

Record success for **Gulfood 2013** as it drives global growth for food & beverage industry

World's biggest annual industry show delivers record breaking results for organisers, exhibitors and trade visitors

Gulfood 2013, the world's largest annual trade show for the food and beverage industry ended on a record high this year with an unprecedented number of visitors, exhibitors and business deals confirmed. As a result, the show will be extended by a day next year to run for five days, in order to accommodate the exceptional trade opportunities it provides.

The show which ran from 25th to 28th February 2013, is the biggest exhibition to be organised by and held at the Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC). It attracted 77,609 trade visitors from over 152 countries. Additional space required to accommodate the 4,200 exhibitors participating this year, necessitated the special construction of the Zabeel Pavilion to take the total exhibition space for the show to a record 113,388m².

"Demand for space at Gulfood increases every year as the show continues to deliver unmatched trading opportunities for the industry globally. The value that Gulfood provides to the food and beverage industry is now undisputed and recognised on a truly global scale. It is also an event that contributes measurably



Sheikh Hamdan Bin Rashid Al Maktoum opens Gulfood 2013.

ably to the economy of Dubai by attracting tens of thousands of visitors to the city every year," said H.E. Helal Saeed Almarri, Director General, Dubai Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DTCM) and CEO, Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC).

Visits to Gulfood this year by heads of state, ministers and government officials from more than 21 countries around the world – the largest contingent to date - signified the global reach and stature of the show. Announcements of a number of bi-lateral trade agreements were made



during the event, with more expected during the course of the year.

Brisk business trade was reported from exhibitors across all sectors of the show, from food producers through to retailers, distributors, equipment manufacturers and service providers. While final figures for confirmed orders are not yet available, information received so far indicates record sales levels across the board.

Launch Platform

Gulfood has increasingly become the platform of choice for global launches by international companies. This year Electrolux, a leading international player in food service and laundry solutions, conducted four major global launches for their specialist food preparation brand Dito Sama during the show.

Mohamed El Bakkouri, Head of Category, Dynamic Preparation at Electrolux said: "We had clear and ambitious objectives for choosing Gulfood as our launch stage, most importantly because both MENA and Asia are big markets for Dito Sama, particularly given the current economic climate globally. The show enables access to both regions and we were delighted with the results. Not only did we sell out of every machine on our stand, we received more than 150 solid leads that we are confident will be converted.

An added and unexpected bonus for us was the interaction we enjoyed from end-users – we didn't expect the number of chefs and restaurant owners to be at the show and enabling us to have direct contact with them gave us great advantage in a very competitive environment. The calibre of trade visitors at Gulfood is unmatched," he said.

Tetra Pak, a leader in food processing and packaging solutions, unveiled a number of technologically innovative developments in their packaging and filling equipment, designed to deliver greater production efficiency and meet consumer demands for functionality and convenience.

Country Pavilions

With more than 110 countries represented at this year's show, Gulfood's role as a truly global platform is clear. Countries such as France have concentrated their F&B industry efforts on Gulfood, ahead of any other trade show in the world. According to Christelle Labernède, Head of the Agribusiness Department, UbiFrance UAE and Qatar, "Gulfood is essential for French companies to develop their business, not only in the Middle East region but also all over the world. This year, we organised four pavilions at the show, enabling French exhibitors to showcase equipment, ingre-

dients, food & drink and processing, and the results have been excellent."

A record number of Australian companies were represented at this year's show, demonstrating the importance of the region for the food producing country. The Honourable Louise Asher MP, Minister for Innovation, Services and Small Business and Minister for Tourism and Major Events, led 70 of Victoria's leading food and beverage companies to Gulfood as part of the State Government of Victoria's Super Trade Mission to the Middle East.

Commenting during the Ministers' Meet on the opening day, Ms. Asher said: "The Victorian Government has a long-standing and fast growing trade relationship with the MENA region and our presence at Gulfood has grown year on year – from 20 only two years ago to 70 this year. This speaks for the significant opportunities our exporters are seeing in the region, as well as the immense value the exhibition delivers to companies."

Excellent results were generated by the US pavilion which hosted 137 companies at Gulfood, the largest contingent to date. The Foreign Agriculture Service reported that exhibitors concluded on-site sales of approximately US \$102 million and expect to secure an additional US \$313.9 million in sales in the next 12 months as a direct result of their participation at Gulfood.

Local to Global

With tens of thousands of international buyers and businesses attending Gulfood, the show provided an excellent forum for local and regional businesses looking to expand their businesses beyond the Middle East.

The importance of Gulfood for regional beverages giant, RANI, was outlined by Dimitri Dugandzija, Head of Marketing & Business Development: "We are currently in our second phase of growth to widen our market from the Middle East region to international markets, following our partnership with Coca-Cola and Aujan. There is no doubt that Gulfood helps us to achieve this, delivering excellent results for us in meeting new partners and distributors."

Saudi Arabian Al Alwani Memoni Dates, producers of premium organic dates, also required introduction to international partners and distributors. Mustafa Iqbal, Managing Director of the company said: "We are based in the Middle East with strong brand equity here, and are now looking to target new markets in Pakistan, the United States and Europe. Gulfood is helping us to do just that."

Dubai Cola Company's Sales Manager, Ahmad Roshdi confirmed that Gulfood provided a great opportunity to introduce the company's distinctive beverage to the international world. He said:

"We focus on the Arabic taste in our cola product, which includes all-natural dates grown in Dubai. We received orders from numerous countries during the exhibition, including Greece, France, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and a record order for 30 containers from Turkmenistan."

Business Success

Business opportunities extended to every sector of the industry represented at Gulfood. As a first time exhibitor, American Pistachio Growers used the show as a means to gauge market interest. Judy Hirigoyen, Director of Global Marketing explained: "Gulfood is clearly the most influential exhibition in the region, but the response we have received has been quite overwhelming. Not only did we have at least 500 solid enquiries, but as a result of the show we will now be opening an office in the UAE."

Long-time participants at Gulfood, Best Foods Company LLC, enjoyed substantial success at this year's show. Ravi Jangid, General Manager said: "We have participated at every single edition of Gulfood. This year we launched our new Tamrah product line, which has attracted good interest from the trade, and excitingly, won the Gulfood Award for "Best Local Food". The show was also the perfect platform for us to announce our growth in profit of 15% last year, the re-opening of our factory in Rashidiya and

the new opening of our Dubai Investment Park factory."

For packaging giant IPS, Gulfood delivered great results across all divisions. The company sold equipment and solutions for everything ranging from beverage bottling, bakery and confectionery making, meat processing to storage of raw materials. Stephan R. Schaerrer, President of IPS said, "Gulfood 2013 was an excellent exhibition, bringing us visitors and enquiries from the entire MEA region. IPS signed deals in excess of €16million with clients from KSA, Yemen, Oman, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria and the Ivory Coast."

Industry Excellence and Insight

In addition to the billions of dollars in business deals transacted during Gulfood, the show also highlighted excellence in the industry through the annual Gulfood Awards, of which there were 24 award winners this year, and through the much anticipated Emirates International Salon Culinare competition which attracted entries from 1,500 professional chefs around the region. Delegates at the Gulfood Conferences enjoyed privileged access to global experts and leaders during the three day conference, to gain valuable knowledge on innovations, trends, regulations and growth strategies for businesses in the industry.

Two New International Food Events Announced

In addition to Gulfood's new five-day format in 2014, two new and significant food events will take place during the week of the show. The inaugural World Food Safety and Investment Summit will be attended by ministers, government officials, policy makers and thought leaders from the region and around the world to address global food supply and security. The Dubai World Food Festival, a consumer focused celebration of the world's foods and flavours will take place immediately following Gulfood 2014, and will offer residents of the UAE and visitors to Dubai a chance to enjoy the culinary innovations previously only available to F&B industry professionals attending the trade show. ◆

