



Green Week 2019: At the Green Week today – in the shops tomorrow



Trendsetting test market with hundreds of thousands of consumers – German politicians present in greater numbers than ever before – Successful outcome for partner country Finland.

A leading meeting place for international agribusiness, the presence of numerous German politicians, and a unique experience for the public: in 2019 the International Green Week Berlin confirmed its standing as the world's leading trade show for agriculture, food and horticulture. From 18 to 27 January, as at last year's event, some 400,000 people attended the trade fair and conventions in the halls on the Berlin Exhibition Grounds, including approximately 85,000 trade visitors from around 75 countries. Digitalisation in agriculture and rural areas, the impending Brexit and the common European agricultural policy, discussions about 'Animal Welfare' and 'Food Labelling', the quality

and safety of the food we eat, and the conditions under which it is produced, and safeguarding world food supplies in the face of a constantly increasing population were among the widely discussed topics at the Green Week 2019. Producers and retailers discussed issues surrounding supply and value added chains, with the main focus being on regional foods and luxury items.

The presence of representatives of German politics was an outstanding feature this year, headed by Federal President Steinmeier at the Future Forum for Rural Development, and Federal Chancellor Merkel at the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture, together with 75 ministers of agriculture from every continent. The public were keen to buy and their expenditure exceeded 51 million euros. This year's partner country, Finland, summed up the fair as a success, with keen interest being shown in the products of the country's agricultural

sector. The 84th Green Week was held from 18 to 27 January with a record number of exhibitors, 1,750 from 61 countries, who occupied a hall area of 125,000 square metres.

Dr. Christian Göke, Chief Executive Officer of Messe Berlin GmbH: "In its 93-year history the Green Week has reached yet another milestone: never before has the presence of German politicians been so much in evidence, headed by Federal President Steinmeier, Federal Chancellor Merkel and Federal Minister Klöckner. Their attendance underlines the social relevance of the subject matter under discussion here. Start-ups are represented in ever-increasing numbers at the Green Week, ensuring that this trade fair remains a trendsetter in the food sector. More than ever before the Green Week 2019 acted as a test market, with hundreds of thousands of consumers, and its slogan could be described as 'at the Green Week today – in the shops tomorrow'.

row'. The essence of the Green Week brand – pleasure and the enjoyment of life – was very evident and tangible throughout the ten days of this event.”

Representatives of German politics show strong commitment

Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel and Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier both visited the Green Week for the first time. The Federal Ministry of Agriculture, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Federal Ministry for the Environment were each represented with special displays. Federal Minister of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection Julia Klöckner, Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development Dr. Gerd Müller, Federal Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety Svenja Schulze, and Federal Minister of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth Dr. Franziska Giffey participated in several events and tours. Numerous minister presidents from the federal states and senior members of the parties represented in the German Bundestag took part in separate tours. High-ranking guests included Director General of the FAO José Graziano

da Silva and EU Commissioners Phil Hogan and Vytenis Andriukaitis.

The Federal Ministry of Agriculture in particular was represented in numerous sections at the fair and took part in high-level conferences. Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture Julia Klöckner: “The International Green Week is the largest and most important shop window for our food and farming industries. The Green Week is where farmers, the food industry and associations explain how the industry works and conduct public relations. It is also where we hold a public debate on efficient economics, expectations, the viability of projects and the industry’s future. Consumers want information and are keen to find out more. This year, the staff on the stands in the hall representing our ministry spoke to more people than ever before. That is a good thing, and it is important. Food and farming issues need to be debated on a less emotional level and to focus more on the subject matter, scientific data and facts. We need to get away from binary concepts of ‘black and white’ – I would like to strike a conciliatory note here. Particularly because agriculture is not just any sector – on the

contrary. At the Green Week, taking as its slogan ‘What will tomorrow bring?’

Agriculture with hearts and drones’, our Ministry of Life demonstrated the shape that tomorrow’s industry can already take today. In that context, digitalisation will play a decisive role in achieving certain objectives. Digital solutions in agriculture mean that above all we can produce foodstuffs, the basis for life, more efficiently and can conserve resources, by using fewer pesticides, less fertiliser, in precise amounts and using sustainable methods. Only by accomplishing this will we be able to satisfy the increasing demand for quality food products around the world. And that is the only way we will succeed in fighting starvation around the world.”

Supporting associations emphasise the important status of the fair

The non-commercial sponsors of the Green Week gave their views on the Green Week 2019 as follows: President of the German Farmers’ Union Joachim Rukwied (DBV) said, “The International Green Week in Berlin is the highlight among the agricultural policy events at the beginning of the year. Once again, numerous high-ranking



politicians and representatives of the farming sector from Germany and around the world made use of the occasion to discuss developments in agriculture. Hardly any other platform offers a better opportunity. The many discussion events and the wealth of information also make it possible for consumers to find out more about modern agriculture. Digital technology, measures to protect our climate and livestock health are the topics that interest visitors. The many positive reactions, including from children, are proof that the fair is an important event for the public, policymakers and companies alike."

Christoph Minhoff, Chairman of the Federation of German Food and Drink Industries (BVE):

"This year in a remarkable way we have been able to present all the current food-related trends from A to Z, with established companies and start-ups. We are delighted with the very positive response by our guests from the worlds of politics and business, and by visitors attending the Green Week. We have presented solutions to some pressing social questions: a project to utilise male chicks, algae and hemp as protein of the future, reformulated products and access to water as a task facing the whole world were all highly visible topics. In-depth media coverage and an invitation

for one of our start-ups to appear in the TV show 'The Lion's Den' are proof for us that people are taking notice of the innovations being produced by the German food industry. 'What will be the tastes of the future?' is our slogan, and the Green Week 2019 has provided the answer."

Partner country Finland very satisfied

This year's partner country Finland was able to look back on a successful fair. The most northerly agricultural country in the EU, which is taking over the presidency of the Council of the EU in the second half of 2019, used this occasion to present an unprecedentedly diverse range of agricultural products. Juha Marttila, President of Finland's Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners (MTK): "We are very satisfied with the amount of attention attracted by Finland, our food and beverages, and Finnish dishes. This has also been reflected in the coverage by the international press. The interest of many potential business partners and visitors to the fair has been aroused by our Arctic foodstuffs and unpolluted nature. Our experience of the Green Week has been that it is a very professionally organised event that brings together the agricultural scene from all over the world."

Federal Chancellor Merkel attends the 'Davos of agriculture'

This year's Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA) took place under the heading 'Digital agriculture – Intelligent solutions for tomorrow's farming industry'. For the first time in the history of the 'Davos of agriculture' Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel delivered a speech to the agriculture ministers of 75 nations and representatives of numerous international organisations. The chancellor emphasised the opportunities that digital transformation presented. She also highlighted the issues of combating starvation around the world and the need to ensure that sustainable agriculture helped to achieve the aims of the Paris Climate Accords. For many countries the digital transformation was a giant step forward that brought with it a huge process of cultural change, Merkel said. The chancellor called for rules and a framework to assure the rule of law. This would have to be agreed at international level. As the GFFA drew to a close Federal Klöckner summarised events thus: "At the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture, in agreement with 70 agriculture ministers from around the world, we made the decision to establish an international Digital Council – a breakthrough."





Federal President Steinmeier at the Future Forum

Together with Federal Minister Klöckner, Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier opened the 12th Forum on the Future of Rural Development. He had previously toured Hall 4.2 at the Green Week with its regional displays. Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier emphasised the importance of creating equal social conditions in urban and rural areas. To accomplish this it was absolutely necessary to provide internet access everywhere, said the head of state. With the arrival of 5G mobile internet access in Germany one would have to make sure that rural areas were not left behind, the federal president cautioned. "For far too long we have been lamenting the slow pace of broadband provision", he said to applause, and added that no one would even think of cutting off a small village's supply of electricity and water only because of a demographic shift. "The internet is like electricity and water." To ensure there were jobs in rural areas in the future, high-speed internet was needed in the fields and in the home. "Neither agriculture and laser technology nor marketplaces and the global market are contradictory concepts."

Comprehensive overview of the market for the trade

In 2019 the International Green Week again brought the representatives of the trade and of catering together with regional enterprises. The agricultural marketing association pro agro alone was responsible for enabling 200 EDEKA retailers, 70 representatives of the REWE chain and some 100 representatives of the catering sector in Brandenburg to engage in discussions with regional manufacturers and suppliers. This is a win-win situation for both sides. In this way many small producers were able to make initial contacts with caterers and retailers from all over the state, while the trade and catering sector obtained first hand information including some exciting new additions to their regional product portfolios, the association reported.

Between 21 and 25 January the Professional Center was open exclusively to the experts. This is where, away from the hectic pace of the fair, representatives of the hotel and restaurant trade and food retailers had an opportunity to survey regional foods and luxury items from this country and abroad.

Test market for tomorrow's products

This year the Green Week again provided an invaluable function as a test market. It offers an opportunity, for example, for visitors to sample the 'Incredible Burger', a vegan hamburger from the Nestlé brand Garden Gourmet, several months before it goes on sale. With its 'Incredible Burger' the company aims to offer vegans, vegetarians and flexitarians a meat-free alternative to the traditional hamburger, but with a product that strongly resembles the original, and tastes like it too.

Philipp Wachholz, Director Corporate Affairs, McDonald's Germany: "Here we are concentrating on our concept restaurant of the future, and in accordance with this strategy all our restaurants in Germany will be converted by the end of 2019. Sustainability is a very important aspect in this respect. We also want to demonstrate to people that McDonald's can always be a little bit better when it comes to packaging or recycling quotas."

For Danone the main focus was on reduced sugar and innovation. Mira Koppert, Director, Science and Nutrition, Danone: "We are presenting new develop-



ments in the freshness of milk, we have already launched the Bio Fruit Mini on the market, and a natural mineral water containing fruit and plant extracts, without additional sugar, flavourings or other additives. For us the Green Week is very important for presenting our innovations.”

REWE was one example of an exhibitor presenting sustainability concepts. Raimund Esser, Divisional Director Corporate Communication REWE: “Each year the International Green Week is an occasion for displaying the innovations which REWE is introducing in its stores. This year attention is being focused on reducing the amount of plastic used, by finding alternatives to plastic packaging in the greengrocery sector, for example with re-usable freshness nets. Another measure is to avoid the use of plastic drinking straws, and we at REWE now stock an alternative, a stainless steel straw that is dishwasher safe and lasts for decades.”

Spoontainable is the winner at the Startup Days

Innovations and sustainable business models were to be found in numerous sections at the fair, with a particularly large number of startups presenting their prod-

ucts on the combined stand of the German food industry and in the Hall featuring displays from Berlin. This year, the winners at the Startup Days at the Green Week 2019 were the founders of a crowd-funded project by the name of Spoontainable. Their invention is a sustainable, edible ice cream spoon made of cocoa fibre. According to the company’s founder Amelie Vermeer they will replace plastic spoons and reduce waste.

Regional Star awarded in four categories

For the fourth time the industry magazine ‘Lebensmittel Praxis’ and experts at the Green Week presented awards for outstanding concepts with a regional character from trade, industry and agriculture, and which use aspects of sustainability in order to assist the marketing of regional products. In the ‘Innovation’ category the panel placed the company Kale&Me first for its ‘Naturally Nordic’ concept. The Regional Star in the ‘Presentation’ category was awarded to Rewe Susann Daubitz for the concept ‘Corner Shop on a Large Scale’. The cup and certificate for the first place in the ‘Organisation’ category went to Tegut for the Tegut Gardens of the Seasons. First

prize in the ‘Cooperation’ category was awarded to Edeka Center Minden and the ‘Deaconal Foundation for the Disabled’ in Wittekindshof for the concept ‘Love times two – saves ripe fruit’.

And not least of all the Schools’ Programme of Messe Berlin provided some 21,000 schoolchildren with practical lessons at the Green Week, making instructive and descriptive examples of subjects concerning agriculture and the food industry available to schoolchildren of all ages.

A packed arena at HIPPOLOGICA, the equestrian show

A packed arena and a live, relaxed atmosphere at the competitions as well as great fun for fans of equestrianism, riders and families – that is how four days of HIPPOLOGICA can be summed up. From 24 to 27 January the capital’s largest indoor equestrian event took place at the Green Week for the second time and provided a perfect stage for showing the many aspects of equestrianism to a wider public.

Exhibitors, trade visitors and the public offer a positive assessment

Over 80 per cent of exhibitors said their participation was a success and that they

would take part in the Green Week again in the future. The same percentage said the fair was an ideal testing ground for consumer reactions to new products. About one in two exhibitors said that making contact with policymakers at the Green Week was very important. Three-quarters of the exhibitors were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their results and two-thirds expected follow-up business to be good. The main goals of exhibitors were "to present the company/cultivate one's image", "provide information for consumers" and "consumer sales". For the most part these aims were met.

Over 90 per cent of trade visitors were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their visit. The same percentage offered a positive opinion of the products displayed. 40 per cent represented their company or institution in a decision-making capacity. Trade visitors for the most part represented the farming and forestry sectors, commerce (wholesalers, retail trade and exports) and

the food industry. Around 90 per cent were satisfied with their results at the fair. Nearly one in two trade visitors were able to establish business contacts. As far as their work/business was concerned, trade visitors were mostly interested in the sections featuring 'food and specialities', 'farming and forestry' and 'organic products'.

Over 90 per cent of the general public were very satisfied with their visit and said they would attend the Green Week in the future. Well over 90 per cent gave a positive assessment of the products on offer. They were particularly interested in the sections featuring 'food and specialities', 'gardens' and 'organic products'. The main public attractions among the special displays were the Floral Hall, Livestock Hall and Market Hall / Street Food.

Green Week is an important economic factor for Berlin

The expenditure by out-of-town visitors and exhibitors at the Green Week provided

Berlin and the surrounding region with an influx of purchasing power worth around 150 million euros. This year approximately 3,000 media representatives from 65 countries obtained accreditation. International coverage in particular, combined with many reports about business and cultural activities, as well as entertainment and leisure opportunities in the capital, provided Berlin with additional publicity with long term benefits for the city.

Dates of the next event: 17 to 26 January 2020

The International Green Week Berlin 2019 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 85th Green Week will take place from 17 to 26 January 2020 on the Berlin Exhibition Grounds. ♦

