

Danone names Antoine de Saint-Affrique as CEO

Danone has appointed former Barry Callebaut CEO Antoine de Saint-Affrique as its new chief executive officer, effective 15 September 2021.



Antoine de Saint-Affrique. Credit: Barry Callebaut

De Saint-Affrique stepped down as CEO at chocolate maker Barry Callebaut at the end of August, a role he occupied since which he occupied since October 2015. Prior to Barry Callebaut, Antoine de Saint-Affrique held a series of senior executive positions at global consumer goods company Unilever, where he notably led the Foods division.

He replaces Danone's long-time head Emmanuel Faber, who announced in March he was leaving as Danone following pressure from activists agitating for a leadership shake-up. Antoine de Saint-Affrique thus succeeds the joint interim leadership of Véronique Penchienati-Bosetta and Shane Grant at Danone.

The food company's board of directors also decided to propose Antoine de Saint-Affrique as a new member to the board of Danone for appointment at the next annual shareholders' meeting in April 2022.



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New chapter of leadership

Gilles Schnepp, chairman, said: "As a board we have delivered on our promise to search and find swiftly the best person to lead Danone through the next phase of our evolution. This marks a new chapter of leadership and a continuation of how we, as a board, have been transitioning governance at the company for a few weeks already."

"We unanimously agree that Antoine de Saint-Affrique is a standout leader in the consumer goods world. He has a distinguished track record of innovation and delivery. Importantly, he brings the right blend of strategic vision, international consumer goods experience, and operational execution skills to Danone. The board is confident that Antoine, together with the rest of the leadership team, will deliver sustainable value for shareholders, and all our stakeholders.

"Antoine's proven ability to successfully deliver a purpose-led growth strategy in a sustainable way fits well with our Mission and long-term goals. He will have all the room and resources a CEO can have to best assess and direct Danone's strategy for the future. In welcoming him, I would also like to thank Veronique and Shane, on behalf of the board, for their diligence and support in the joint interim leadership of the company they will hold until September 15."



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Antoine de Saint-Affrique commented: "I am proud and honoured to join and soon lead a company which has always been an inspiration for me. I have tremendous admiration for Danone's rich heritage and pioneering spirit in all fields: its strong and innovative portfolio of brands that have brought health through food to people around the world for so long; the dual social and economic project which has been at the heart of the company's purpose for decades; and its strong and unique people culture which respects both diversity and inclusivity.

"I believe Danone has significant potential to continue to shape and contribute to how people eat and drink globally, and I am looking forward to, together with all Danoners, the executive committee and the board, writing our next chapter of growth and further progressing Danone's mission."

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