

ADVANCES ON PILOT PLANT AND COOKING LAB FACILITIES FOR TRAINING AND EDUCATION

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Keywords: Food processing; Pilot plant; Cooking lab; Training & education; Industrial services

Abstract

Food processing is constantly facing new challenges in terms of developing new products, which are innovative, healthy, easy to consume, sustainable, among other characteristics. The combination of food science and technology with nutritional knowledge is more and more a requirement from food stakeholders.

To answer the education and training requirements from food industry, the implementation of a cooking lab combined with a food processing pilot plant is the most adequate strategy from a University willing to bridge the gap between the academic teaching and the industrial and employees training needs.

The Escola Superior de Biotecnologia of Universidade Católica Portuguesa recently built a new cooking lab next to its classical food pilot plant. This cooking lab has all the facilities to develop new products and processes that can then be tested at pilot plant scale, packed and carry out shelf life studies.

These new combined labs are being used by 1st, 2nd and 3rd cycle students, from food engineering to nutritional sciences degrees, and its potentialities are starting to be highly requested by local food industries, particularly small and medium enterprises, for training of their employees and developing new products.