

Avebe Magazine

Catching, Shaking, and Sieving

New stone catchers and sieve shakers in Ter Apelkanaal

Circular collaboration

Valuable products from potato juice

Route 2030

New Strategy for Averis



Accelerate and Strengthen: progress we achieve together

Before you lies the 14th edition of the Avebe Magazine. With a new look, but the approach remains the same. In this issue, we highlight several achieved results of our strategy Accelerate and Strengthen. Royal Avebe is fully transitioning to a market & customer-driven organisation with an emphasis on creating distinctive, added value for our customers, members, and employees. As one Avebe team, we are fully committed to rapidly increase the earning capacity of our members. Both in the field and in our end markets, we must continue to earn our place. Fortunately, our strategy is bearing fruit and we are on course. I cannot repeat the core of our strategy often enough: We pursue a strategy focused on accelerated growth, targeting distinctive added value from specific markets, both in the food and industrial markets. The customer is more central than ever before.



The last potatoes of the 2024 campaign have now been processed. With winter months that were hardly dry and regional differences, it was a varied start to the planting season. During the short growing season, we fortunately had favourable weather. Despite the challenges, the cultivation year 2024 will go down in history as a year with relatively good yields.

New look, same approach

In this edition, you will read about the steps we are taking with Averis, our 100 percent subsidiary, with which we are further strengthening the position of Averis towards our members and the market. We are also making visible progress in increasing the added value of our potato starch and potato protein products in specific markets.

We spoke with a grower about his business and the choices he makes. Two employees talk about workplace safety in the past and present and clearly conclude: they do not want to go back to the past.

With the Live Saving Rules program, we are taking important steps in our ongoing pursuit of a safe and healthy working environment for everyone who works at Avebe. We are also making investments so that our factories can operate stably and reliably.

We took a look at our production site in Ter Apelkanaal, where the sieve shakers and stone catchers have been replaced. The project required logistical thinking and tight planning so that the factory could operate again during the potato campaign. Finally, our collaboration partner ChainCraft talks about the sustainable project with which they can convert our residual potato juice stream into valuable products.

We hope this magazine inspires you and takes you along in the progress we achieve together. Enjoy reading!

David Fousert
CEO Royal Avebe

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Colophon






The Avebe Magazine is a publication by Royal Avebe, created especially for our members and employees. The digital version of the magazine can be viewed at www.avebe.nl/over-ons/downloads.

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Growth, innovation, and expansion into new markets

Route 2030: New Strategy for Averis



AVERIS

Averis is embarking on an ambitious transformation with the implementation of their new strategy: Route 2030. With this strategy, Averis focuses on growth, innovation, and expansion into new markets. Bastiaan Schoenmaker, who has been leading Averis since June 2024, enthusiastically discusses the new direction and the future of Averis.

With a passion for plants, Bastiaan has built a remarkable career in seed breeding. After studying tropical plant cultivation in Wageningen, he worked in South Africa, Turkey, Barcelona, and the Netherlands at Royal van Zanten, Enza Zaden, and Monsanto. "I love living products, the dynamics of seasons, and the constant challenge to stay ahead of the competition," says Bastiaan.

Advantage in resistant varieties

For years, Averis's focus was primarily on its farmer members, providing seed potatoes for Avebe growers. That made sense at the time, but the world has changed. Over the past 70 years, Averis has made significant strides in developing varieties with improved resistances. This was originally the reason Averis was founded; to secure the future of starch potato cultivation in Northeast Netherlands and Germany, addressing the challenges of disease pressure.

"By focusing on the starch potato cultivation of our own members, we have achieved a significant lead in breeding varieties with resistances, especially in the area of soil-borne diseases. With technological advancements and our desire to accelerate the development of these improved resistances, we also see opportunities in new markets. This ultimately benefits the breeding program and positively impacts our members."

← Bastiaan in the greenhouse at Averis in Valthermond

Market expansion in full swing

This season marks the first time Averis has started market expansion. Where Averis previously only supplied seed potatoes to its own Avebe growers, they are now looking further. "This means we will also supply seed potatoes to non-Avebe growers both domestically and internationally. We have very good varieties. The best varieties for starch cultivation and also very suitable varieties for flake production. We want to capitalise on this by also selling our seed potatoes to non-starch potato growers," says Bastiaan.

By collaborating with Aviko, Averis varieties are also finding their way into the flake market. Additionally, Averis sees geographical expansion opportunities. Denmark is an important growth region. Here, Averis collaborates with KMC, a major potato starch producer. "Our potato varieties are proven strong and improved disease-resistant with high yields and high starch content, so there are great opportunities. But scaling up takes time. Next year we will



deliver mini-tubers, which KMC will multiply. Before these potatoes can be processed in the factory, we are looking at a four-year timeline," explains Bastiaan.

"Our potato varieties are proven strong and improved disease-resistant with high yields and high starch content, so there are great opportunities."

Benefits for our farmer members

Even with a more commercial approach, there are still benefits for our farmer members. "Members, for example, get priority with new varieties, and only then are these varieties offered to other markets. Members also receive a price advantage. This shows that Averis, as a 100% subsidiary of Avebe, offers benefits," says Bastiaan.

Ambitions for the future

Bastiaan believes in the future of Averis. "Averis has a good position in the market. We have the knowledge, experience, location, equipment, and people. We are currently a small and specialised breeding company, but we can grow into a larger player in the sector. With our own Route 2030."

"We are currently a small and specialised breeding company, but we can grow into a larger player in the sector."

Route 2030

The new strategy is built on three pillars

- 1 Strengthening the foundation
- 2 The power of innovation
- 3 Broadening the horizon



Staff activity

Avebe Young pubquiz

In January, the now very popular pub quiz for Avebe colleagues took place at the Innovation Center in Groningen. The theme was 'Guilty Pleasures'. During ten rounds, knowledge was tested on music, newspaper headlines, a photo round, a challenging puzzle round, and of course a round about Avebe. About 170 colleagues, divided into 29 teams, competed for the trophy. This year, teams could earn points and a prize for their outfit for the first time. No less than 11 teams scored the full 5 points with their 'Guilty Pleasure' outfit! The pub quiz was won by the team 'Between the Soup and the Potatoes'.



Agro meetings

Review of district member meetings

During the district member meetings in November, all district members were updated on the current state of affairs within the Avebe cooperative. Did you know there are a total of six districts? So also six meetings. The agenda included the progress of the Accelerate and Strengthen strategy, Avebe's financial figures, the campaign progress, and an update on the Averis strategy. Everyone could also taste a macaron with our potato protein. This treat was in honour of Avebe's 105th anniversary. For the Weser-Ems district, just across the border in Germany, the meeting concluded with a tour of our production site in Ter Apelkanaal.



Award won

Plant-Based Innovation Award

On November 19, Avebe won the Plant-Based Innovation Award for **PerfectaSOL® – Say goodbye to flimsy coatings** at Food Ingredients Europe.



Award won

World Plant-Based Ingredient Award

Avebe won the World Plant-Based Ingredient Innovation Award with the recently launched **PerfectaSOL® – solution for plant-based fermented yogurt**. This award was presented at Bridge2Food North America on October 9.



Digital tour

Take a look at the Innovation Center



Scan the QR code and follow the digital tour of the Avebe Experience

Listen to the podcast

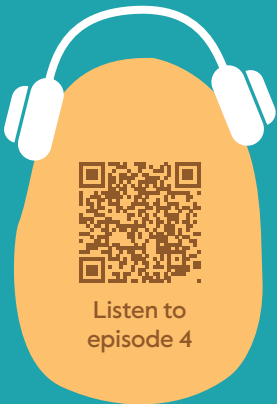
Power to the Pieper

The NTR science program Focus created a four-part podcast series about the potato (in Dutch).

For episode 3: **From vegan winegums to baby bottom cream**, they visited Avebe. **Episode 4: The secret of the healthy potato** is about the FIBERS project.



Listen to episode 3



Listen to episode 4

An example of product development with the customer

Improved surimi with potato protein

At Royal Avebe, we are constantly looking for opportunities in new markets with our existing and new products. We investigate whether our potato starch and potato protein can enhance nutritional value and add extra value in specific applications. We try to develop these new applications together with our customers at an early stage, increasing the chances of market success.

One of the newly introduced applications is PerfectaMAR®: the breakthrough in surimi products. We spoke about this with Marc Laus, responsible for market innovation, and Akkelien Vermue-Tjalsma, strategic marketing manager.

Potato protein replaces egg white

"We knew that our potato protein has interesting properties, but when we discovered that we could also improve the texture of surimi, we saw enormous potential," explains Marc. Surimi is the base material for products such as crab sticks and fish balls. Good quality requires a certain elasticity and gel strength to create the desired texture. Traditionally, egg white is used for this, but it brings challenges: price fluctuations, allergens, and availability.

Potato protein is a high-quality and natural replacement for egg white. An additional advantage is that potato protein can also prevent texture loss. Texture loss is caused by natural enzymes present in fish. "Our protein ensures that the original texture is maintained by improving gel strength and elasticity. This allows surimi producers to



PRODUCT APPLICATION

make a higher quality and more sustainable product. Moreover, it is clean label and low in allergens, making the product more accessible to a broader group of consumers," emphasises Marc.

deliveries," says Marc proudly. In April 2025, the new application was officially introduced to the market. The market for surimi products is mainly in Asia, but there are also major producers in Europe and America.

"With our potato protein, surimi producers can make a more stable and sustainable product."

Innovative collaboration

About two years ago, an Indian surimi producer visited several innovative companies in the north of our country, including Avebe. "At that time, we had just completed a scientific study confirming that potato protein is suitable for use in surimi. The timing of the visit could not have been better," says Marc. Surimi production is complicated. You have to match the protein to the different types of fish, and each market has different requirements. "It is a challenging learning process. By collaborating with producers, universities, and our colleagues in Asia and America, we can better map the market and applications," says Akkelien.

Market-driven innovation

PerfectaMAR® is a market-driven innovation resulting from collaboration with customers. It contributes to the reduction of animal ingredients in food production, a trend that is becoming increasingly relevant. "We have once again shown that you should not approach innovation only from a laboratory, but rather in close cooperation with the market," says Marc. "By listening to the needs of our customers, we have developed a product that is not only functionally strong but also commercially attractive. An ultimate example of innovating for the customer," emphasises Akkelien.

From test phase to pallet deliveries

What started small grew into a promising innovation that is now attracting worldwide attention. "We never expected our first major customer to come from India, but they were immediately convinced of the benefits. Within three months, we went from test phase to pallet

"By listening to the needs of our customers, we have developed a product that is not only functionally strong but also commercially attractive."

Avebe *Inside*

For 105 years, our products have been traveling the world and making a difference in various end products. Potato starch also plays an important role in bakery products. Think of bread dough, cake mixes, or custard cream in pastry. PASELLI® and ELIANE® instant starches regulate the liquidity and aeration of the batter, retain moisture, replace fat, ensure longer shelf life, and provide a better mouthfeel. In short, with our potato, you can go in any direction! Below you will find a recipe for carrot cake to try it yourself.

Here's what you need to make the carrot cake*

A pack of carrot cake mix (a regular cake mix can also be used), grated carrot, eggs, vegetable oil or butter, and water. Optional: walnuts, raisins, and cinnamon. Check the supermarket to see if the cake mix label mentions 'potato starch'; there's a good chance our product is in it.

And here's how to make it

- ▶ Line a cake tin with baking paper and preheat the oven.
 - ▶ Mix the cake mix with water, eggs, and vegetable oil or butter according to the instructions on the package.
 - ▶ Add the grated carrot and optionally the chopped walnuts, raisins, and cinnamon.
 - ▶ Mix everything well together.
 - ▶ Pour the batter into a cake tin and bake the cake for about 50-60 minutes in the oven.
- Tip: you can also use cupcake molds!

Here's what you need to make the topping

200g cream cheese, 100g unsalted butter, 200g powdered sugar, and 1 teaspoon vanilla extract.

And here's how to make it

- ▶ Mix the cream cheese and butter in a large bowl with a mixer until smooth.
- ▶ Gradually add the powdered sugar while continuing to mix until the frosting is fluffy.
- ▶ Add the vanilla extract and mix again until everything is well combined.
- ▶ Let the cake cool completely and remove it from the cake tin.
- ▶ Spread the topping evenly over the cake.

*Quantity of ingredients according to the cake mix instructions

Skin cream with *potato ingredient* from Avebe

A new skin cream containing our potato-based ingredient has recently been launched: Zechsal's skin repair cream.

Many people suffer from itching, redness, blisters, or flaking skin. While medication can sometimes help, what if there's a natural alternative?

In collaboration with the Innovation Hub East Groningen, Zechsal has developed a natural cream using ingredients sourced from Dutch soil. One of the key components is a substance found in potato protein, which helps prevent the breakdown of the skin's own proteins. Alongside potato protein, the cream also contains magnesium from Nedmag and hemp seed oil from Hempflax.



Order the Zechsal skin repair cream here

Fun fact

Did you know that potato starch is also in baking paper and cupcake molds?

The starch ensures that no, or very little, oil can penetrate the paper.

Working at Avebe

Avebe'ers in the picture

Meet the Faces of Royal Avebe. In each edition of the Avebe Magazine, we highlight several Avebe employees. What role do they play within the organisation? You can read about it here.

In August, at the end of the intercampaign, Heinrich von Gottberg started as the site manager at Avebe in Lüchow.

"For me, the change means a return home. It makes a real difference to work for a company with local roots, where you sometimes know colleagues or farmers from your personal life. Avebe has always been a well-known name in the Lüchow-Dannenberg district, and I've always been familiar with the Lüchow site. I can see that we're already doing many things very well here, but there's also great potential. I'm particularly focused on optimising processes in production and maintenance — we want to continue working together to improve efficiency and stability."

Helena Pot, specialist in the field of safety.

"As a safety expert, I contribute to a safe working environment by working with my colleagues to address risks at the production site in Ter Apelkanaal. We do this, among other things, by implementing preventive safety measures. I derive a great deal of satisfaction from my work because I believe it's important that everyone returns home safely. By collaborating effectively, we can reduce risks and prevent accidents."

Daniel Tse works in the Asia-Pacific region.

"For Avebe, I support technical projects with a focus on innovative solutions. In our region, we have diverse cultures, so it's very important to understand our customers' needs. We work closely with them to develop solutions that meet their expectations in terms of cost, texture, stability, and sensory experience. We're grateful for the support of our Avebe colleagues worldwide in helping to advance our projects."

"It makes a difference to work for a company with local roots, where you sometimes know colleagues or farmers from your personal life."

A new face at Avebe: Ann-Kathrin Beiderwellen.

"Since September 2024, I've been a product manager at Avebe, responsible for the product portfolios of potato starch and protein. I serve as a connecting link between product development and customer needs. With enthusiasm, I'm committed to the development and optimisation of Avebe to create more value for our customers and members, as well as for our employees. Contributing to Avebe's future direction is what motivates me and makes working here so enjoyable."

Just add some potato for a world of difference

"You just don't think about starch being in plaster materials."

To what extent does the quality of plastering depend on the materials you use? How do plasterers choose their plaster? Which factors play a role in that decision? Is there any change in the range of options? In short: is there a difference between one bag of plaster and another? And if so, what is it? We asked plasterer Peter Jansen.

The right materials make plastering easy

"Plastering only becomes easy when you work with the right materials," says Peter. "People often try to do it themselves, and it goes wrong. Then they ask me to finish the job with their materials. I never do that. The plaster people buy themselves just can't compare to what I use – even if the bags and brands look identical."

Poor materials deliver mediocre results at best. Low-quality plaster can clump, sag, or discolour. Peter explains: "Good plaster stays put, even when you need to apply it thickly. Bad plaster will drip under its weight. If your plaster starts sagging while you're spreading it, it's going to be a right mess."



IN PRACTICE



Standard and decorative plastering work

Peter knew from a young age that he wanted to become a plasterer. "When I was 15, I started working in construction as a cleaner. In the mornings, I saw plasterers arrive to work on an ugly wall. By the afternoon, that wall was completely smooth and beautiful. That made a big impression on me. I started working for a plasterer and, after obtaining my certifications, I immediately started my own business."

By now, Peter has more than 25 years of experience. His plastering company Stucadoorsbedrijf Peter Jansen is based in Stiens, Friesland. Together with his son Sietse, he applies both standard plaster layers and eye-catching decorative plasterwork. Peter: "We create extremely beautiful, unique designs that we proudly showcase on our Instagram: PT Jansen Decoratief."

"When I heard that my plaster contained potatoes, I thought, 'Excuse me?'"

Potato starch in plaster materials?

Early 2024, Peter and his son participated in a photoshoot for Avebe's building solutions. Peter: "We plastered several walls on set, which was captured by a film and photography crew."

However, Peter didn't know in advance that the plaster used on set contained Avebe's CasuCOL®, an ingredient based on potato starch. This ingredient improves the adhesion, handling time, and stability of plaster and similar materials.

Peter recalls: "When I heard that my plaster contained potatoes, I thought, 'Excuse me?' My colleagues were just as surprised. It's not something you think about – that you could have potato starch as an ingredient in plaster materials."

Plaster with CasuCOL® meets all of Peter's high quality standards. "Plaster needs to stay in place and not sag, even when it's applied thickly. Potato starch makes a difference here. I noticed I could apply the plaster thickly without it dripping. It's also what we plasterers call 'fattier,' meaning it is quicker to mix and easier to spread."

What is CasuCOL®?

CasuCOL® modified potato starches are thickeners for gypsum or cement-based mineral binders. These ingredients make plasters, mortars, and adhesives easier to work with by improving adhesion and handling time. Furthermore, adding CasuCOL® reduces the risk of sagging in applied layers.

The right plaster for every job

For Peter, the exact ingredients of plaster aren't a top priority when he chooses materials. Plasterers are mainly interested in quality, handling time, and suitability for the job.

Peter comments: "I've got all kinds of plaster in my van. I always have the right material for every job. If I'm plastering an entire ceiling, I'll choose plaster with a long handling time. To repair a damaged wall, I'll use fast-drying plaster so I can keep moving."

Special plasters are available for specific applications and surfaces. Peter adds: "For plasterboard, I use plaster that doesn't require a primer. For other jobs, I have different materials. For example, I use a special mortar for tile walls. If I apply it 8 cm thick in the morning, I can start tiling in the afternoon. You wouldn't want to try that with regular mortar."

For Peter, quality always comes first. "I need to be able to rely on my materials. They can't be too heavy, they need to stay in place, and they have to spread easily. I'm very satisfied with the products I use. Thanks to the Avebe photoshoot, I now know that one secret ingredient can make all the difference."



MEMBER STORY

In conversation with Avebe member Henning Grote

Sharing experiences with the starch potato variety Aveline

During the past growing season, Max Alvermann a member of the agro field staff visited farmer Henning Grote twice. Henning Grote manages two arable farming businesses in the Elbmarsch region, near Hamburg in Germany. While in the field, they exchanged experiences regarding the new starch potato variety, Aveline.

In the summer, during the growing season, they discussed topics such as the planting time, fertilisation, and the optimal harvest period. In the autumn, Max returned to gain an overview of the harvest and to hear about Henning Grote's observations throughout the season. They also discussed the starch yield and the cultivation plans for 2025. Henning Grote's experiences are featured in a short video.



Watch the experiences of Henning Grote here



Tip

Watch the video by **YouTuber AgrarBlick** about planting starch potatoes for the current growing season.



In conversation with Avebe member Alric Stevens

Looking ahead: What does it cost and what does it yield?

He is 27 years old, his name is Alric, and entrepreneurship was instilled in him from a young age. In Wildervank, he runs the Stevens arable farming and contracting business. Together with his father, they cultivate 300 hectares of land, growing starch potatoes, sugar beets, onions, grains, and hemp fibre. In addition to the arable farming business, their contracting business has a modern machinery park and workshop. With a team of ten permanent employees, they provide services for other arable farmers and livestock farmers, such as sowing crops, planting potatoes, and various other fieldwork up to the harvest. During the campaign, they also load potatoes for Royal Avebe.

Collaboration between father and son

"If you look purely at the arable farming part, my father and I could have done it alone. Enormous peaks occur

"I enjoy working on special projects to ensure we always stay ahead as a company"

only during the growing season. With a few people, the work is done quickly," explains Alric. His day usually starts with a round on the farm, followed by office work. He says he is mainly responsible for the organisation on the farm: "I enjoy working on special projects to ensure we always stay ahead as a company," he says. His father prefers working in the workshop with machines. "This division works very well for us; we are really proud of each other."

Spreading risk

The starch potatoes grown for Avebe go directly from the field to the Avebe factory. "We are very satisfied with the 2024 harvest; it was above expectations. We grow the starch potato varieties Festien, Adeline, Axion, Avemond, and BMC. With these varieties, you know you have a good foundation." The new varieties Aveline and Avemond come from the Averis breeding program, and Alric is very pleased with them: "We notice that the starch yield is particularly good with these varieties." Not all the potatoes from the Stevens family went to Avebe. Some were stored and sold through other channels. Alric: "It is important for us to have income, and I want to spread the risk," says Alric. Despite not everything going to Avebe, he looks positively at the cooperative. "With Avebe, you have a lot of certainty. It is important that Avebe remains strong, although it would be nice if the price for our potatoes goes up," Alric smiles.

Lower costs and higher yields

In recent years, the company has reduced the intensity of starch potato cultivation. Alric explains that regulations are not the only reason to stop growing 1 in 2 and switch to 1 in 3. "We hope that in the long term, this will also result

"With Avebe, you have a lot of certainty"

in lower costs and higher yields," explains Alric. During the conversation, it becomes clear that they are looking at the cost-yield ratio in more areas. For example, Alric

mentions the high costs of pesticides in the past potato season: "I find it important to know what something costs and what it yields. The higher costs for pesticides were worth the yield. We followed our instincts on this."

Looking at the long term

How does Alric look at the future? "Recently, a lot of work has been done on the farm. A new shed with a workshop has been built, we have made an annex for onions, and a new weighbridge. Yet I am already looking at the long term. What new things are coming to the market? When, for example, is a machine no longer profitable? I calculate everything. I find it important that we have our equipment in order and can work efficiently."



↑ Alric Stevens

New stone catchers and sieve shakers in Ter Apelkanaal

Catching, Shaking, and Sieving

In the summer of 2024, both the second stage stone catchers and the sieve shakers were replaced in the first part of the production process of the potato starch factory in Ter Apelkanaal. Not because newer or smarter techniques are available that work more efficiently, cheaply, or sustainably. No. These parts were simply worn out after 35 years of operation, shaking, and pounding, explain Matthijs and Jan from Ter Apelkanaal. Matthijs is involved in the replacement project, and Jan will soon be partly responsible for maintenance.



200 to 300 tons of potatoes per hour

In the first part of the production process, potatoes are separated from plant residues, stones, sand, and smaller dirt particles. "During the campaign, about 200 to 300 tons of potatoes pass through here per hour: 24 hours a day, every day of the week. The only break this production line gets is the months outside the potato campaign," explains Matthijs. "That is a relatively short period for a large project where two parts in three production lines need to be replaced, which are also on an upper floor. That requires logistical planning and tight scheduling."

Stone catchers through the roof

"In a relatively short period, a lot had to happen. Dismantling the old machines, placing the new ones, and connecting them to the process," explains Matthijs. For the stone catchers, which look like large drums measuring 3 by 6 meters with a diameter of 2.5 meters, a real hole was made in the roof. The old machines were pushed to the hole via a rail and lifted out of the factory through the hole. The new machines were placed in the same way. "Just the lifting is already a monster task," says Matthijs. "The project planning is tight, and when the campaign starts, it must work immediately. It cannot be delayed."

← The new stone catchers



← Potatoes in swimming water

"Just the lifting is already a monster task"

Super simple and extremely robust

The replacement projects began with the desire to purchase exactly the same machines as 35 years ago. "Our process line has been basically the same for over 100 years," explains Matthijs. "Our lines are super simple and extremely robust. In this part of the production process, only a few separation principles are used, such as buoyancy or the size of the parts to be separated. Almost all in combination with washing and swimming water. When replacing installations, it is always a matter of balancing robustness, energy consumption, affordability, and feasibility of maintenance."

Sieve shakers running smoothly

The sieve shakers were custom-made by the supplier based on the old drawings and are now running smoothly. "The biggest change to the sieve shakers are the fences," says Jan. "These fences make cleaning a bit more difficult, but the chance of accidents is much smaller. And we all want to go home healthy at the end of the day," says Jan. The gentlemen have a bit more challenge with the new stone catchers. "This should be the same design as before, but it is different," begins Matthijs. "Upon delivery, the stone catchers not only caught stones but also many potatoes." Jan hits the nail on the head: "Those potatoes belong in the factory, not in the container." Matthijs explains that this creates extra work: "Of course, we don't throw away the potatoes, they go back into the factory."

The new sieve shakers →

Perseverance and fine-tuning

"We have been searching for the cause for a while," says Matthijs. "We adjusted the drum speed, changed the water level, and much more. Eventually, it turned out there was a difference of 10 centimeters between the old and new drums over a length of 6 meters. This makes it harder for the potatoes, in the upward thrust of the water, to jump over the edge and end up among the stones." "The solution was not easily found," says Jan. "The result is already much better after some adjustments than in the beginning, but it remains a matter of searching, adjusting, and fine-tuning. In the end, I am confident that we will achieve a good end result!"

"During the campaign, about 200 to 300 tons of potatoes pass through here per hour"



↑ Jan Schutte (left) and Matthijs Mallee

New financing with six banks

ABN AMRO Bank, Rabobank, ING, Deutsche Bank, Commerzbank, and Caisse d'Epargne are the banks with which Royal Avebe has arranged new financing. In total, this concerns a credit line of 460 million euros for a period of three years, with the option to extend it by two years. With this financing, Avebe can make investments that align with the "Accelerate and Strengthen" strategy. The new financing started on March 5, 2025.

The previous financing ran until September 2025. It is customary to renew financing well before the end date. This time, market opportunities were used, resulting in the addition of Deutsche Bank, Commerzbank, and Caisse d'Epargne as new banks. ABN AMRO Bank, Rabobank, and ING were also involved in the previous financing.

Rob van Laerhoven, CFO of Avebe: "We are pleased with the trust these banks have in Avebe. During the discussions leading up to the refinancing, they expressed a very positive view of our cooperative."



Interview with Hamza Kasalak and Jan Rieks

80 Years of work experience at the table

It is just after two o'clock on a Thursday afternoon when almost 80 years of work experience sits down at a large white table in building 136 in Foxhol. Jan Rieks started in 1979 and Hamza Kasalak in 1992. Both are CCK operators in shift D, and they both remember very well how their early days at Avebe looked.

It was called corvée back then

"You never forget that. I was 17 years old when I first came here," says Jan. "The first thing they showed me was the coffee machine. Then they handed me a broom, and I started as a corvée worker, that's what it was called back then." Jan explains that his boss lived nearby and took him under his wing. "I learned by just participating and watching closely," says Jan. "It was all very relaxed. Yes, quite fun. A good time."

Watch out for moving parts

Thirteen years after Jan, Hamza started. Through a re-education program from VAPRO (Specialist Training Process Industry), he entered Avebe as an intern. For the first few years, he only worked at Avebe during the campaign period until he got a permanent job in 1999. Safety



Photo of excess foam from the image archive

protocols were hardly there. "You were basically just told to watch out for moving parts or toxic substances. You learned everything from a permanent colleague," Hamza recalls.

Japannertje

Both gentlemen lean back a bit and start telling stories. Jan: "In my early days, there was still a japannertje flying through the factory. Do you know that? It's a motorised wheelbarrow you sit on, but in this case with a two-



Jan and Hamza have over 80 years of work experience at Avebe together

stroke combustion engine that left a trail of smoke in the factory. Can you imagine that between dangerous substances like propylene oxide?"

Serious accident

Jan also tells about a serious accident that happened when he had only been at Avebe for one year: "I saw the regular first-aider cycling across the site at high speed with a very serious face. I greeted

Beginning of safety

After this story, there is a moment of silence at the table. The gentlemen explain that accidents used to lead to changes being made. That's why the doors of the silo can now only open to one side. There are also fences around the pits, and the roller, for example, has an emergency cord. Hamza explains that things are fortunately different now: "In the past, safety wasn't a topic.

"In the past, safety wasn't a topic. That awareness was much less"

him, but he didn't respond. The foam from the proteins that sometimes flowed over the road had also flowed over a pit where someone was still inside, and that man didn't survive... Yes, that makes an impression."

That awareness was much less. A tank wasn't secured like it is now. Now pipes are flushed, blinded, and the oxygen in the tank is measured. Only then is the tank released for the cleaning crew. You also don't enter the tank unsecured or alone anymore, and always with a

manhole watch. That's a colleague who supervises above the hole. Moreover, a rescue team is on standby if a job takes longer or is complicated."

Not going back to the old days

With all those safety protocols, the work has sometimes become less efficient, but the gentlemen don't want to go back to the old days. Jan says about this: "The fixed procedures, risk analyses, and a working method where we check each other ensure that everyone can go home healthy again. We too. That's worth all the effort." Hamza adds: "The mentality has also changed. Everyone wants to work safely. You see it everywhere when you look around. You can't ignore it anymore, and we don't want to either."

Collaboration between Avebe and ChainCraft

Valuable products from potato juice

Royal Avebe strives for increasing circularity in its operations. In a circular economy, there is no waste. Residual streams become raw materials. This is precisely what the collaboration between Avebe and the innovative company ChainCraft aims to achieve. ChainCraft has developed a technology that can convert a residual stream from Avebe, potato juice, into valuable products.

During the production of potato starch and proteins, potato juice is produced, a watery residual stream containing organic substances such as amino acids, sugars, and inorganic salts. Avebe currently evaporates this stream to make fertilisers and raw materials for animal feed. Evaporating this stream consumes a lot of energy. Thanks to ChainCraft's innovative process, Avebe no longer needs to evaporate the water. The potato juice can be directly used as a raw material for the production of valuable fatty acids and minerals such as potassium, ammonium, and phosphorus, which are important fertilisers for agriculture. Recently, ChainCraft signed Heads of Agreement with Avebe to implement this technology on a large scale.



CO²-reduction

ChainCraft's process is designed to valorise organic waste streams and reduce the use of non-sustainable raw materials, says Niels van Stralen, co-founder of ChainCraft: "Fatty acids are important ingredients for countless products, such as fragrances and flavourings, lubricants, cleaning agents, and animal feed. These are currently mainly made from palm and mineral oil. With our process, they can be made from residual streams that currently have little value." His company uses bacteria to convert the organic substances in the potato juice. A specially 'trained' bacterial culture for this process essentially cuts the organic raw material into pieces. In a second step, the microorganisms make longer fatty acids. The sustainability gain is significant: "If you calculate it, our process results in a 50 to 80 percent reduction in CO² emissions compared to traditional processes for making these substances."

← Niels van Stralen (left) and David Fousert sign the Heads of Agreement

SUSTAINABILITY

On May 8, ChainCraft won the Industry Innovators Award 2025 with their fermentation technology



↑ ChainCraft's demonstration plant in Amsterdam

From laboratory to full-scale factory

ChainCraft's technology is based on knowledge developed at Wageningen University. ChainCraft was founded in 2010 to bring the research from the laboratory to a larger scale. In the early years, the start-up worked in the university's laboratories, says Niels: "We tested various raw materials, including potato juice from Avebe." To apply the technology in a commercial process, the company took several steps to scale up. "In 2014, we commissioned our industrial pilot plant in Amsterdam. Since 2020, a large-scale demonstration plant with a capacity of 2000 tons per year has been operating there. Now we are ready for the next step: the realisation of a large-scale factory, which will be ten times the size of our demo plant."

Involvement

According to Niels, it is logical that ChainCraft is now choosing to collaborate with Avebe: "We have achieved good results with tests using Avebe's residual stream as a raw material for our process. Moreover, there is enough space on the site next to the production location in

Ter Apeldoorn for us. It is important for this process to be close to a player who can supply us with the raw materials for our process, so we do not have to transport large volumes. Additionally, we can achieve synergies in the areas of energy, steam, biogas, and (waste) water. For example, we can use the existing facilities such as the water treatment plant."

But the collaboration between the two companies is not only successful because of the possible integration of processes and facilities. "We are very pleased with Avebe's involvement. Our project fits very well with their ambitions, and we notice that the management also supports this collaboration," says Niels.

ChainCraft is now working on the permit application and securing financing. If everything goes according to plan, the new factory will be operational from 2028.

