



# Alamance Foods Launches AFI Labs to Accelerate Food and Beverage Innovation from Concept to Commercialization

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*Eric Nakata, Alamance Foods  
Corporate Chef*

[Alamance Foods](#), a leading developer and manufacturer of aerosol whipped toppings, cold foams, specialty beverages, and frozen treats, announces the launch of [AFI Labs](#), a dedicated research, development, and commercialization center designed to help foodservice operators, consumer packaged goods companies, retailers, convenience retailers, and restaurant brands bring innovative products to market faster.

AFI Labs combines deep scientific expertise, pilot-scale manufacturing capabilities, culinary innovation, and commercialization support into a single collaborative environment where customers can rapidly develop,

validate, and scale new food and beverage solutions.

“As consumer preferences evolve faster than ever, companies need innovation partners that can move from idea to commercialization with speed, flexibility, and technical confidence,” said Eric Nakata, Corporate Chef. “AFI Labs was created to help our customers shorten development timelines while leveraging Alamance Foods' manufacturing expertise to deliver products ready for commercial success.”

A Collaborative Innovation Partner

AFI Labs offers a customer-centric approach that supports every phase of product development—from early ideation through commercial production. Rather than a traditional product development model, customers work alongside cross-functional experts in research and development, process engineering, commercialization, packaging, culinary development, and

manufacturing.

The collaborative model allows customers to rapidly evaluate concepts, optimize formulations, validate manufacturing processes, and confidently launch products that meet evolving consumer demands.

#### Accelerating Innovation Across Multiple Categories

AFI Labs specializes in high-growth food and beverage categories including:

- Dairy and dairy alternative aerosol whipped toppings
- Dairy and dairy alternative aerosol cold foams
- RTD beverage applications
- Freezer pops
- Drinkable yogurt

The facility supports customers developing products for foodservice, convenience retail, quick-service restaurants, consumer packaged goods, and private label programs.

#### From Market Insights to Commercial Success

AFI Labs follows a structured innovation process designed to reduce development risk while accelerating commercialization:

- Innovation and consumer trend exploration
- Concept development
- Rapid prototype formulation
- Validation and analytical testing
- Pilot-scale manufacturing trials
- Commercial scale-up and production support

By integrating commercialization planning early in development, AFI Labs helps customers transition seamlessly from prototype to manufacturing.

#### Technical Expertise Meets Real-World Applications



Alamance Foods announces launch of AFI Labs

The facility includes laboratory, culinary, and pilot plant resources designed to replicate real-world customer environments.

Capabilities include:

- Bench-scale product development
- Pilot-scale processing equipment
- Product performance evaluation
- Manufacturing validation and scale-up
- Sensory testing and competitive benchmarking
- Culinary-inspired product applications
- Coffee, café, and beverage equipment for customer-specific execution
- Small commercial bakery equipment
- Modular plug-and-play kitchens that accommodate customer equipment and operational workflows

These capabilities enable customers to evaluate products under authentic operating conditions before commercial launch.

Customized Innovation Services

AFI Labs provides a range of collaborative development services, including:

- Innovation workshops
- Consumer and market trend exploration
- Rapid prototyping
- Customized formula development
- Technical troubleshooting
- Product optimization
- Long-term co-development partnerships

Each engagement is tailored to meet individual customer objectives, whether developing entirely new platforms or enhancing existing products.

Built for Today's Food and Beverage Market

As foodservice operators, beverage brands, retailers, and consumer packaged goods companies continue seeking differentiated products, AFI Labs provides the flexibility, technical expertise, and commercialization capabilities needed to accelerate innovation while reducing time to market.

With direct access to Alamance Foods' manufacturing expertise and commercialization

resources, customers gain a strategic development partner capable of transforming promising concepts into scalable, market-ready products.

For more information about AFI Labs or to schedule an innovation workshop, visit [www.alamancefoods.com](http://www.alamancefoods.com) or contact the Alamance Foods Commercialization Team.

#### About Alamance Foods

Alamance Foods is a leading manufacturer and innovation partner serving the foodservice, convenience, retail, and consumer packaged goods industries. The company specializes in aerosol whipped toppings, dairy and dairy alternative cold foams, specialty beverage solutions, frozen treats, and custom food and beverage product development. Through AFI Labs, Alamance Foods partners with customers to accelerate innovation from concept development through commercialization and full-scale production.

Marisa Viestenz

Alamance Foods

Marisa.Viestenz@alamancefoods.com

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