Innovations at IFFA trade show

# GEA shows technology innovations for a better food future at IFFA

Düsseldorf (Germany), March 17, 2025 – GEA, a leading technology group, is set to showcase numerous innovations at IFFA 2025 in Frankfurt, Germany, from May 3 to 8. The company will demonstrate its expertise in meat, alternative proteins and cheese production at Hall 8, Booth G10, highlighting their latest technological advances in food processing, slicing and packaging designed to increase efficiency and reduce energy consumption. With a strong commitment to customer-centricity, GEA empowers food processors to navigate the evolving market landscape through integrated solutions and continuous innovation.

As the world's population grows, so does the demand for food and its variety. At the same time, inflation and the rising cost of living are making consumers more price-sensitive. In response, food producers are under increasing pressure to optimize their costs without losing sight of efficiency in an increasingly competitive market.

”We are committed to helping our customers navigate today's challenging market by providing innovative technology solutions that enhance production efficiency and sustainability. From maximizing raw material utilization and reducing packaging volume to adopting recyclable mono materials in line with Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation placed on the EU market, we prioritize sustainability and cost-effectiveness”, says Peter Lauwers, CEO at GEA Food & Healthcare Technologies division. “Our solutions support to optimize energy consumption and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, enabling our customers to achieve greater operational efficiency while minimizing their environmental impact. State-of-the-art systems for automation and advanced digital tools provide additionally comprehensive Overall Equipment Effectiveness (OEE) and increase the production yield.”

**Highlighted innovations at IFFA in Frankfurt**

**New spiral oven - CookStar First**

GEA is expanding its successful CookStar family with the introduction of **CookStar First**, a new spiral oven designed to serve medium-capacity markets, particularly for coated and plant-based products, with a throughput of up to 1,700 kg/hr. Offering up to 3% higher yield than most ovens and delivering 10-12% energy savings, CookStar First qualifies for GEA’s TÜV-validated ecolabel, “Add Better.” To put this into perspective, a 1% yield improvement in a two-shift operation at 1,500 kg/hr could result in savings of up to 55 tons of product annually, translating into a financial impact up to 200,000 EUR, depending on the substrate and coating type. CookStar First is equipped with advanced process enhancements that improve process control and cooking insights. It comes with the cloud-connected **Starter Package Plus**, a service solution that supports preventive maintenance to maximize uptime. Additionally, the **Insight Partner** module provides a comprehensive dashboard for energy usage, enabling customers to fine-tune their settings and minimize energy consumption for their SKUs (stock keeping units).

**MaxiFormer 2.0 concept**

GEA introduces the **MaxiFormer II**, the latest evolution in drum forming technology, setting new industry benchmarks for efficiency, consistency, and sustainability. Building on the proven legacy of the original MaxiFormer, this next-generation solution delivers superior performance at the lowest total cost of ownership (TCO) on the market. Its drum can now run continuously for up to 60 hours, at speeds of up to 10 tons/hr, without the need for cleaning, resulting in impressive uptime and class-leading productivity.

Moreover, the new machine follows its predecessor by delivering market-leading consistent product quality output with over 1.7% lower give-aways and uniform weight distribution across the belt width. Designed for versatility, the MaxiFormer II effortlessly handles a wide range of applications, including poultry, fish, vegetarian and vegan products, pork, potatoe masses, and even cheese-based mixes – traditionally challenging to form reliably at high speeds. Equipped with the advanced **SmartControl HMI** and automated product weight reporting, the system empowers food processors with real-time data insights, ensuring precise control and enhanced decision-making.

A key feature of the new system is **GEA MaxiClean**, an intelligent, automated cleaning solution that minimizes downtime and maximizes productivity. By optimizing water, chemical and energy consumption, the **MaxiClean** system reduces total annual water usage by up to 80% and hot water consumption by 91%, significantly lowering operational costs and environmental impact. As a result, the **MaxiFormer II** has been awarded the TÜV-validated "Add Better" ecolabel of the company, underscoring GEA’s commitment to sustainable innovation.

**Innovative combination: GEA OptiScanner 5000 and GEA OptiSlicer 7000 set new standards in slicing precision**

GEA’s food processing and packaging portfolio is among the most comprehensive on the market, and this will be demonstrated at the show with a slicing, loading and packaging line featuring cutting-edge technological innovations. A key highlight is the debut of the **GEA OptiScanner 5000** and **GEA OptiSlicer 7000**, which together set new standards in precision slicing and efficiency.

The **OptiSlicer 7000**, available with a mono drive or optional two independent drives, enables high-capacity slicing of two natural products while maintaining individual weight control per lane. When paired with the newly developed **GEA Slicing Blade R505**, featuring an extended cutting edge, it ensures superior portion quality and accommodates wider products. In interaction with the preceding **OptiScanner 5000**, GEA’s latest advanced optical scanning solution, the system minimizes product giveaway and maximizes throughput – reducing waste and optimizing raw material utilization in production.

The impact of this efficiency is significant: in a specific application, reducing portion weight by just **2 grams in a 200-gram package** could generate annual savings of 400,000 EUR for a two-shift operation. Additionally, all **GEA PLC-controlled machines** are **IoT-ready** and seamlessly connected to the **GEA Cloud**, enabling smart data integration for real-time performance optimization.

**Holistic approach reduces energy consumption and emissions**

As an intensive energy user, the large-scale production industry must lead the way in achieving net-zero activities. [GEA NEXUS](https://www.gea.com/en/campaigns/nexus/?utm_campaign=landingpage&utm_source=nexus&utm_source=nexus&utm_medium=shortcut%3Futm_campaign%3Dlandingpage&utm_medium=shortcut) is a holistic engineering solution designed to optimize energy use while minimize carbon footprint in the food industry. By integrating and combining food processing and heating/cooling-solutions rather than treating them separately, GEA NEXUS can reduce energy consumption and operating costs by up to 30%, reduce CO2 and NOX emissions by up to 100%, reduce water consumption, and pave the way for closed-loop and carbon-free production. One of the key enablers of GEA NEXUS is the intelligent use of [GEA heat pump](https://www.gea.com/en/products/heat-pumps/) technology.

At IFFA, visitors will have the opportunity to engage with GEA experts and learn about the latest innovations in improving production processes and sustainability in the food industry. **Hall 8, Booth G10**

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Picture preview



Source: GEA

NOTES TO THE EDITORS

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**About GEA**

GEA is one of the world’s largest suppliers of systems and components to the food, beverage and pharmaceutical industries. The international technology group, founded in 1881, focuses on machinery and plants, as well as advanced process technology, components and comprehensive services. For instance, every second pharma separator for essential healthcare products such as vaccines or novel biopharmaceuticals is produced by GEA. In food, every fourth package of pasta or every third chicken nugget are processed with GEA technology. With more than 18,000 employees, the group generated revenues of about EUR 5.5 billion in more than 150 countries in the 2024 fiscal year. GEA plants, processes, components and services enhance the efficiency and sustainability of customers’ production. They contribute significantly to the reduction of CO2 emissions, plastic usage and food waste. In doing so, GEA makes a key contribution toward a sustainable future, in line with the company’s purpose: ”Engineering for a better world.”

GEA is listed on the German MDAX, the European STOXX® Europe 600 Index and is also a constituent of the leading sustainability indices DAX 50 ESG, MSCI Global Sustainability and Dow Jones Best-in-Class World.

More information can be found online at **gea.com**.
If you do not want to receive any further information from GEA, please send an e-mail to **pr@gea.com**.