



# SIAL Middle East 2019 draws strong participation of the leading experts and decision makers

This event provided the perfect platform for networking and interaction with representatives from major food producers and exporters from across the globe. SIAL Middle East 2019 featured a series of interactive sessions and competitions that attracted the participation and interest of leading local, regional and global experts. The attendees to the exhibition also gained insight into the latest food and beverage trends along with key topics related to food production and innovation plus the future of food.

The Sharjah Chamber of Commerce & Industry, SCCI, represented by the Sharjah Exports Development Authority,

SEDC, was also taking part in the 10th edition of SIAL Middle East 2019 in Abu Dhabi, which is held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Presidential Affairs and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Abu Dhabi Agriculture and Food Safety Authority. The SIAL Middle East 2019 was held under the theme "Defining Innovation in the Food, Beverage & Hospitality Industry" from 9 to 11 December 2019 in Dubai.

The event was organized by Abu Dhabi National Exhibitions Company (ADNEC) with the French

"Comexposium" group, and in partnership with the Abu Dhabi Agriculture and Food Safety Authority (ADAFSA) was held over an exhibition area of 22,000 square meters. SIAL Middle East 2019 hosted interactive sessions and competitions while offering insights into the latest F&B trends along with topics related to food production, innovation and its future. The three-day event welcomed 23,000 industry participants and visitors, recording a 13 percent higher footfall than last year. The number of new exhibitors reached 16, in comparison to 8 last year, while the number of UAE exhibition companies totaled 76 from more than 50 countries.

The event also hosted the UAE National Coffee championships that convened the world's best baristas to take part in the "National Latte Art Championship" and the "National Cezve/Ibrik Championship". The event also held the debut Gahwa championships to revive the traditions of Arabic coffee. According to media reports, the 10th edition of the food, beverage (F&B) and hospitality exhibition, SIAL Middle East, closed on a high note, recording trade deals crossing Dhs7.2bn (\$1.96bn). The exhibition was the biggest edition since its launch in 2010 under the theme "Defining Innovation in the Food, Beverage & Hospitality Industry".

The Winners for the National Cezve/Ibrik Championship were; First Place, Michaela Ruazol, Second Place, Mohammed Bin Bader and Third Place, Sydney Oloch. Winners for the National Latte Art Championship were; First Place, Nipendra Maharjan, Second Place, Rajbir Gurung and Third Place, Mondrick Alpas.

Winner of the Sane' Al Gahwa Light Roast category and for the Medium/Dark Roast category, triumphed over the competition, with both receiving the top prize of AED 125,000. The runner-up for Sane' Al Gahwa Light Roast and for Medium/Dark Roast, both received AED 40,000.

Saeed Al Bahri Salem Al Ameri, Director-General of ADAFSA, said: "We are pleased with the high turnout witnessed by the exhibition in its tenth-anniversary edition, and its success in attracting elite food companies, major food suppliers and investors from all over the world. This will contribute by strengthening our efforts to consolidate the food security system and will open up new and innovative food industries by providing the supply chain for this system with more opportunities and capabilities that ensure their sustainability and growth, to meet the growing demand for food in the region and the world and to keep pace with the great prosperity and

booming industry that we are witnessing in the UAE, in the field of agriculture and food production."

He added: "The Authority's participation resulted in the signing of a number of cooperation agreements related to food security, food safety and sustainable agricultural development and support for local farmers with a selection of vital national institutions and leading private sector companies in areas closely related to the elements of food and biological security and agriculture. This indicated that the participants included a definition with the great achievements made by the Emirate of Abu Dhabi in developing the agricultural and food sector, and presented the most important investment opportunities provided by the authority. In addition, a number of innovative projects were implemented by the authority in its fields of work with projects such as the development of honeybee strains, production of the fourth generation of Emirati queen bees, a project to produce



quinoa, the use of satellite imagery in agricultural inspections and agricultural pest detection, and many of the pilot projects implemented by the Authority."

The event witnessed the announcement of the winners of the SIAL Innovation contest which saw visitors viewing the most innovative food and beverage products from a large number of submissions at the SIAL Innovation area. The Gold Winner went to SC Honest Fields Europe SRL for their 'Smoked Seaweed and Sea Salt Organic Puffs' from Romania, the Silver Award went to Green Good Eco-Tech FZCO for their 'Sandwich Pack' from the UAE; an eco-friendly and 100% recyclable sandwich container made of wood-pulp and cellulose window. The Bronze Award went to Manuka Doctor Limited for their 'Wild Flora Honey with Cacao' from New Zealand consisting of flower honey infused with cacao with no refined sugar, colors, preservatives, nuts, dairy or palm oil.

In the event, the Hosted Buyer Program allowed a private dedicated space for hosted buyers to have business meetings with a selected batch of

exhibitors that match their sourcing requirements in structured 'Speed Networking Sessions' along with giving a place for exhibitors to meet and discuss their requirements. This year saw 550 Hosted Buyers with an increase of 17% compared to last year, and the number of meetings conducted reached 5,000 meetings. Top countries included; Kuwait, Egypt, Korea, Azerbaijan, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and India with new countries this year including Korea, Vietnam, Paraguay, Turkmenistan, Spain, Romania and Bulgaria.

Features and activities that took place during SIAL ME included the La Cuisine competition, the region's largest culinary competition and a favorite meeting point for catering professionals. Eleven Awards in total were given out for La Cuisine in a number in categories such as Practical Cookery, Young Pastry of the Year, Best Cuisiner and more.

Roaming Chefs, where senior executive chefs represented regional and international hotels and restaurants and took guided tours around the exhibition to dis-

cover new and innovative products. The Food Art event, which was hosted by the national culinary and confectionary arts training center, aiming to develop and promote the national food market to reach the world.

In addition to the Food Forever Experience, hosted by the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, in collaboration with the Food Forever Initiative, aiming to reduce food waste, promote sustainable consumption behaviors, diversify available foodstuffs within this industry, and turn the spotlight on locally sourced food produced in the UAE. The initiative highlighted the importance of food diversification as a contributor to ensuring resource sustainability and enhancing food security.

Launched in Paris 1964, SIAL is one of the world's leading exhibitions in food industries, where food manufacturers, suppliers, and all those interested in the food industry around the world come together to learn closely about the latest innovations and conclude business deals. ♦

