

Alimentaria 2010

Barcelona 22 - 26 Marzo / March - Fira de Barcelona. Gran Vía

Press Release

26th. November 2009

55 foreign journalists attended the exhibition's international presentation

Alimentaria brought together the international trade press and the principal Spanish authorities of the sector

Authorities, opinion leaders and top executives at Alimentaria shared a day of talks in which the current situation and prospects of the agri-food sector were analysed. Additionally, there was a presentation of the major new features of the exhibition, to be held at the Gran Vía venue in Barcelona (Spain), 22-26 March of next year.

Casa Llotja de Mar in Barcelona hosted the presentation of the major Spanish food and drinks exhibition for 55 trade journalists from over 30 countries around the world. This highly prestigious event included the participation of Catalan Minister Joaquim Llena; Junior Minister Josep Puxeu; ICEX (Spanish acronym for the Spanish Institute for Foreign Trade) Executive Vice-chairman Ángel Martín Acebes and General Manager for Promotion Jaime Montalvo; FIAB (Spanish acronym for the Spanish Food and Drink Industry Federation) Chairman Jesús Serafín Pérez and Internationalisation Committee Chairman José Carlos Lacasa; the chairman of the Alimentaria Organising Committee, Josep-Lluís Bonet; Alimentaria's top executive, J. Antonio Valls; Alimentaria Exhibitions General Manager Francisco Carrió; IESE economics lecturer Antonio Argandoña; the chairman of Innoval, Josep Arcas; the president of the Association for the Advancement of the Mediterranean Diet, Francisco Sensat; and chef Fermí Puig, member of the BCNVanguardia Technical Committee. The consulting firm Synovate presented the main approaches of the study 'What consumers of brands expect. The manufacturer's role as brand manager'.

The main strategic themes to be focused on at Alimentaria 2010 – taking place at Fira de Barcelona's Gran Vía venue 22-26 March – will be internationalisation, brands and innovation.

Globalisation, the great challenge

After highlighting the spectacular growth of the exhibition over the past 10 years, **J. Antonio Valls, top executive at Alimentaria and deputy managing director of Alimentaria Exhibitions**, emphasised the globalisation of the market and consumption as the great challenge for the industry. 'Alimentaria must be a global, outward looking platform. For this reason, we have increased our investment in international projects by 30% and in order to get to know foreign buyers better, we have developed the Hosted Buyers programme together with the FIAB and other partners.' He went on to defend brands as 'a country's assets', which must be given 'greater recognition and differentiation'. He also emphasised that the 'capacity to reinvent content and drive new projects' would take shape at initiatives such as Innoval, Best Pack, BCNVanguardia, Taste & Flavours of Spain and other R&D&I projects. On this subject, **Joaquim Llena, minister of the Catalan Department of**

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Agriculture, Food and Rural Action, indicated that 'together with internationalisation, innovation is the most important stimulus for our companies, the gateway to normality and what will allow us to survive. And Alimentaria will ensure this.' The minister remarked that 'agri-food is the number one industry in Spain and in Europe, but above all, it is number one in Catalonia, where it accounts for over 17% of GDP. It is a strategic sector for our economy and as a way out of the crisis.' In this regard, Llena expressed his conviction that 'Alimentaria is a test which plots the course the industry will follow and we believe it will pass with flying colours.'

A macro exhibition to serve the food and beverage industry

Josep-Lluís Bonet, chairman of the **Alimentaria Organising Committee**, noted that 'Alimentaria 2010 is preparing to turn Barcelona into the food and drinks capital of the world, one of the most crucial at the international level, and a true declaration of support for brands and their attributes'. He explained that this year the trade show will be held in a single venue in response to repeated requests from participating brands and buyers who attend.

J. Antonio Valls also confirmed the advisability of relocating all the pavilions into a single venue, which will occupy a total area of 94,500 m². However, he stated that in a trade show context, 'size is no longer the priority. Trade shows are now measured by return on investment.' In such a changing and competitive environment, it is necessary to demonstrate profitability. For this reason, we have had to rework the show for Alimentaria 2010 in order to respond to the new challenges of the industry, without losing its essence.'

For his part, **Francisco Carrió**, managing director of **Alimentaria Exhibitions** – the company which organises the exhibition, a joint venture between Reed Exhibitions and Fira de Barcelona, stated that the priority of Alimentaria, 'a model which has been a success in Barcelona and which has moved on to Lisbon, Mexico City and Buenos Aires', is to 'serve the development of the international agri-food industry. And it is for this reason that we develop contacts, content and communities with the idea of having an influence on business.'

A greater foreign presence as a way out of the crisis

According to figures provided by **Josep-Lluís Bonet**, of the 5,000 exhibitor companies which will take part in Alimentaria 2010, some 1,500 will be foreign, occupying 15% of the trade show's area, or 15,000 m². The growing presence of Asian exhibitors (**China, Indonesia** and **India** are strengthening their commitment to Alimentaria, in addition to exhibitor groups from **South Korea, Singapore** and **Vietnam**) will be joined for the first time at this edition by South Africa, with an institutional stand. Furthermore, it is expected that the show will receive some 150,000 visitors, of which 20% will come from abroad. 'Looking at our current numbers, we are sure that the 18th edition of Alimentaria will be a success,' predicted Bonet, who highlighted that the 2010 exhibition will be 'very dynamic in

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terms of activities and more international, given that in the current economic situation, companies must fearlessly tackle expanding abroad.'

In this regard, **Ángel Martín Acebes**, executive vice-chairman of the Spanish Institute for Foreign Trade (ICEX in its Spanish acronym), noted that the agri-food industry accounts for 15% of Spain's total exports and that 9,000 of the 30,000 companies that make up the sector in our country have been exporting regularly over the past four years. According to Acebes, 'Companies that expanded abroad have weathered the crisis better.' He also praised Alimentaria, which he considers 'one of the Spanish trade shows we can be most proud of,' and highlighted that 'the Spanish agri-food industry, whose balance of trade has a surplus of more than 700 million euros, is a model for exports, competitiveness, innovation and institutional collaboration.' **ICEX General Manager for Promotion Jaime Montalvo** added that 'Spanish products do not operate in terms of price, but rather quality, because of their ability to reach the customer and satisfy increasingly more complex needs,' and he stressed the need to 'position the Food & Wines from Spain brand in the quality products segment around the world, for which Spanish chefs are a great help.' Continuing along the same lines, **Fermí Puig**, managing chef of the restaurants **Drolma** and **Petit Comité** (1 Michelin star) and member of the **BCNVanguardia Technical Committee**, emphasised the importance of undertaking direct strategies to establish the Spain brand throughout the world through our products and formats, such as *tapas*. Puig also presented the strategic guidelines of the next edition of BCNVanguardia, a conference which traditionally includes the participation of Ferran Adrià: sustainability, brand and marketing in the restaurant and food service industry of the future, new models and Spanish cuisine in the world.

The outstanding role of Alimentaria as a driving force for the industry

Jesús Serafín Pérez, chairman of FIAB (Spanish acronym for the Spanish Food and Drink Industry Federation), the European food and drink association CIAA and the Expobebidas show, underscored that Alimentaria 2010 'plays an important role as a forum for the Spanish food and beverage industry, as well as Europe,' and he reminded those in attendance that the sector generates 930 billion euros a year in Europe and tips the balance of trade in favour of the positive side, as the European Union exports 55 billion euros in food and beverage products. Serafín Pérez highlighted that 'FIAB and Alimentaria have grown together, above all in foreign markets.' The head of the European food and drink association placed special emphasis on the strength, solidity and solvency of the Spanish food and beverage industry, as well as the unstoppable expansion into foreign markets in recent years. He provided positive details such as the fact that today 'total Spanish food exports are almost equivalent to Spain's total imports from China,' that is, close to 18.7 billion euros.

For his part, **Josep Puxeu**, junior minister for Rural Environment and Water, described Alimentaria 2010 as 'the exhibition of the recovery, the start of a return to normality for the "consumption party"'. Puxeu stated that 'the Spanish agri-food

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industry is continuing to grow in volume (around 1.4%). Although there has been a certain drop in value, the number of companies lost during the downturn has been minimal.' The minister also highlighted that 'it is a leading sector because it has succeeded in adapting its supply to the changing demands of the marketplace and this leadership and its ability to hold firm can be found at Alimentaria 2010.'

'Alimentaria is nourished by business owners and business that want to sell, to do business. This is why the trade show is designed to be of use to companies, for example, by setting up meetings for buyers so that they will get the most they can out of their attendance,' according to **José Carlos Lacasa, chairman of the FIAB (Spanish acronym for the Spanish Food and Drink Industry Federation) Internationalisation Committee, Alimentaria's International Projects and Mundidulce**, who also underscored that today 'a trade fair is either international or there is no reason for it to exist.' Lacasa stated that at the last edition of Alimentaria, 7,800 international meetings were held, with the Technology and Innovation Conferences being especially noteworthy for their great success in attracting attendees.

Alimentaria 2010 will coincide with the revival of domestic consumption

In his talk, 'The Spanish Economic Situation: Reality and Prospects', **Antonio Argandoña, lecturer in economics at IESE-Business School**, predicted that 'the Spanish economy will not take off until late 2010, although because household consumption has not dropped too much, it is expected that this will begin to bounce back by the middle of next year.' The prestigious doctor of economics and holder of the La Caixa Chair of Corporate Social Responsibility and Corporate Governance at IESE, observed that over the past year 'consumers have become conservative, pessimistic, sceptical, disloyal and opportunistic: they compare a lot and extend the useful life of their consumer goods, although they give themselves small treats and are now beginning to realise that they don't have to tighten their belts so much.'

Despite expressing 'optimism' about the difficult stage of the Spanish economy, as 'people are prepared to do what is necessary and open to accepting structural reforms,' Argandoña believes that 'jobs will not increase until 2011, we will not see a recovery of the same standard of living as prior to the crisis before 2014, and for the next 8 to 10 years, we will not be able to grow at more than 1 or 2%.'

For his part, **Gerardo Fuksman, BD & Client Service manager at Synovate** presented the main approaches of the study 'What consumers of brands expect. The manufacturer's role as brand manager', which Alimentaria commissioned from this consulting firm. This report, which will be the basis of the 2010 International Food Forum, indicates that consumers still desire and need brands, in so far as 'there is a human and anthropological need to have signs of belonging, of differentiation, of distinction, of status, of security, of comfort and of power.' Fuksman also stated that brands 'are a sign that varies over time, because values and needs change. For this reason, we need to adapt and assign our brands the role to which they are suited.'

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In fact, Innoval 2010, the area at Alimentaria dedicated exclusively to R&D&I, will focus on highlighting the value of brands. According to its chairman, Josep Arcas, 'The existence of brands depends on innovation, which means that Innoval makes more sense than ever, as it is a very important showcase.' He added that 'without brands, it is not possible go international.'

Lastly, **Francisco Sensat, president of the Association for the Advancement of the Mediterranean Diet** – the organiser, together with Alimentaria, of the eighth edition of the International Conference on the Mediterranean Diet – expressed hope that within one year, this dietary model will be listed as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO. The conference, which will bring together more than 200 specialists from around the world, will make a decisive contribution to promoting its candidacy.

55 international media outlets invited

A total of 55 foreign journalists took part in the international presentation of Alimentaria 2010, representing key food and drink industry publications. In addition to attending the press conference at Casa Llotja de Mar, the journalists – from 31 European, Asian, American and African countries – enjoyed an intensive two-day programme of leisure and culinary activities in Barcelona.

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