

Mexicans in finals of Institute of Food Technologists competition



Only six finalists from around the world were selected, and these are the only ones from Latin America

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IFT Alimentos Qro

A team of **Food Engineering** students from the Tec's Querétaro campus **has been selected** as one of the **six finalist** groups in the [Institute of Food Technologists \(IFT\)](#) **international competition** for developing a **vegan burrito**.

The team is made up of Trinela Rodríguez, Rocío Adriana Posada, Mariana Fernández, and Julieta Galván.

Their project is a burrito designed specifically for military personnel and is intended to be **consumed at any time**.

On July 13, the **Querétaro team** will present its project at the conference in Chicago, representing both **Mexico and Latin America**.

*“The IFT is the **largest international institution** focusing on the food sector. During its annual conference, there is an expo with stands and several competitions,”* Mariana explained.



*The students during a laboratory practical at the Tec’s Querétaro campus.
Photo: Miranda Lara*

They say this is the burrito that can do it all

The **Food Engineering** students **at the Tec’s Querétaro campus** have developed a **vegan, gluten-free, burrito that is** vacuum-packed, sterilized, and comes in **pouches or bags**.

“It’s a burrito with a gluten-free tortilla, gluten-free vegan chicken, beans, rice, and guacamole. The guacamole is spray-dried,” Trinela said.

It is **primarily designed for military personnel, outdoor** enthusiasts, and those facing **emergency situations** like **earthquakes or hurricanes**.

*“Our burrito has an **adaptogen** that helps with cognitive function, stress, and anxiety in these types of situations. The moment someone eats it, our role is to help them deal with their emotions,” Adriana added.*

It is a product for those who **need convenient food in seconds**, which lasts for a long time **without any special care**.



The students will present their project at the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) conference in Chicago. Photo: Miranda Lara

The application phase

Various competitions are held during the **IFT conference**, including those focused on children’s snacks, solutions for developing countries, and product development. The Queretaro team is participating in the latter of these.

“Although you’re asked to submit a proposal for your food product, you have to include everything that’s involved in developing it, including safety, food safety, ingredients, nutrition, processes, costs, and marketing,” Mariana said.

A document is uploaded at the start of the process, after which the six finalist groups are chosen to attend this conference in Chicago to present their oral and sensory presentations.

“Our burrito has an adaptogen that helps with cognitive function, stress, and anxiety; The moment someone eats it, our role is to help them deal with their emotions.” - Adriana Posada

Strength through unity

As the **team started working** on this project during the vacations, they were separated and it was difficult to coordinate their schedules. They also mentioned that they didn't know where to start.

“We all put all our heart and soul into it, as well as a lot of creativity, which built mutual trust; when a problem arose, we were able to solve it quickly,” they added.

They mentioned that they feel their biggest challenge will be their **oral presentation**, as they must keep control of their nerves in order to fully demonstrate why they call themselves a **“work machine.”**

“We’re going to have to put all our effort into it, because it’s the final part of everything we’ve worked for, and it’s worth knowing how to communicate our story well,” Mariana commented.



The burrito is made of gluten-free tortillas with beans, rice, and guacamole. Photo: IFT Alimentos Qro

This project has been a **great challenge for them**, as they **had to use everything** they learned throughout their degrees in order to reach the final phase. However, they are grateful for the help of their **professors, and for the use of the facilities and tools** offered on campus.

“We want to thank Professor Rubén for always being willing to answer our questions and making sure we have the means to get to the final and get the most out of it,” they concluded.

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