



International Green Week draws its curtain with yet another success



This year's International Green Week Berlin once again served the interests of both groups of visitors. Between 19 and 28 January some 400,000 visitors flocked to the exhibition halls at Berlin's Funkturm, including 90,000 trade visitors. The presence of a large number of start-up companies from the food sector was very evident this year. The introduction of the Start-up Day by organizers Messe Berlin reflects the growing importance of the founders of new businesses, whose innovative business ideas are combining creativity with sustainability. The public were keen to buy and their expenditure exceeded 50 million euros for the first time. The partner country of the 83rd Green Week was Bulgaria. On a hall area measuring 116,000 square metres shows with a particular appeal to the public, such as the Floral Hall, the Livestock Hall and the Farm Experience, as well as 25 stages and cookery display in the 26 halls,

met with an excellent response among visitors. The 1,660 exhibitors from 66 countries presented a comprehensive

review of the food industry's international market as well as displays by agriculture and horticulture.



European common agricultural policy, the digitalization of agriculture and rural areas, the discussions about animal welfare, the quality and safety of our foodstuffs, and safeguarding world food supplies in the face of a steadily growing population were the main features of the agricultural policy events at the fair.

According to Dr. Christian Göke, Chief Executive Officer of Messe Berlin GmbH, "The Green Week also has its 'hip' side. Start-ups have certainly made their mark at the leading trade fair for international agri-business. With numerous innovations in the exhibition section, this year more than ever they have shone the spotlight on creative and sustainable business ideas. The Green Week shows itself to be a trendsetter in the food sector, and at the same time the producers of foodstuffs have used this fair as a test market, attended by hundreds of thousands of members of the public, who are the decision-makers in the shops."

Rumen Porodzanov, Minister for Agriculture, Food and Forests of the Republic of Bulgaria said, "Our participation in the International Green Week 2018 has been a great success for

Bulgaria. We are eagerly looking forward to future collaboration and hope that, as a result of our appearance here, Bulgarian foodstuffs and its agricultural products will not only become more widely known but will also meet with greater demand."

The German government was involved with shows by the Federal Ministry for Food and Agriculture ("Agriculture at the Heart of Society") and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development ("One World Without Hunger is Possible With Fair Purchasing and Fair Production").

The members of the federal cabinet who attended were Christian Schmidt, Federal Minister for Food and Agriculture, Dr. Gerd Müller, Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, Dr. Barbara Hendricks, Federal Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Environment, Construction and Reactor Safety, Brigitte Zypries, Federal Minister for Economics, and Energy, and Thomas de Maizière, Federal Minister for the Interior.

At the end of the fair Federal Minister for Agriculture Christian Schmidt summed it up as follows:

"The International Green Week is the ideal place for discussing agricultural and food topics with consumers. Agriculture is not an end in itself but a way of safeguarding food supplies. Here in Germany we are all grateful to our food industry, which largely comprises small and medium-sized businesses, for our healthy, safe and varied foodstuffs, in quantities never experienced before. I want to see an ecologically sustainable but also economically viable agriculture in Germany an agriculture at the heart of society."

Leading representatives of the parties in the Bundestag, the German parliament, came to the Green Week in search of information. They included Hans-Peter Friedrich, MdB, Vice President of the German Bundestag; Wolfgang Kubicki, MdB, Vice President of the German Bundestag; Petra Pau, MdB, Vice President of the German Bundestag; Claudia Roth, MdB, Vice President of the German Bundestag; Katrin Göring-Eckardt, Chair of the Parliamentary Group Bündnis 90/Die Grünen in the German Bundestag; Dr. Anton Hofreiter, MdB, Chair of the Parliamentary Group Bündnis 90/Die Grünen in the German Bundestag; Simone Peter, Chair of the Parliamentary



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Group Bündnis 90/Die Grünen and Dr. Dietmar Bartsch, Chair of the Parliamentary Group DIE LINKE in the German Bundestag.

The opening ceremonies at the CityCube Berlin, attended by some 3,500 invited guests, including over 850 guests from delegations from over 100 countries, were dominated by the partner country, Bulgaria, represented by its Minister for Agriculture, Rumen Porodzanov. Joachim Rukwied, President of the German Farmers' Union, and Dr. Christian von Boetticher, Deputy Chairman of the Federation of German Food and Drink Industries, represented the non-commercial sponsors of the Green Week.

Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA)

How can the keeping of livestock be made more productive in order to feed a growing world population, while at the same time protecting the climate and the ever more limited resources of soil and water, as well as meeting the demands by consumers for the maintenance of high standards of animal protection? These issues were discussed by 2,000 representatives of politics and business, science and civil society at the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA), whose keynote topic was "Planning the future for livestock production sustainably, responsibly, and efficiently".

For agricultural policy-makers the

highlight of the three-day event was the 10th Berlin Conference of Agriculture Ministers the largest of its kind anywhere in the world. Ministers from some 70 countries, as well as representatives of the EU Commission and numerous international organizations accepted an invitation from Federal Minister for Agriculture Schmidt to come to Berlin in order to hammer out some defining features of sustainable and efficient livestock production.

In their closing communiqué the government representatives called up their ministerial colleagues and all international organizations to take the appropriate action. They should commit themselves to safeguarding global food supplies, improving the means of existence of livestock farmers, protecting the climate environment and resources, and improving animal health and welfare.

The ministers unanimously called for efforts to prevent the emergence of resistance to antibiotics and to contribute to this by opposing the unnecessary use of such substances in the fattening of livestock.

Start-up Day an instant success

With its Start-up Day the International Green Week focused attention for the first time on the founders of businesses in the food market. The first prize went to nearbee (<https://nearbees.de/>), a sales portal from Munich serving regional honey producers from all over Germany, with the slogan:

"Find honey from next door", which is aimed at both the retail sector and end consumers.

Second prize was won by bickus (<https://www.bickus.de/>) from northern Hesse. A number of farms have joined forces under this name, with the aim of utilising the meat from laying hens as food, instead of handing them over to industry when they cease laying.

The winner of the third prize was Hiddenseer Kutterfisch (<https://www.hiddenseer-kutterfisch.de/>), which produces canned fish on Rügen and is not only committed to promoting regional products but whose activities are also intended to preserve gillnet fishing off the island.

From vegan to street food

Exhibitors of vegan products were present in greater numbers this year. Visitors to the Market Hall at the Green Week were able to enjoy street food, the current fashion in fast food, in a number of unusual flavors.

Organic products are still as popular as ever and this was reflected by the high attendance in the Bio Hall. Dr. Felix Prinz zu Löwenstein, chairman of the leading organic producers' association, the Federation of the Ecological Food Industry (BÖLW): "There is a boom in organics, in the fields and at retail outlets, because increasing numbers of people are deciding in favour of protecting the climate, the environment and animals in economic activities and when shopping.

Evidence of this cooperation in the interests of sustainable agriculture, food stuffs production and good food can also be found in the Bio Hall, now a firmly established feature of the Green Week. It is popular with all visitors as the first place to go for anyone in search of enjoyment and discussions with organic farmers, bakers, vintners and many other eco-practitioners.

Jiří Milek, Minister for Agriculture of the Czech Republic said, "This prestigious event is an excellent opportunity for our producers to present quality items from the Czech Republic and to make contact with potential business partners. In my ministerial capacity I have been able to attend bilateral meetings with my colleagues. We endeavoured to find a common approach to the problem of African swine fever, and discussed questions about food quality and the new framework conditions of the Common Agricultural Policy."

During the Green Week 2018 over four fifths of the exhibitors were positive about their participation and have already announced that they will be attending the IGW 2019. The main reasons they gave for attending the fair were "presenting their company / cultivating its image", "providing consumers with information",

"selling to end users", "obtaining media publicity", "introducing and testing new products" and "establishing personal contacts with specialist buyers". These objectives were met to a high degree. Over three quarters of the exhibitors assessed the commercial results of their participation as positive, and over two thirds of them are expecting very good to satisfactory follow-up business.

Some 90,000 trade visitors were registered at this year's Green Week. They came mainly from agriculture and forestry, the food industry, the retail, wholesale and foreign trade sectors, and also from the hotel and catering industry. Some 41 % of trade visitors held a leading decision-making position in their respective company or institution. They were able to obtain wide-ranging information about the range of products at the Green Week, as well as making new business contacts and intensifying existing contacts. They also used the specialist supporting programme of the Green Week, comprising some 300 individual events.

The range offered at the Green Week 2018 met with a very positive response among the general public. In addition to the food products and luxury foods and beverages from every continent, the spe-

cial shows in particular attracted a great deal of interest. The Floral Hall was the favourite choice of the public, followed by the Livestock Hall, No. 25, and following them, the Market Hall, Bio Hall and Farm Experience, all roughly equal.

The range on offer at the Green Week 2018 met with the emphatic approval of 96 % of the general public and 92 % of trade visitors. The general public was primarily interested in foodstuffs and in luxury foods and beverages, the garden section of the fair, the halls containing pets and domestic animals, and the agricultural displays, especially on the subject of "Holidays in the Countryside".

Some 20,000 children from schools in Berlin, Brandenburg and adjoining states took part in the Messe Berlin schools' programme. Classes were able to obtain practical instruction from a programme comprising more than 100 different items.

The International Green Week Berlin 2018 was organised by Messe Berlin GmbH. Its non-commercial sponsors were the German Farmers' Union (DBV) and the Federation of German Food and Drink Industries (BVE). The 84th Green Week will take place from 18 to 27 January 2019 on the Berlin Exhibition Grounds. ♦

