

Fruit Logistica 2003

It's all go on the eastern front

The 11th Fruit Logistica held from 16 to 18 January this year has confirmed the position held by the trade fair as world reference in fresh fruit and vegetables. To judge by the strong increase in the presence of Eastern European countries—future EU members—the fresh fruit and vegetables sector has not waited for 2004 to build trade links. The fair also shows the main lines of the work of sector operators.

As the years go by, Fruit Logistica has acquired the status of reference show at the world level for the fresh produce sector. The 2003 event was up to standard in this respect, with 14 000 visitors, 50 percent of whom were foreigners, crowding through the doors of Messe Berlin to meet nearly 850 exhibitors from more than 45 countries. The doubling of all the indicators (attendance by the public and exhibitors, floor area of the show and the number of countries represented) between 1999 and 2004 is a clear illustration of this success. The organisers now have the task of handling this.

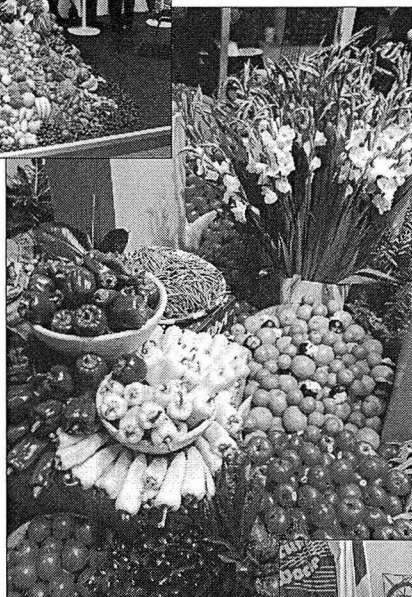


with no customs dues, of a market consisting of 375 million consumers with high purchasing power. Hungarian operators in particular, who have long supplied Germany with cherries, plums and vegetables, were numerous, forming the main

represented. A fair number of trade operators nevertheless consider that the stabilisation of the Russian banking system provides the credibility hitherto lacking for importers in a country with 150 000 consumers.

King pineapple

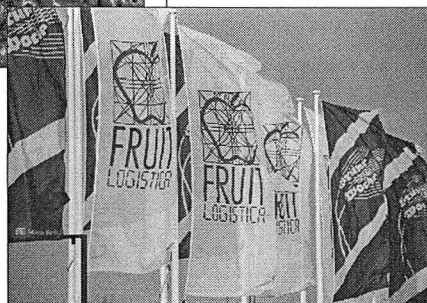
Pineapple did not usurp its title of 'king of fruits'. The pride of place reserved for it on the stands clearly illustrated its position as priority target for operators. It is true that the market is in fairly good health thanks to continued growth of consumption (+ 150 000 t imported by the UE from 1991 to 2001) and the comfortable income that it generates. Côte d'Ivoire was present but rubbed shoulders with increasingly strong competition. The rise of Cayenne from Ghana was shown by the much larger delegation and stand than last year. However, the most noticeable development is obviously 'Sweet' pineapple, with an increasing number of transnationals vying to show it off. A



Europe is already enlarged

A feature of the 11th Fruit Logistica was clearly the enlargement of the EU. The presence of an East-West Information Centre devoted to the promotion of east-west trade is a symbol of this. Operators from the future member countries already formed 15 percent of visitors in 2002 and arrived in large number in 2003. Furthermore, a fair number have become exhibitors since nearly 30 stands were manned by Hungarian, Polish, Czech or Lithuanian professionals. The export sector was clearly dominant, attracted by the prospect of access,

delegation. However, some large importers also made the journey. It is true that the game is worth it since these markets already total nearly 800 000 tonnes of citrus and 650 000 tonnes of banana and they have considerable scope for development. In contrast, Russia was strangely little



show it off. A festival of superlatives seems to be taking place. Fyffes, with Fyffestar, and Dole, with its premium select, are happy with 'Super Sweet', Del Monte and Chiquita go for 'Extra Sweet' while Bonita uses 'Ultra Sweet'. They are going to have to upgrade

to 'Mega Sweet' and 'Giga Sweet' next.

But don't all these similar marketing concepts show that Sweet pineapple has now peaked out, as would tend to be proved by the dwindling difference in price with Cayenne?

Towards an increase in the ready-prepared fresh fruit and vegetables market

Ready-prepared fresh produce was also one of the most heavily emphasised concepts. Firstly, the range of rapid peeling machines available from equipment suppliers is increasing. A combined enzymatic and mechanical system was presented by the FDOC at the 2002 Citrus Professional Meeting (see <http://citrus2002.cirad.fr>). At the show, Kronen exhibited a new 100 percent mechanical system capable of peeling and slicing 400 fruits per hour.

The professional market seems to be taking this particularly seriously.

Indeed, the technique that was released only last year has been widely used, as is shown by several new products presented (slices of orange or grapefruit packed in containers, ultra-fresh fruit salads, etc.). These innovations can perhaps awaken the market for certain products such as orange and grapefruit that have strong potential but are considered difficult to handle by consumers.

Marketing targeting health

Health and food safety seem to draw unanimous approval among the marketing themes used. Firstly, the '5 A Day' operation was well represented, with a US 'Produce For Better Health Foundation' stand and another manned by their German counterparts. The '5 A Day' international symposium was held in Berlin two days before the opening of Fruit Logistica. Private operators of all sorts also made considerable use of these themes in their advertising. Promotion leaflets were full of information about nutritional characteristics.

Numerous distributors offer health sheets or recipe books. One of them—Elsdorfer Feinkost—even exhibited a range of salads baptised 'Fit for Fun'!

Too few French importers

French attendance was solid with the SOPEXA banner flying over nearly 90 exhibitors, most from the production and shipping sector (including a perfectly divine 'Miss Pink Lady!'). But the import sector was little represented this year once again, with only 7 exhibitors. Welcome, however, to the initiative of Martinique banana operators who were present as exhibitors for the first time. Others should follow their example!

The 12th Fruit Logistica trade show will be held from 15 to 17 January 2004 ■

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The advertisement features a screenshot of the website www.VisualGlobalFruit.de. The website interface includes a navigation bar with tabs for EUROPE, USA, ASIAN/OCEANIC EAST, and SPECIALS. The main content area displays a 'Weekly Global Market Reports' section with a sub-header 'EUROPEAN APPLE STOCK SITUATION' and a brief analysis of the market. To the right, there is an 'OPINIONS' section with a quote from 'Stanley Wente'. Below the main content, there are sections for 'MARKET TRENDS IN JAPAN' and 'MARKET TRENDS IN AUSTRALIA'. The background of the advertisement is a large, stylized image of a fruit, possibly a pineapple, with the text '... born to change your business!' overlaid at the bottom.

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