**Savers of coffee grounds - the university competition for the collection of coffee grounds by Coca-Cola HBC Hungary and MATE has come to an end**

**Budapest, 29 November 2023 – Exciting and creative student presentations marked the end of the Coffee Grounds Saver student competition launched jointly by Coca-Cola HBC Hungary and the Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences (MATE). The competition aimed to develop a safe collection and recycling system for coffee grounds generated by the HoReCa partners of Coca-Cola HBC Hungary.** **The winning team came up with an idea of a two-part coffee grounds collection system: after UV sterilization in one container, the treated coffee grounds are collected in another bin equipped with a volume sensor, and when it fills up, it will be transported away.**

Although coffee grounds are rich in valuable materials and contain many components that can be recycled, most of them end up in the waste bin because organic waste is not yet integrated into the cycle. Those who are able and consider it important are already composting the coffee grounds at home, but the quantity is negligible compared to the 14,000 tons of grounds generated from the coffee consumed in Hungary. In the domestic coffee market, which is worth approximately HUF 200 billion, an average HoReCa unit produces 4-500 kilograms of coffee grounds annually, according to a previous survey by Coca-Cola HBC Hungary.

Participants of the Coffee Grounds Saver competition tried to identify ways to give new life to used grounds of coffee. In total, 27 student teams applied to the contest, and after a preliminary round in November, the five shortlisted teams were invited to present their solutions to the professional jury.

Coca-Cola HBC Hungary, as the exclusive distributor of Costa Coffee and Caffè Vergnano, is one of the TOP 3 companies of the premium HoReCa coffee market in Hungary. They sell coffee to more than 2,200 customers in the catering industry nationwide. As a responsible company, Coca-Cola HBC Hungary pays special attention to the entire life cycle of its products. An earlier survey conducted by the company among its HoReCa partners showed that more than half of the customers are interested in the coffee grounds collection system and the possibility to get involved in the future, because they would like this valuable raw material to join the cycle.

To make this happen, the recently ended Coffee Grounds Saver student competition was the first step. The aim of this was to develop feasible and creative solutions that are applicable in real market conditions and enable the storage of coffee grounds and their transport to the processing site in a way that does not compromise the value of the raw material and preserves its usefulness.

*„Students feel the timeliness and relevance of this important challenge as well. I am very proud that with the creative entries we received for the competition, we were able to show our corporate partner that our students are capable of innovative thinking to solve a challenging problem. The aim was to demonstrate, from a food science perspective, that coffee grounds can be collected as a valuable raw material suitable for processing in the pharmaceutical and food industry - and I think we achieved this target”* - said **Katalin Badakné Kerti**, Associate Professor at MATE. *„Among the five shortlisted entries we saw solutions combining cooling and vacuum technology, also oven drying, acidic treatment, extending durability by pulverisation and drying, and sterilisation by UV lamps.”*

*„With the contribution of the students, viable, creative ideas were developed that have the potential to move forward and will soon enable us to offer our customers a solution for the safe collection of coffee grounds generated by them.*  *As a representative of Coca-Cola HBC Hungary, my primary focus was on practical implementation and the needs of our customers. It was great to see the students working with incredible passion to help us and they understand perfectly that the challenge they are working on can have a big impact on the future of coffee drinking”* – said **Péter Ákontz**, HoReCa Sales Manager of Coca-Cola HBC Hungary.

The winner of the competition is the BFSL Movement, a Colombian-Ecuadorian team studying at the MATE Gödöllő campus. Their idea is based on a two-part coffee grounds collection system. The team members are studying as PhD students in Hungary, **Natalia Pitta-Osses** is an environmental engineer and **Erika Luzón-Tandazo** is an agricultural engineer. Their solution is a two-part container, the lower unit of which sterilizes the coffee grounds and the upper part, equipped with a volume sensor, is used to store the grounds. When the container is full, the sensor signals this to the responsible partner, who picks up the material at the HoReCa unit and transports it away. It was an obvious choice for the team members to enter the competition because coffee and sustainability are topics close to their hearts. As they come from the world's renowned coffee producing countries, the recycling of the coffee grounds is a particularly important issue and a challenge for them.

The jury chose the BFSL Movement team as the winner because they were looking for a sustainable, simple, feasible solution that complies with current legislation and can be implemented swiftly on the market - while of course meets the strict quality requirements for the storage of coffee grounds.

The cooperating partners have expressed their intention to continue the project. The work does not stop here, and Coca-Cola HBC Hungary hopes that the ideas submitted in the competition will be implemented in the future, after further development and testing. The aim is to find a solution that, if embraced and supported by the right resources, can help the HoReCa customers to make their business more sustainable.

**Related information:**

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**Coca-Cola HBC Hungary**

Coca-Cola HBC Hungary is a member of the Coca-Cola HBC AG Group, which serves 715 million consumers across 29 countries. The Dunaharaszti-based company operates two facilities in Hungary that employ 1,000 people. Its overall production line provides jobs for nearly 13,000 people. Coca-Cola Hungary has so far invested more than HUF 135 billion in the country. The company is one of the most important players of the food and beverage sector, it ships its products to 17 countries. Nearly two-thirds of the materials used in production come from domestic suppliers.

Thanks to the continuous product development over the past years, Coca-Cola HBC Hungary now offers more than 100 types of non-alcoholic beverages to its consumers: carbonated soft drinks (Coca-Cola, Coca-Cola Light, Coca-Cola Zero, Coca-Cola Cherry, Coca-Cola Lemon, Coca-Cola Zero Lemon, Fanta, Fanta Zero, Fanta Zero Red Grape, Fanta Zero Lemon-Elderflower, Sprite, Sprite Zero, Kinley, Kinley Zero), natural mineral waters (NaturAqua), flavoured waters (NaturAqua Emotion, Aquarius), innovative water drinks (Smartwater), juices, nectars and fruit drinks (Cappy, Cappy Pulpy, Cappy Ice Fruit, Cappy Kid, Cappy Lemonade), ice teas (FuzeTea, FuzeTea Zero), sport drinks (Powerade), energy drinks (Monster, Burn). The company’s product portfolio includes the Rainforest Alliance certified mass premium Costa Coffee, and the premium Italian espresso brand Caffè Vergnano. The company also sells premium spirits, including Rézangyal palinka, Jack Daniel’s whiskey, Finlandia vodka, Bacardi rum, Martini vermouth and champagne, Bombay Sapphire gin and, from 2023, the Jack & Coke alcoholic ready to drink product made with Jack Daniel's Tennessee Whiskey and Coca-Cola.