

Gulfood 2012: Sold out five months before show starts

Soaring GCC food consumption an ideal industry opportunity

The organisers of Gulfood, the world's largest annual trade exhibition for the food and beverage industry, have announced that the event sold its one million square feet of exhibition space a full five months before the show is due to start on 19 February 2012 at the Dubai International Convention and Exhibition Centre.

The show, which last year attracted a record 62,000 visitors from more than 150 countries and 3,800 exhibitors, is once again on track to provide a global platform for Middle East food and beverage trade and reinforce the region's status as one of the world's key growth markets for the industry.

According to recent research from Alpen Capital, food consumption per capita across the Gulf Co-operation Countries (GCC) looks set to rise by more than 20% over the next five years and GCC food import bills are expected to more than double from US\$ 25.8 billion in 2010 to US\$ 53.1 billion by 2020.

"Gulfood is a dynamic industry event with a track record of bringing together the most influential food and beverage



Opening ceremony of Gulfood 2011.

trade companies who forge new international partnerships and conduct multi-million dollar deals both during and after the show. The growing demand for food products in the GCC and across the wider Middle East makes Gulfood an essential event for those organisations and companies either looking to make inroads into the region, or expand their market share," said Trixe Loh, Senior Vice President, Dubai World Trade Centre, the organiser of Gulfood. "Time and again, Gulfood has proved it is the only Middle East event that consistently delivers and generates vast quantities of new trade for

the industry."

As well as showcasing a truly global array of quality food products and services, Gulfood 2012 is hosting the region's most significant F&B conference, with expert presentations, including dedicated sessions on Food Manufacturing and Processing, Leaders in Food – featuring some of the industry's most innovative pioneers – and 'Foodpreneur, an opportunity for ambitious entrepreneurs to find invaluable advice related to their start up business.

In recognition of best food and beverage products and services, the annual



Gulfood Awards will highlight the industry's outstanding companies – both newcomers and established organisations – with a gala ceremony, celebrating their achievements and raising their profiles.

The enormously popular Emirates International Salon Culinaire returns to demonstrate the energy, inspiration and passion of more than 1,300 young chefs as they compete to become stars of the future. From practical cooking competitions to buffet and banqueting show pieces, the chefs will showcase the best of Middle East culinary talent. Competitors are evaluated by a panel of 25 renowned experts, mandated by the World Association of Chefs Societies (WACS) to judge culinary events across the globe, ensuring the highest competition standards.

In another competitive element to Gulfood, the Pastry & Baking Salon is the perfect platform for showcasing the talents of professional Pastry Chefs across the UAE and GCC region. The competition is open to all pastry chefs and bakers working in the UAE/GCC, to compete in static display and live baking across twelve categories.

Restaurant & Café Middle East and Ingredients Middle East run concurrently with the show, creating a 360-degree industry offering for buyers and vendors. Ingredients Middle East is the only event in the region to address the growing food manufacturing and processing sector.

Leading companies from around the world, who cultivate, extract, process or supply raw materials and ingredients used in the manufacturing of finished food, beverage and health food products will



present their latest ingredients and processing solutions.

The value of networking is also harnessed at Gulfood, through The Gulfood Majlis, a commercial forum that provides a discreet but focused environment for senior industry professionals to network and develop new business opportunities.

Making dollars and sense for Global food industry

With an unrivalled track record for delivering record business deals, quality customers and entry into lucrative new markets, Gulfood is a key element in the business plans of food, beverage and hospitality companies around the world. Generating billions of dirhams in transactions for local, regional and international manufacturers, suppliers, distributors and retailers, the show is now the world's largest annual trade exhibition for the industry and the 2012 show is forecast to facilitate more transactions than any other hospitality trade show globally.

Gulfood runs from 19 – 22 February 2012 at the Dubai International

Convention and Exhibition Centre, and brings together 3,800 exhibitors and an expected 65,000 trade visitors from 152 countries for the four day show. More than 83 countries and a record 107 international pavilions are expected to record brisk business trade.

Reports from the Gulfood 2011 show included sales from the Malaysian pavilion alone of more than US\$16.2 million during the show with an additional US\$28.5 million in business trade conducted following the event. According to Dzulkifli Mahmud, Trade Commissioner of the Malaysian External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE), the GCC provides an excellent opportunity for Malaysian companies entering the market, and they are expecting sales to increase by approximately 20% over last year.

With the GCC now one of the top 10 markets for US agricultural exports, Gulfood plays an important role in facilitating global growth for the US industry. Over US\$34 million worth of orders were confirmed at last year's show, and many more contracts fulfilled as a result of US companies' presence at Gulfood.

As the key economic driver of France's economy, the food industry in the country contributes more than €150 billion annually, with exports to the Middle East region reaching more than €1.525 billion last year. More than 100 exhibitors filled the French Pavilion at Gulfood 2011, conducting record sales in poultry, dairy, apples, biscuits and mineral waters.

Trixe Loh, Senior Vice President of Dubai World Trade Centre, organiser of Gulfood said: "Trade shows around the





world are under increasing pressure to deliver tangible benefits to companies participating and visitors attending, and Gulfood is now one of the most successful industry shows for delivering bottom line results. Trading reports from our exhibitors continues to increase year on year, with billions of dollars transacted on the show floor and beyond, in addition to the new market opportunities opening up every year and increased interest from around the world in this fast growing region."

Many local and regional companies reported additional business opportunities last year from new customer segments. UAE based giant Masafi, reported business prospects from new markets beyond the GCC, including Lebanon, Morocco, Japan and a number of countries in Africa and Asia. Makram Haidar, Brand Manager for Masafi commented: "Our participation at Gulfood last year brought a new segment of visitor to our stand in the form of retailers and wholesalers, and a valuable addition to our traditional visitor profile of exporters and buyers."

More than 1 million square feet of exhibition space has been dedicated to Gulfood, together with Restaurant & Café Middle East and Ingredients Middle East, the co-located shows that run alongside to deliver a 360-degree offering to the industry's professionals.

Gulfood is strictly a trade-only event and is open to business and trade visitors from within the industry only. Complimentary registration is available in

advance online. Industry business professionals on the day of the show will be able to buy a Four Day Pass for AED 200. Gulfood is open from 11am – 7pm Sunday 19 February to Tuesday 21 February and 11am – 5pm on Wednesday 22 February 2012.

Gulfood Conference highlight key trends for growing Middle East F&B Industry

As global trends present new opportunities for the food, beverage and hospitality sectors in the Middle East, the need to stay updated has never been more critical for industry professionals in the region. To address this, highlight key issues and help foster continued growth for the region's industry, the Gulfood 2012 conferences bring to Dubai more than 25 of the world's experts, food entrepreneurs and business leaders to share the latest knowledge and business advice.

Running from 19 – 22 February 2012 at the Dubai International Convention & Exhibition Centre, alongside Gulfood, the world's biggest annual trade exhibition for the food and beverage industry, the Gulfood Conferences will this year incorporate four key summits: Food Leaders Summit; Foodpreneur Forum; Food Packaging & Processing Forum; and the Gulfood Workshop on Franchising.

Trixe Loh, Senior Vice President for Dubai World Trade Centre, organiser of Gulfood said: "Given the stature and importance of Gulfood as a key sales platform for the industry both regionally and globally, it is equally important for us to support knowledge exchange for this fast-paced industry. Gulfood conferences showcase the very latest trends and innovations across all sectors, and include invaluable interactive business workshops for companies wanting to start operations, expand into new markets or even develop global leadership."

Bringing together some of the most dynamic principals and captains of the food and beverage industry, the Food Leaders Summit on 19 February will address the many challenges and trends shaping the competitive landscape. Keynote presentations delivered by the

leaders of global players including Yousuff Ali M.A, Managing Director, Emke Group, Sanjeev Chadha, President MEA, PepsiCo and Eelco Camminga, VP, South Africa, Middle East & Pakistan, Unilever discuss best practice, innovation, ideas and strategy whilst providing some valuable insights into what it takes to reach and remain at the top.

With the growth of SME businesses in the Middle East at an all-time high – approximately 200,000 SMEs operate in the UAE alone - the Foodpreneur Forum on 20 February will prove exceptionally valuable for entrepreneurs and business owners in the industry. This highly interactive event brings together international food-biz veterans, including celebrity chefs, global brand leaders and retail gurus to guide start-ups, fledgling businesses wanting to expand, and those looking to compete regionally and globally.

Keynote speaker at the Foodpreneur Forum, Yousif Abdulghani, Managing Director of McDonald's Middle East Development Company, will illustrate how an internationally recognised brand like McDonald's can adapt itself to local markets with great success. He said: "McDonald's Corporation plays an important role working with individual locally owned Development Licensees to build each business, incorporating locally relevant foods into the menus for the region and ensuring brand relevance in advertising that works well beyond just showing local people in ads."



Food processing, manufacturing and packaging are some of the fastest evolving elements in the food industry supply chain, with increasing pressure on distribution processes, bottom line costs, and implementation of packaging regulations around the world. This year's Food Processing and Packaging Forum, running on 21 February 2012 will outline the very latest trends across the sector, with keynote presentations on a broad range of highly relevant topics. These include Factories of the Future; Sustainable Packaging and the Carbon Effect; The Quality Chain – From Farm to Fork; Tackling The Cost of Quality Assurance and Process Control; and Packaging and Labelling, mandatory vs. self-regulated.

One of the world's leading providers of business intelligence and strategic market analysis, Gulfood's knowledge partner Euromonitor International will provide delegates with comprehensive insights on the latest global and regional trends impacting how consumers eat, both at home and away, and how this impacts the Middle East and its consumers specifically. This includes the global packaged food market, global food service and strategies for adapting brands, products or concepts globally.

With franchising continuing to present excellent growth opportunities across the Middle East, Africa and Asia regions as more and more international restaurant brands and food manufacturers look to these markets for the most promising expansion, the Gulfood workshop, facilitated by Kit Brinkley, Director of World Franchising Association, will focus on this topical subject. The interactive session, which takes place on 22 February 2012,

will offer participants invaluable practical advice on evaluating brands, recognising legal and financial issues, maximising the franchiser-franchisee relationship and differentiating between local and international markets for business success.

"The calibre of speakers and depth of content that the Gulfood conferences offer this year is unsurpassed, and continues to ensure global leadership for this key trade exhibition at all levels," added Loh.

Al Ain Dairy to showcase its award winning products at this year's Gulfood

Al Ain Dairy, the region's largest dairy producer and leading FMCG brands has announced its participation in Gulfood 2012, the world's largest annual food and hospitality show to be held in Dubai on February 19th to 22nd 2012 at the Dubai World Trade Centre.

At the event the company will be showcasing its new flavor offerings of drinking yoghurt based Morning Drink as well as new flavors' in the stirred fruit category such as Kiwi, Mango & Pineapple. Renowned for introducing innovative product to market, Al Ain Dairy who was award winners for innovative products with their Cardamom Milk in SIAL Abu Dhabi last year will be showcasing their new ranges at this year's show.

Al Ain Dairy announced the launch of the first of its new product for this year with the introduction of its new "Morning" drinking yoghurt variant Mango Passion.

The UAE's largest dairy company Al Ain Dairy plans to introduce many more new products this year and boost



the production volumes across the entire product range in 2012.

The company plans to introduce range of camel milk products including niche ice cream flavors, plus additions to its cow milk variants and juices that will complement their existing portfolio including new juice combinations, yoghurts, and Laban varieties.

The company established in 1981, is a forward moving company and has announced expansion plans and major investments. Last year, Al Ain invested \$2.5m on its new camel milking parlor. This year it plans to invest further \$150m in a new cow farm and initiate an AED100m (\$27.21m) expansion of its plant and factory which will double of the company's output.

Talking about its participation at Gulfood 2012, COO Shashi Kumar Menon said "Gulfood is an important part of our event calendar and the opportunity to showcase ourselves. 2011 was a great year for us, and the company plans to roll out a range of new products across the whole portfolio in line with objectives. The new plan meets with overall trends in growing consumer demand and also reflects diversifying taste in the region.

The company also eyes further growth from potential new markets and is ready to meet the challenge that will propel production and supply chain to the next level.

"Overall we are seeing a general growth trend in all areas of our business so the future looks very good indeed for Al Ain Dairy," Shashi Kumar added. ♦

