alone. There needs to be a profit around that and we luckily see more and more success stories around this that sustainability and profit goes hand in hand and it is the future. And what we are sure of, there shouldn't be no profit in the future without sustainability element in in.

Stephan: If we are linking sustainability to profit that means that consumers out there need to make informed decisions in order for those profits to arrive with the cooperations.

Christina: Exactly. We know from studies that the Swiss consumer, 80% of them, they want to buy sustainable. And almost half of the consumers, they want to give up meat in the future and buy alternatives. So, we need to help them to understand what does that mean and how can they do it and when they pick up a product whether it's in the supermarket or online, is this sustainable and what does this actually mean.

Stephan: So, we need as Sebastian said before, we need transparency and traceability for consumers that the information they are getting is truly credible information that serves as a bases form informed decision that has the impact that the consumer wants to have on the market and on the corporate world.

Christina: We have an interesting complex here in Switzerland because our consumers are really responsible. Nobody loves nature more than the Swiss people, they only live footprints when we got there. And yet we are the black sheep of

Europe when it comes to food waste. We waste almost double of the average here. And it's not because we want to damage the planet, it's because we don't know we do that and we don't know it better. So, here we need digitalization. We need a digital tool to help the households understand.

Stephan: And awareness with consumers that we stop throwing away so much food. That would already have a huge impact.

Christina: Yeah, I mean today worldwide we throw away one third in Switzerland. It's 320kg per capita. A country like Denmark who has worked hard on this they are down to less than a 100kg per capita. Throwing away food is throwing away resources and it's so damaging, and it can be measured on our capita footprint every day.

Stephan: What about the notion that whatever is sustainable is necessarily more expensive and we don't have the money for that, as consumers might be saying.

Christina: Well, let's talk about true costs and what is expensive. I think meat is not expensive enough if you look at the damage it causes our environment, on the damaging costs on the human health, you know what the hospital and services do around here. Then, it's too cheap, it's too cheap.

And vice versa we have so many good foods that merges our body and our mind and that we need to work around. And here again, it's not one place, it's the taxes from the government, it's the retailers are pricing it wrong and so on. We all need to step up.

Stephan: Give me a couple of examples on how you are tackling this issue at the Swiss Food & Nutrition Valley.

Christina: So, one of our impact platforms being the sustainable proteins is looking into what can alternatives sources be to a very damaging beef protein source for example.

Stephan: So, more sustainable, but still very, very tasty hopefully?



Christina: Exactly. Tasty, nutritious, and affordable as you mentioned. And here we are looking at the cultivated meat, the plant based, the LG, the precision fermentations going back to some old crops and the whole beans, so there are many routes to get there, and we are setting up projects around these to understand better which one's are the best routes because we cannot have one size that fits all.

Stephan: So, Sebastian, it is all about looking for alternatives that are sustainable, that tastes good, so that have a market value, is that the same in the corporate world?

Sebastian: Yes, and I really like the terminology Christina used. I think the task for corporations is really to find alternatives. There is not one size fits all solution, it's alternatives that create profit. At the end of the day, we need that change from a linear to re-generative circular value chain and they really have to find solutions right now.

Stephan: How do we approach this?

Sebastian: For me, there are 3 points that are important.

First of all, looking into the corporations, they need to enable the right operating model to allow innovation also in a big corporate. I mean the start-up world is great, they bring a lot of influence into that. But at the end of the day, we need scale, and we need it fast and that can only be achieved through the corporates.

Stephan: We are living in exciting times, and we can probably say that the transformation of the food sector is just about as it's beginning. So, exciting times ahead of us, a lot to look forward to, in corporate world and in the consumer world. We are the world of these citizens that are also part of the system. Exciting times but a lot of work Christina.

Christina: Yeah, but who doesn't want to save the world? I think that's a lot of people who jump out of bed in the morning thinking, today I am part of changing the world and I think it's also this empowerment we should give, that no matter who you are, if you are working in consulting agency, if you are a retailer, we are all citizens, we all purchase food but we also can

all influence what's happening at work. Encourage the canteen to have a meat-free day or whatever it might be. So, we are almost a billion people who can work on this job together.

Stephan: Such a lot of things to do, how do we get started?

Christina: Well, we have started, long time ago Stephan and we are just rolling. I think the difficulty is the know where to put the focus first because we need to get some fast wins, we need to get some big bet. We see the consumers are doing their job. It's not about moving to vegan tomorrow, all of us, it's about sitting down and that's what I want to encourage everybody who is listening to this podcast, sit down 15 minutes with your family, with your colleagues and say: brainstorm. What can we do? Is it one meat-free day? Is it start taking the bike going to supermarket and bring your own bags? Is it buying more local? More seasonal? There are so many little things you can do.

Stephan: So, start small, step by step.

Christina: Just start.Yeah.

Stephan: The first three steps that really matter in the corporate world, we need more information, we need to explore further, and we need that empowerment on the corporate world Sebastian. Where do we find further information, how to get started, how to move these processes forward?

Sebastian: I think at the end of the day we all have the responsibility to leave the planet better for everyone who follows after and that's I think the core responsibility for consumers, for corporates and at the end of the day, that's the important part.

Stephan: You also mentioned the study before. Just let us know what that study was in case we want to carry out for the research.

Sebastian: Yes. So, last year we did a full report of the Swiss point of view. How does the Swiss Food tech ecosystem developing, what are the important players and really give transparency to the consumer, to basically everybody who is out



there in the ecosystem and also to give a bit of responsibility to the ecosystem to actually engage through the means for example like Christina's association.

Stephan: And I am sure it's fine for you Sebastian to reach out to you on LinkedIn?

Sebastian: Yes. Happy to discuss everything.

Stephan: And of course, Christina to reach out to your organization?

Christina: Yes. Please join us on LinkedIn at Swiss Food & Nutrition Valley. We are happy to talk.

Stephan: Absolutely. So, thank you so much for being here Christina Senn-Jakobsen, Managing Director at the Swiss Food & Nutrition Valley.

Christina: Thank you, it's been real fun.

Stephan: And thank you Sebastian Günther, Senior Manager, Innovation & Design at Accenture, thank you Sebastian.

Sebastian: Thank you Stephan.

Stephan: Now, this whole episode is available wherever you get your podcasts, wherever you enjoy listening to new content, to new information and find inspiration. Thank you for tuning in. This is a podcast by Accenture. I'm Stephan Lendi.

Outro

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