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EU Strengthens Singapore Partnership to Drive Functional Dairy Innovation in Southeast Asia

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The European Union is strengthening its engagement with Singapore as a regional hub for advanced food manufacturing and nutrition innovation. This comes as demand for functional dairy ingredients accelerates across Southeast Asia.

Led by Bord Bia â?? The Irish Food Board, the initiative is part of the â??European Dairy: Ireland, Where Nature Meets Scienceâ?• campaign, a â?¬3.2 million investment co-funded by the European Union to strengthen Asiaâ??s nutrition pipeline and foster long-term trade partnerships. The campaign showcases sustainable farming and scientific research behind European dairy production.

Singapore is globally recognised as a hub for innovation, positioned at the heart of Southeast Asiaâ??s food ecosystem, and has an important role in regional product development and distribution. Manufacturers across ASEAN are increasingly seeking high-quality science-backed ingredients, as demand for targeted life-stage nutrition, preventative health products and functional foods is increasing. This is largely driven by the fact that Southeast Asiaâ??s population is growing and ageing rapidly, particularly in Singapore, leading to increased demand for functional foods to support healthy ageing and overall well-being. Given limited domestic dairy production in Singapore, F&B innovators and manufacturers are driven to rely on imports and seek trusted international partners.

Lorna Allen, South East Market Manager of Bord Bia, mentioned, â??Singapore is a key gateway for European dairy engagement in Southeast Asia, particularly as demand for functional and science-backed nutrition continues to grow. Ireland has exported â?¬276 million value of dairy products to Southeast Asia in 2025, a y-o-y increase of 16.4 per cent. Through the EU-funded campaign, Bord Bia is supporting closer collaboration between European dairy producers from Ireland and regional food and nutrition innovators.â?•

Dr Kalpana Bhaskaran, Deputy Director, Industry Partnerships and Head, Glycemic Index Research Unit at Temasek Polytechnic, commented, â??Dairy ingredients play a vital role across the life course. With proteinâ??fortified and functional dairy products gaining strong momentum, the opportunity to improve population health through evidenceâ??based dairy innovation has never been greater.â?•