

**BITE: Where Food and Technology Meet**

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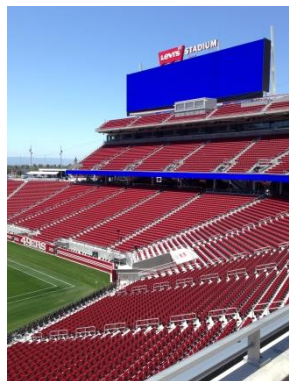
IT Newswire

**Executive Summary**

While we normally attend tech conferences, this inaugural BITE event was a welcome change; meeting great chefs, knowing their passion for not just cooking but feeding the needy; mingling with real people—away from geeks and freaks; appreciating what we have; and how you can give back to society.

**Details**

We have attended many events and reported about them over the last dozen years on diverse technology topics—Cloud, IoT, IoE, CloudStack, OpenStack, Security, Mobility, Open Source, Software, Servers, Storage—but this event, along with [The Future of Life Summit, February 2003](#) held to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the discovery of DNA, were the most memorable.



BITE was a fascinating event celebrating life held at the beautiful Levi's Stadium: Lovely location, wonderful weather, fabulous wines, gourmet food, and beautiful people. What more could one ask for?

The focus was on: sustainable agriculture producing healthful food; how to feed the 9 billion people that are expected to live on our planet by 2050; and how to help the poor and the hungry.

José Andres, Chef/Co-Founder, [ThinkFood Group](#), has spent years as a great chef, but is focused on giving back to society and help the poor. "The poor don't need pity, they need respect," said he.

Here is a typical story: Poor people in developing countries still cook as we have for thousands of years—three stones, firewood, and a few dishes. Where do they get the firewood? Typically, they send their daughters (gatherers, because the sons are hunting) to the forest. They are raped, but still manage to bring home some firewood. The trees in the forest are fast disappearing (deforestation); so, when it rains, there is nothing to hold the water. The topsoil is slowly washed off the hillslopes to the sea. So, no more agriculture, and the soil in the sea kills fish and corals. "I'm a scuba diver and I've been to many places where there are no absolutely no fish left," said José. No fish? No fishing villages, no fishermen, no livelihood, so they are poor. Unfortunately, this is a very vicious cycle—all because there is no gas, electric, or solar energy as an energy source.



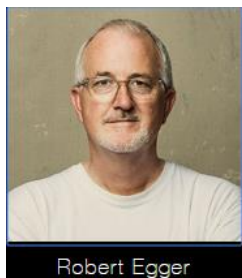
José said "Don't give the poor handouts, invest in them." His organization got a donation of \$100,000 that he invested in a bakery and a restaurant in Haiti. The bread from the bakery is used to make delicious sandwiches in the restaurant by locals that he trained. Monthly revenue from these two establishments is about \$5,000. More than focusing on the ROI, he's helping the locals make a living who, in turn, may open their own establishments, employ more people, and give back to society.

[Roy Choi](#) of the Los Angeles Korean barbeque fame spoke about his new restaurant venture Loco'l, which encourages locally grown foods and local folks. We believe Loco'l is a play on *local* and *loco*, Spanish for crazy (remember El Pollo Loco?). After all, Roy is known for doing crazy things anyway, like constantly moving his food truck in the L. A. area to West Hollywood, Westwood, El Segundo, Long Beach, Venice...



Loco'1 initially has two locations—[Watts](#) in LA and [Tenderloin](#) in San Francisco. Watts is (in)famous for its rites in the '60s, but Roy goes to these places to find folks that society has abandoned and give them a chance and a sense of pride. Tenderloin has a similar reputation, although it's gradually changing. We may add, lately so many Indian restaurants have opened there that it's often called *Tandoori Lo'in*.

Will his model succeed? Roy said "This is an experiment we are trying with my well-known chefs and business partners. Will we succeed? I don't know, but we won't give up." We asked "Will you eventually expand to other locations in the U. S. on a franchise or company-owned basis? And, how can you clone a Choi?" "We don't know, it depends on our initial success," was Roy's response.



[Robert Egger](#), Founder and President of L.A. Kitchen (LAK) and DC Central Kitchen in Washington, D. C., recovers fresh fruits and vegetables to fuel a culinary arts job training program for men and women coming out of foster care and older men and women returning from incarceration. What is really remarkable about what he is doing is hiring the incarcerated and veterans. The incarcerated are quite often blacklisted and, on a given day, almost 50,000 veterans in the U. S. are homeless. And, these are men and women who served our country! His message to the millennials: The Baby Boomers is one of the greatest American generations, don't abandon them just because they are old; learn from them. Someday, you will be old, too, because aging is democratic.

Other interesting tidbits:

- Barilla has introduced a new line of pasta products called Pronto. Mix one package of the pasta and three cups of water, slowly cook it in a pan (don't microwave) for 10 minutes. No need to drain the pasta, because the pasta absorbs the water. And the pasta comes out beautifully *al dente*, add your favorite sauce, grilled vegetables...and enjoy.



- 3D Systems showed off some delicious desserts made by 3D printing. Yummy!



Your mouth still watering? Enjoy more delicious stuff below.





### Conclusions

Overall, this was an absolutely fascinating conference. Silicon Valley is always looking at bits and bytes, but this was real BITEs—food we all need for sustenance. What is remarkable about the folks we discussed above is the passion for what they are doing—giving back to society. What is even more interesting is that many Valley high-tech entrepreneurs are now focusing on food and agriculture, water conservation (especially in draught-ridden California), plant-based food products and proteins, and eggless Mayonnaise (Unilever, don't sue me!) and cookies. The current model of meat consumption is unsustainable in the long run: It takes 1,800 gallons of water to make one pound of beef. And, we just killed almost 40 million chickens in the Midwest because of suspected avian flu. People have to change their habits and living style for the sake of our future generations. Fortunately, the millennials are very well-informed and aware of the consequences. They will change the world for better.