

7 September 2021

TIA awarded AusIndustry grant to improve food safety and storage

A successful AusIndustry Global Innovation grant will aim to improve food safety in manufacturing, shipping, and storage while strengthening global ties with two major Spanish organisations.

Chief Investigator, Tom Ross, Professor in Food Microbiology at Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture, helped secure the AusIndustry Global Innovation grant for the “*Development of complementary preservatives for Australian meat products*” in collaboration with two Australian companies, Mantiss Pty Ltd and George Weston Foods and a Spanish company, Chemital. Spanish Government funding came via their Centre for the Development of Industrial Technology (CDTI).

“The project aims to assess the efficacy and reliability of products intended as additives to extend the shelf life and improve the safety of foods,” Professor Tom Ross said.

“Through cooperation between the industry, TIA and Chemital S.A.U. we plan to test and, as appropriate, modify a family of preservatives for Australian conditions to provide the local processed meat industry with substantial improvements in food safety and cold chain resilience, for both domestic and export purposes.”

“Processed meats (‘smallgoods’) generally have long shelf lives under refrigeration because they are made by traditional methods involving addition of salt, fermentation, or cooking and, in the modern world, using vacuum-packaging.

“Having newer preservation methods will open the door for developing newer, healthier, and more convenient products that, nonetheless, give the same enjoyment that are safe, and have the same, or greater shelf life. Longer shelf life also increases the opportunity to reach more distant export markets.”

This aspect of the work will focus on Australian smallgoods and a parallel grant has been submitted in Spain, by the Spanish industry partner, Chemital, drawing on Spanish government funding from the CDTI.

The project will be led and co-funded by Mantiss, the Australian agent for the Chemital (Spain) products that will be assessed. The other Australian industry partner is George Weston Foods, Ltd.

“The aim is that the two projects will be genuinely collaborative and complementary,” Professor Michael Rose, Interim Director, Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture, said.

“Key to this is the University of Tasmania’s connection with AusIndustry which is supporting international connectivity. That international connectivity will provide benefits to the local food industry because it will support the development of innovative, premium foods, in Tasmania and Australia as well as increasing our capability in food safety and innovation.

“The project should lead to scientific literature publications, and it exemplifies the University’s strategy in its co-design with industry as well as on the impact anticipated in the industry sector.”

The total project value is \$1,204,028, which includes \$525,000 in funding from the Australian Government, and \$250,000 from Chemital.

Australian Liberal Senator Eric Abetz officially announced the successful grant funding at TIA in Sandy Bay on Tuesday, September 7.

TIA is a joint venture of the University of Tasmania and the Tasmanian Government.

Information released by:

Communications Office

University of Tasmania

+61 3 6226 2124

Communications.Office@utas.edu.au

[Twitter.com/utas_](https://twitter.com/utas_)