

October - November 2015

FRESHFEL ANNUAL EVENT STIMULATED MEMBERS TO 'THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX' TO STIMULATE CONSUMPTION



Freshfel's annual policy event has been held with the motto "Think outside the box" and set its focus on inspiration for unusual ways to stimulate the consumption of fruits and vegetables. Referring to the challenges in the past year to reposition itself by setting up new promotional campaigns and in opening up to new markets, the event picked up this read threat to continue the positive developments of the past months. Kicking off with the annual evening dinner at the Residence Palace, Freshfel strengthened the ties between the fresh produce sector and the European policy makers. With the participation of the MEPs Clara Eugenia Aguilera García (S&D, ES), Pilar Ayuso (EPP, ES), Angélique Delahaye (EPP, FR), Herbert Dorfmann (EPP, IT), Esther Herranz García (EPP, ES), Jordi Sebastià (Greens, ES) and

Michela Giuffrida (S&D, IT), Freshfel members had the chance to exchange views with the leading figures in the field of agricultural, food safety and trade policies. Stephan Weist, Freshfel Vice-President reminded the audience in his opening remarks that there is still need for bigger ambitions to stimulate the unsaturated potential for consumption all around Europe.

The contrast of need for new marketing paths vs. the lack of budgets for unbranded goods has been the accompanying framework for the conference program of the annual event. With Samuel Levie from Food Cabinet in the Netherlands, Daniel Fritz, a German social media expert and Lotfi-El Ghandouri from Creative Society, the morning session did encourage to dare more in the promotion of unbranded products and revealed undiscovered potential for the fresh produce sector in the field of marketing. Relevant present topics such as the state of play of the EU School Fruit Scheme have been summed up by Marc Tarabella (S&D, BE) as well as by Jésus Zorilla from the European Commission DG Agriculture. The audience received an exclusive insight on the key priorities of DG Agriculture for the next year such as outweighing the effects of the Russian embargo, the upcoming CMO reform and discussions about the School Fruit Scheme. Prof. Ludwig Theuvsen from the University Göttingen emphasized in his concluding presentation, that trade flows have been changing over the past decade, and European countries have to work harder, to maintain attractive destinations for third country exporters.



With food for thought and discussion, we look forward to our next Freshfel Annual Policy event, which will take place together with Europatat, the European Potato Trade Association, at the 1st and 2nd of June 2016 in Brussels.

FRESHFEL PARTICIPATES IN EP SYMPOSIUM ON FEEDING EUROPE WHILE REDUCING PESTICIDES DEPENDENCY



Freshfel participated on 18 November to Symposium “Feeding Europe while reducing pesticides dependency” organized by IBMA, IOBC, Euroccop, Pan Europe and Greenpeace. The symposium was hosted by Pawel Poc, Member of the European Parliament. Alessandro Dalpiaz, Director of Assomela voiced the industry holistic approach towards sustainable production. He highlighted the progress and efforts of the industry in the last years and underlined the high level of compliance with the EU strict plant and food safety and environmental regulation, the implementation of integrated pest management as well as other measures in regard to carbon food print and soil and water protection. The sector should continue to invest in research and innovation to further improve the quality of produce and have more tools available for the growers including biological and other new technology tools.



FRESHFEL URGED FOR A MORE COMMON APPROACH IN GAINING MARKET ACCESS TO THIRD COUNTRIES

In the framework of the Market Access Advisory Group for Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, which takes place on a regular basis and includes representatives from all SPS-relevant units of the European Commission, representatives of the member states, Freshfel has been asked to provide the industry perspective on the “EU as one entity” in gaining new market access to third countries. The presentation focused on three main pillars. First, it highlighted the importance to recognize the real competitors outside the EU instead of only looking on on neighbours, as EU operators became more and more pan-European in their production and supply. Second, it urged on the introduction of a monitoring system, to gain more transparency about pending and planned application as a decisive basis for common action. Third, it gave a variety of improvement impulses to mutualize actions, where it is necessary. This includes among others better outcomes in FTA negotiations, better involvement of IPPC as standard setting organization as well as the abolishment of bilateral protocols. All of this could lead to more reciprocity in trade flow and a better level playing field on SPS issues.

FRESHFEL PRESENTATION AT INTERPERA ON CONSUMPTION OF PEARS

Freshfel, in a combined role with WAPA (World Apple and Pear Association) was invited to give a presentation at the Interpera conference on the consumption trends regarding pears. The focus was on a short overview of the production and trade situation, the reactions to the Russian embargo and the overall (gross) consumption trends (not including processing or waste). Daphne van Doorn presented several examples of different types of promotion campaigns in Europe, including some consumption data which was based on local sales and finally, a short slide on the consumption of pears worldwide.

One of the main conclusions outlined was that pear consumption is higher in the pear producing countries and that pears are suffering from the same general trends as the overall fresh produce sector with a decline in consumption. Furthermore, it was interesting to note that in some example countries the consumption after the Russian embargo had gone up drastically, most likely because of the increased efforts regarding promotion campaigns and overall media attention. Finally, it was concluded that there is still a lot of gain to get from further expanding the consumption in many European countries as well as certain upcoming regions such as the Middle East and Asia.



The powerpoint presentations can be found here: <http://bit.ly/1XEg4CB>

FRESHFEL CO-ORGANISES SEMINAR ON THE NEW EU PROMOTION OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS



On 22 October 2015 Freshfel (under the umbrella of SACAR and in partnership with COPA COGECA, FoodDrinkEurope and CELCAA) co-organised a highly successful seminar to discuss the new EU Promotion Policy for agricultural products which is entering into force on 1 December 2015. This new ambitious and improved policy looks promising as it will simplify administrative procedures and reduce red tape for the industry, which was one of the key elements that needed to be improved. A positive step forward is the increased budget for this new policy, especially with the Russian ban on agri-food products hitting the sector significantly. The new policy has great potential to help the EU diversify into new markets, enhance competitiveness and raise awareness of high quality European products.

The Seminar brought together over 160 participants from across the agri-food chain and included high-level presentations from the EU Commission and the Consumer, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency (CHAFEA) showing how the new policy will work in practice. Successful examples of past programmes were also presented, and new ways of communicating messages through social media and relevant marketing tactics were also explored. The Seminar marked the first step in building a dynamic, professional network to encourage the preparation of multi-country promotion programmes in the future.

FRESHFEL ATTENDS EUROMIX CONSORTIUM MEETING IN CYPRUS

On 23-24 November Freshfel has attended a Second Consortium Euromix Meeting in Larnaca, Cyprus. EuroMix will provide a test strategy for mixture testing based on new and already existing toxicological tests. Freshfel is involved in several Working Packages (WP) within the project, like: scientific integration and guidance for tiered risk assessment & dissemination and stakeholder involvement. The aim of the meeting was to present the most recent activities of each WP and to discuss future working plan and actions.



More information about the Euromix project can be found via the project's website: www.euromixproject.eu

FRESHFEL JOINED A STAKEHOLDER GROUP IN A PROJECT ON SUSTAINABLE, FOOD & NUTRITION SECURITY

Freshfel joined a stakeholder group meeting of a Horizon 2020 project, SUSFANS, on sustainable food and nutrition security. The objectives of SUSFANS are *"to build the conceptual framework, the evidence base and analytical tools for underpinning EU-wide food policies with respect to their impact on consumer diets and their implications for nutrition and public health in the EU, the environment, the competitiveness of the EU agri-food sectors, and global food and nutrition security"*. The project envisages a case study on the fruit and vegetable supply chain, including references to the fact that fruit and vegetables are highly sustainable, nutritious and healthy foods. As such, Freshfel participated in the debates concerning this ongoing project. More information on the project can be found here: www.susfans.org