

Driving the Future of Plant-Based Fillets with Fibre-Based Technology

13 April 2026 | News

Mark van Noorloos, Head of Marketing at Schouten Europe



Mark van Noorloos, Head of Marketing at Schouten Europe

As demand for next-generation plant-based proteins accelerates, manufacturers are under increasing pressure to deliver products that closely replicate the sensory experience of meat while also improving sustainability and production efficiency. Netherlands-based Schouten Europe is stepping into this space with a new fibre-based technology designed to enhance texture, scalability and environmental performance in its latest fillet innovation.

In this interview with NUFFOODS Spectrum, Mark van Noorloos, Head of Marketing at Schouten Europe, discusses the technical breakthroughs behind the company's proprietary fibre structure, its approach to reducing processing intensity and environmental impact, and how evolving consumer expectations are shaping the future of plant-based protein development.

Schouten Europe has introduced a proprietary fibre-based technology for its new fillet. What were the biggest technical challenges your R&D team faced in developing this structure, and how were they overcome?

“One of the main challenges was achieving a fine, consistent fibre structure that delivers both tenderness and stability. Many conventional approaches result in either a too coarse or uneven texture. Our R&D team focused on controlling fibre alignment and distribution, allowing us to create a uniform, meat-like bite. Balancing this with scalability and process efficiency was key, and required close collaboration between product development and processing technology.”

As highlighted by CEO Niek-Jan Schouten, reducing processing intensity is a key focus. How does your fibre technology compare with conventional texturisation methods in terms of energy efficiency and scalability?

“Compared to conventional texturisation methods, our fibre technology allows us to reach the desired structure with fewer intensive processing steps. This results in a more efficient use of energy while maintaining product quality. At the same time, the process is designed with scalability in mind, making it suitable for larger production volumes without compromising consistency.”

With growing scrutiny around ingredient sourcing, how is Schouten Europe working to localise supply chains and reduce dependency on non-European raw materials?

“We continuously work on optimising our supply chain by sourcing raw materials as locally as possible. By focusing on European suppliers, we reduce dependency on long-distance imports and increase transparency. This approach not only supports more stable supply chains, but also contributes to lowering transport-related impact.”

Your internal analysis suggests a 10–30% reduction in environmental impact could you elaborate on the key factors driving this improvement and how it is measured?

“The reduction in environmental impact is driven by several factors. These include a more efficient production process, optimised use of raw materials, and reduced transport movements within the supply chain. We assess this through internal lifecycle-based analyses, comparing our new technology with more conventional plant-based production methods. Together, these improvements lead to a meaningful reduction in overall impact.”

From a consumer perspective, how important are attributes like juiciness, texture, and ease of preparation in driving adoption of plant-based alternatives, particularly in markets where meat consumption remains high?

“Attributes such as juiciness, texture and ease of preparation are critical for consumer acceptance. Especially in markets with high meat consumption, products need to closely match the eating experience people are familiar with. A consistent texture and reliable cooking performance help lower the barrier to repeat purchase and long-term adoption.”

Looking ahead, how does this innovation fit into Schouten Europe’s broader strategy for expanding its product portfolio and strengthening its position in the global plant-based protein market?

“This innovation is an important step in strengthening our product portfolio with more advanced textures and improved performance. It allows us to better meet the expectations of both consumers and our B2B partners. At the same time, it creates a strong foundation for further product development, supporting our ambition to grow in international markets and across different application segments.”

Shraddha Warde

shraddha.warde@mmactiv.com