

Climax Takes on the \$800B Dairy Market, Launching with “Moonshot” Products

Following record fundraise, “Deep Plant Intelligence” biotech startup reveals new generation of alternative dairy products and their first manufacturing hub; showcasing the potential of its data science platforms approach to R&D with “hardest-to-recreate” product category

BERKELEY, California, December 28, 2022 – After two years of rigorous research and development, Climax (www.climax.bio) is introducing its first “zero-compromise” plant-based products to select audiences in Los Angeles, New York and San Francisco, while simultaneously building out production facilities for an early 2023 launch date with select distribution partners who will be announced soon.

Climax’s “moonshot products” - cultured and aged Blue, Brie, Feta and Chèvre cheeses - use sustainably grown plant ingredients while matching the taste, nutrition, and price of dairy cheeses.

“We started from a profound appreciation for the complex flavors and textures of dairy products,” explains founder and CEO, Dr. Oliver Zahn. “Cows have made our milk for thousands of years. However, less than 10% of the plants they eat get turned into food for humans, which has led to significant environmental and health problems in today’s much more crowded world.” Zahn continues, “It is human nature to rethink ancient practices, so we came up with a smarter way. By using data science to accelerate plant-based ingredient and process discoveries, we are saving thousands of years of tinkering to create products that are just as tasty as the cow-based predecessors without the downsides, today.”

[Zahn](#) started Climax with more than a decade of experience as a science leader. Born and raised in Bavaria, Germany, with a fond appreciation for its animal agricultural roots, he did his doctoral studies at Harvard and later led UC Berkeley’s Center for Cosmological Physics alongside two Nobel Laureates. After years of studying the intricacies of space and time, his desire to drive positive global change called him to become a data science and thought leader at Google, SpaceX and Impossible Foods before starting Climax in 2020.

Armed with the largest-ever seed raise for a food tech startup, Climax converted an old chocolate factory in Berkeley, CA into cutting-edge laboratories. The companies’ 40 scientists have since combined molecular-level learnings about animal products with

proprietary plant ingredient functionality databases to converge on optimal "digital recipes" from ingredients selected from thousands of edible plants.

To capitalize on its rapid product innovation ability, Climax is now also building a production hub for its cheeses and a pilot plant for proprietary ingredients in Petaluma, California. Commercialization efforts are led by Caroline Di Giusto, a tenured expert in global dairy cheese innovation and manufacturing. Prior to joining Climax, Di Giusto led production at the oldest cheese company in the US after she had gained extensive R&D expertise with some of the largest dairy corporations in France.

As demonstration of the power of its "deep plant intelligence" platform, Climax is initially launching one of the most challenging product categories - artisanal cheese. But Zahn hints at additional news: "Our technology and ingredient discoveries will soon power the replacements of bigger categories with successors that will be equally delicious and nutritious but more sustainable and – because our products are not heavily processed – substantially more economical and environmentally friendly." Climax products rely on non-allergenic ingredients such as seeds, legumes and plant oils. They are free of nuts, cholesterol, and GMO ingredients.

"We see a bright future as the foundational work that Climax has done to unlock the full flavor potential of plants will open countless doorways to an exciting planet-supporting food industry," said Tom Chi of At One Ventures, one of the company's early investors.

About Climax

Climax (Climax Foods Inc.) is unlocking smarter paths to the foods we love most with its deep plant intelligence platform, yielding a new generation of foods that are as delicious as their animal-based predecessors while being more nutritious, sustainable, affordable and economical. Climax is a Public Benefit Corporation based in Berkeley, CA. For more information, visit www.climax.bio.