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Pinoy *asin tek* win gold, bronze awards in 2023 Seoul invention fair

Korea Invention Promotion Association (KIPA) President, Koh Joonho, through the Seoul International Invention Fair 2023 (SIIF 2023) cited two Pinoy technologies on salt developed by the Industrial Technology Development Institute (DOST-ITDI) during the Awarding Ceremony held on November 3, 2023 at the Convention and Exhibition Center (CoEx) in Seoul, South Korea.

Flavored salts and the salt washing machine developed by the Chemicals and Energy Division of ITDI won the Gold and Bronze Awards for Excellence in Invention Creation, respectively. Both were developed under the initiative of ITDI Director and Project Team Leader Annabelle V. Briones.

The first on flavored or gourmet salts was developed with Maricar B. Carandang and Nadine Kristel A. Garcia, and former ITDI Director Dr. Maria Patricia V. Azanza and staff Ara Antonette Alfuen.

The technology is cashing in on the convenience food market. Businesswire, in its October 2023 report, noted a changing lifestyle of consumers in US, China, Japan and Canada, and the Asia Pacific; they are demanding for convenience food, mostly ready-to-eat food products. With more and more food grade salts being used as flavor enhancer, the trend is encouraging many salt manufacturers to innovate and introduce new flavored food grade salts.

ITDI thus improved its gourmet salts to serve these markets. It presented in SIIF 2023 six aroma infused salts soured with extracts from seaweeds like "*lato*" or sea grapes, shiitake mushroom, and shrimp heads. Others include salts with a smoky aroma of guava, mango, and tamarind.

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Meanwhile, the continuous screw-type salt washer was designed with Engr. Carlos J. De Vera, Oliver C. Evangelista, Engr. Jayson B. Nuval, Melquiades B. Canceran, and Alexander G. Cruz.

The innovation in the machine aimed to increase the purity of salt to at least 97% as required by R.A. 8172, also known as An Act for Salt Iodization Nationwide (ASIN).

SIIF is hosted by the Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO) and organized by KIPA. Inaugurated two decades ago, this is however the first time for DOST and ITDI to simultaneously join the fair and bag two invention awards.

SIIF 2023 featured more than 600 new inventions and products from more than 30 countries in the Asia Pacific. With nearly 40,000 spectators, buyers, and investors, it is one of the largest annual invention fairs in the world. (AMGuevarra\ ITDI S&T Media Service)

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