

Open Innovation in the Food Industry: What we know, What we don't know, What we need to know

Call for papers for: [British Food Journal](#)

Guest Editors

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Special Issue Information

Open Innovation has been a paradigm that reshaped the approach to innovativeness and competitiveness during the last two decades (West and Bogers, 2014). Globalization, fast technological pace, rapid changes in customers' needs asked the companies to rethink their innovation processes as they became more risky and unpredictable (Chesbrough, 2013). The difficult to retain knowledge together with the high cost connected with the purely internal development of innovation pushed the companies to an open innovation approach that includes the network of agents such as universities, start-ups, public and private institutions, external suppliers, and customers (Chesbrough, 2013). This has led the companies towards an open approach both in search of skills as well as innovation and R&D (Johnston, 2020).

Regarding the food industry, studies have revealed that open innovation, collaborative networks and M&A can represent a viable approach to increase competitiveness, customer satisfaction, and sustainability (Annosi et al., 2020; Kiessling, et al, 2020; Bogers et al., 2020; Kafetzopoulos et al., 2020; Enzing et al., 2011; Garcia Martinez et al., 2014). The few food and beverage companies that actively pursue an open innovation approach appears to have a better innovation performance that results in stronger long-term position on the market and better profitability (Bayona-Saez et al., 2017; Enzing et al., 2011; Miglietta et al., 2017). The recent events related to the COVID-19 situation places additional pressure on companies to look for different, more flexible and more collaborative perspective about innovation and business models (FAO, 2020a). In these unprecedented times, the entire food industry has been heavily impacted by COVID-19. In the same time requests for the organic production (Melovic et al., 2020), and therefore new, more efficient, and more sustainable business processes are needed, especially in the food industry (FAO, 2020a; 2020b).

Although several companies have already moved to open innovation, we do believe that more and more companies will progress to open innovation rapidly and that managerial support is necessary. (Barham et al., 2020; Alassaf, et al., 2020). Seminal studies explore the relation with open innovation and knowledge flows (Baima et al., 2020; González-Moreno et al., 2019; Fertő et al., 2016; Moreno-Mondéjar et al., 2020) and sustainability programs (Bogers et al., 2020), or show the significant beneficial influence of open innovation in the food industry. However, additional research is needed to explore the impact and best practices for successful open innovation adoption in the food industry (Saguy and Sirootinskaya, 2014). The decisions of firms, policymakers, and managers need to be informed by

research. We envision that this special issue will extend our knowledge base and contribute food for thought in relation to, among other things, what constitutes best practices under various conditions in a diverse sector; what characterizes the sector's actors and their collective innovation practices; what kind of knowledge and information flows occur; and, in general, provide an status fo the nature of the contemporary research and knowledge landscape in the food industry.

Both conceptual (theoretical, literature review) and empirical (quantitative, qualitative, case studies) submissions are invited to explore openness in innovation in the food industry from the organizational (micro) level, the industry (meso) level, as well as the policy (macro) level of analysis from various theoretical and practical lenses.

Examples of possible topics can include:

- How can open innovation redesign the food industry in the future?
- How can open innovation help to reduce the negative impact of COVID-19 in the food industry?
- What are the challenges that managers face in adopting open innovation in the food industry?
- How can open innovation help increase economic, social and ecological sustainability and contribute to the realization of the Global Developemnt Goals?
- How is open innovation redesigning the supply chain of the food industry?
- What are the best, or good, practices to implement open innovation in the food industry?
- What are the trends with regard to new patents and trademarks related to open innovation in the food industry?
- How can SMEs benefit from an open innovation approach within the food industry?
- How can national, regional or supranational policy enhance promote open innovation in the food industry around the world?
- How can food companies successfully integrated open innovation in their organic food processes?

- How do institutional frameworks promote or hinder openness in the food industry innovation?
- What is the dark side of openness in food industry innovation?

Submission Information

Author submission window opens: 1st December 2020

Author submission deadline: 1st March 2021

Submissions should be accompanied by an assurance of originality and exclusivity and should adhere to the 'Style and Format' author guidelines that can be found on the journal's website at:

<https://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/journal/bfj#author-guidelines>

All submissions are through the online submission system ScholarOne (<https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/bfj>). Full submission details are in the author guidelines. Please ensure you submit to this special issue using the appropriate dropdown menu on ScholarOne.

All submissions will be subject to a rigorous double-blind peer-review process, with one or more of the guest editors acting as action editor.

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