

Mexicans create food supplement from brewing waste!



When he started a vegetarian diet with the aim of limiting his meat consumption, **Javier Vázquez** stumbled upon something: as a student living away from home **he hardly ever had time to prepare his meals** or even sit down to eat them.

This situation, coupled with wanting to do something to **care for the planet**, led him to co-found **Grainest**, a venture that develops **food supplements from waste produced in the brewing industry**.

*“Through a process called **supra recycling**, we’re able to take advantage of **brewing waste** (all the **malt grain** that they used to extract sugars) instead of it just ending up as waste in landfills,”* Javier shares with **CONECTA**.



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Javier, a 19-year old student at Tec de Monterrey's **Querétaro** campus, joined forces with **Óscar Mancilla, 25**, a **Food Chemist** who graduated from the Autonomous University of the State of Hidalgo, to develop this project.

Grainest's first product is **Eco-Shake**. In order to make it, they consulted about 20 nutritionists to generate a truly balanced formula.

*"It's a food supplement that gives you the **nutrients** of a **complete meal**; it is a **powder which you use to prepare a milkshake** in two minutes, you drink it, and it gives you energy for up to 4 hours,"* Javier explains.

*"We take advantage of the **high amount of fiber** the **malt bagasse** has, as well as the **vegetable proteins** and **minerals** that remain after the brewing process. What's more, **it doesn't include any sugar**",* adds Óscar.

The founders market their products through the **Grainest** website, featuring flavors such as chocolate, vanilla, green tea, and taro root



width="900" loading="lazy"> **Nutrition and reducing our ecological footprint**

Javier and Óscar met at an **entrepreneurship** event, realized that they both had common interests, and that they could develop a project together.

While investigating which problem they could solve through a project, they learned that, according to data from the **World Health Organization**, 7 out of 10 adults in **Mexico suffer from malnutrition**.

Óscar also had work experience in the beer industry, so it occurred to both of them to look into malt bagasse.

*“We realized that it is a **‘nutrient mine’** but if we don’t utilize this waste, it can cause environmental problems,”* highlights Javier.

When doing research on the subject, they realized that across the country there are more than **2 million tons of malt bagasse** produced by the brewing industry.

Utilizing malt bagasse **prevents the production of carbon dioxide as it decomposes, and also prevents water pollution**.

*“We want to **take care of people’s health by making it easier for them to be able to nourish themselves correctly, and to help reduce their ecological footprint through the process we carry out,**”* says the Tec student.

At the moment, Javier and Óscar obtain the malt bagasse from craft breweries and use the machinery at a bakery belonging to Javier’s mother to be able to process their product.



width="900" loading="lazy"> **THEIR GUIDE: CONSCIOUS CAPITALISM**

Javier was clear that he wanted to be an entrepreneur ever since he studied at **PrepaTec**.

Upon beginning his undergraduate studies at the **Tec**, he learned about the concept of **conscious capitalism**. As a result of this, he set out to develop a company which would have the **social impact** proposed by [Raj Sisodia](#) and **John Mackey**, promoters of the movement.

“During my classes in the first semesters of the degree, a lot of emphasis was put on the question of conscious capitalism. I saw Raj Sisodia lecture at the Tec, and the truth is that the concept has stuck with me.

*“I began to think about a **company** which **not only pursues economic benefit but creates greater wellbeing for itself, its people, its partners, its suppliers, and its customers, and it is that philosophy we use to govern many of our actions,**” Javier says.*



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On the **Tec's Querétaro campus**, Javier came across **Enactus**, a student social entrepreneurship group, where he remembers being introduced to **Ján Rehák**, the professor from that campus' Business School who is currently his mentor.

*"Javier's project has great potential to generate positive change in the industry; it's developing in an **innovative way**, seeking a change towards a **circular economy**, and generating partnerships that support that goal,"* Rehák says.

*"I believe that the future of humanity is only possible through the **circular economy** and **conscious capitalism**. These are **very important models for today's entrepreneurs** and, as mentors, we help them understand them and apply them to their day-to-day lives,"* says the professor.

Where Grainest is going

Through their sustainable project, the partners have excelled in **national entrepreneurial competitions** such as the **2019 HEINEKEN Green Challenge** in which they were **semifinalists**, and right now in the **2020 Corona Challenge**, where they have made it to the final.

The creators of Grainest seek to consolidate their brand and improve their product. As an example, although their **packaging is already biodegradable**, they would like to improve it so it is **100% compostable**.

“We want it to come in a package that **you can plant in your garden**, and which will disappear in days,” says Javier.



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For that they need more resources, says the student. That is why they developed a campaign introducing a new flavor milkshake: **pan de muerto**.

“The objective is that, from the resources obtained from the sale of that batch, we can continue financing development.

“We need to do tests with equipment that we do not currently have, looking at issues of porosity or moisture, and to examine other important processes so we can guarantee the nutritional quality that is required,” he explains.

This would give **Grainest** the ability to generate another line of business and expand so as to be able to achieve its aim to develop conscientious products.

*“We have several ideas to develop, but a lot of our work is going to be on positioning ourselves as a brand that generates solutions in a **conscientious way**.*

“The Tec has helped me a lot in terms of being able to learn and apply my knowledge on the fly. It has provided me with tools and knowledge and allowed me to see what theories work and can be adapted to this environment,” concludes Javier.

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