



ENTOVEGANISM:



THE NEXT



BIG THING?

CAPE TOWN-BASED START-UP GOURMET GRUBB IS THE FIRST COMPANY IN THE WORLD (AS FAR AS WE KNOW) THAT MAKES ICE-CREAM FROM INSECT MILK. NOT ONLY IS THEIR LACTOSE-FREE ICE-CREAM BANTING-FRIENDLY AND FIVE TIMES HIGHER IN PROTEIN THAN DAIRY, BUT IT'S ALSO PART OF A GROWING ENTOMOPHAGY TREND THAT'S PREDICTED TO REACH \$1.2 BILLION BY 2023.

WORDS: IGA MOTYLSKA

What would it take for you to eat insects?

- A) A booze-fuelled bet?
- B) An adventurous holiday to Limpopo (or perhaps Thailand)?
- C) The looming threat of food security?
- D) None of the above?

While eating insects is normal for two billion people worldwide, most commonly across Africa, Asia and South America, the western world squirms like a creepy-crawly at the thought of entomophagy.

More than 1 900 edible insect species have been identified, with 250 of those coming from Africa, according to the



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THE MARKET FOR SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS IS GROWING. PEOPLE ARE BECOMING MORE EDUCATED ABOUT ADDED INGREDIENTS AND DON'T WANT THOSE THINGS IN THEIR PRODUCTS.



Edible Insects: Future prospects for food and feed security report by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO).

The most popular edible insect in Africa is the mopane caterpillar, which is indigenous to the mopane woodlands in Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. “An estimated 9.5 billion mopane caterpillars are harvested annually in southern Africa – a practice worth \$85 million,” according to the report.

By 2050, many more people will most likely have to eat insects as the world



population surpasses 9 billion and current food production will need to double. “The edible insect market is valued at \$33 million and by 2023 it’s predicted to increase by a compound annual growth rate of 28.3% to reach over \$1.2 billion,” says 27-year-old Leah Bessa, a Stellenbosch University food science PhD candidate and co-founder of Gourmet Grubb. “People are more aware of the environmental impact of dairy and red meat. They have done research and understand that insects are an important part of food security for the future,” says her co-founder Jean Louwrens, an honours-graduate in Supply Chain Management.

The Cape Town-based food start-up is the world’s first company to make gourmet ice-cream from insect milk, with the black soldier fly (*Hermetia illucens*) larvae being the perfect ingredient. “Insects are cold blooded and don’t regulate their body temperature, so their energy doesn’t go to warming their organs, meaning their energy conversion is very high,” she shares. “Black soldier fly larvae are high in protein and fat [the healthy unsaturated kind], which is needed for a creamy dairy alternative. The lactose-free and banting-friendly ‘Entomilk’, from which the gelato-style ice-cream is made, contains five times more protein than dairy and is high in zinc, iron and calcium.

Gourmet Grubb is an early adopter of what will most likely be the rise of entoveganism – a plant-based diet that includes the consumption of insects as a protein source – in the coming decades.

Gourmet Grubb is a holistic brand with three flavours (chocolate, chai-latte and peanut butter) that contain no artificial ingredients, emulsifiers, stabilisers or preservatives, and who only use raw honey and natural, organic ingredients to provide the colour and flavour. This year it plans to expand its palate with banana bread, strawberry and activated charcoal flavours. “The market for healthy and sustainable products is growing,” People are becoming more educated about added ingredients and don’t want those things in their products,” Leah says. ●