

Emerging Leader – Grace van Tilborg

This award is to recognise a young technologist, scientist, or engineer for their endeavour or achievement, AND leadership potential, within the food industry.

This year's Emerging Leader consistently demonstrates exceptional leadership and technical competence. She routinely creates new products, develops flavours, and takes a key role in significant collaborative research projects. One of those collaborative research projects saw her working alongside experienced dairy scientists and engineers and taking a leadership role in developing new-to-world food system and helping create new test methods to characterise its behaviour. Her built-in curiosity, sharp observational skills, and ability to communicate clearly have been instrumental in influencing the direction of the project. Her mentoring skills have also emerged as she guided a new technologist at work, providing excellent input while allowing them to grow. Her calm demeanour under pressure and ability to get things done led to her promotion to Senior Applications Technologist in 2023. In this role, she manages the workload of less experienced technologists and covers for the R&D Manager when needed. She is actively involved with the Auckland Branch of NZIFST and regularly visits high schools to encourage the next generation of students to pursue careers in Food Technology. Her comprehensive skill set and leadership by example have earned her high regard from colleagues and customers alike.

