



# BIGGER & BETTER 2019

11-12 MARCH 2019, AUCKLAND SHOWGROUNDS

## FOODFIRST EXPO SET TO RETURN

*In two short years, the Foodfirst Expo has evolved into a unique trade-only event and a highlight of the trade show calendar. The 2018 edition was a resounding success, with over 100 exhibitors presenting their products to more than 1000 industry figures. The 2019 Foodfirst Expo is set to be bigger and better than ever before, with the show extending over two days for maximum attendance.*



Held on Monday 11 and Tuesday 12 March at the ASB Showgrounds in Auckland, the 2019 Foodfirst Expo will gather passionate suppliers and committed buyers under one roof. Highlights of previous shows that will return in 2019 include the live Vitasoy Espresso Yourself Latte Art Challenge, cooking demonstrations in the Yes Chef! section, and the much-anticipated return of PITCHme, a unique opportunity for suppliers to pitch their product to a panel of industry heavyweights.

Another innovation for 2018 was

the Inspire+ section of the exhibition, which gave the opportunity for smaller, artisanal producers to present their products. The Inspire+ section is set to expand in 2019, giving more producers the chance to share their work with the industry and offering buyers a window into the world of New Zealand's artisanal scene. The Foodfirst Gala Dinner, held on Monday March 11, will see the presentation of a number of awards including Supplier of the Year, Account Manager of the Year, Regional Sales Person of the Year and a Rising Star Award. I&C



## DOES YOUR PRODUCT HAVE WHAT IT TAKES?



PITCHme is an exciting initiative from Restaurant & Café and Foodfirst that opens up the lines of communication between small, large and artisanal producers and the buying groups.

Last year, local companies such as Dr Feelgood, The Larder Project and Tamco, as well as larger groups like Blucrock and Magnesol, all presented their products and services to a panel

with a total buying power of over \$2 billion.

PITCHme is a dragons-den style opportunity for the foodservice industry, giving suppliers the chance to pitch their brand to a panel of buyers and influencers in the foodservice industry. Suppliers submit an entry for consideration to the panel, who will then make a list of the finalists.

These finalists will have the opportunity to put their product in front of the panel in person for feedback and of course the possibility of being stocked.

The PITCHme panel is made up of industry influencers

including representation from small and large distributors, high profile chefs, and buyers for groups from banner QSRs to institutions.

The panellists have the option of taking up the product, but more importantly will give feedback and advice on the product, including suitability of purpose, premiumisation, what further development is needed or a simple reality check.

PITCHme will provide foodservice suppliers with critical advice on a brand's future development and provide a network for ongoing advice. I&C

## VITASOY ESPRESSO YOURSELF RETURNS

The Vitasoy Espresso Yourself Latte Art Competition has returned for another year. Last time the competition gave baristas from around the country the chance to win a share of \$10,000 – the largest cash prize of any barista competition in the country.

Vitasoy Espresso Yourself is a fantastic opportunity for baristas nationwide to showcase their skills in front of a live audience and renowned judges. The winner will take home \$5000 cash, with second

and third place receiving \$2000 and \$1500 respectively.

This year there is a new monthly prize of \$250. Simply upload your latte art to Instagram with the hashtag #espressoyourselfnz and tag @restaurantandcafe to get in the draw. At the end of each month, we'll collect all the entries and share them on the Vitasoy Espresso Yourself Facebook page. One prize will be awarded every month for the next six months, so make sure your barista gets their entry in now! I&C

