

From 17 to 19 May, the 23rd Azerbaijan International Food Industry Exhibition, WorldFood Azerbaijan 2017 took place in Baku. Over the years, the exhibition recommended itself like a reliable platform for traditional meetings between experts, and demonstrations of equipment, goods and services for the food and agriculture industry. This event additionally provides an opportunity to find customers, strengthen existing relationships with business partners, and expand to new markets. Over a number of years, the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Azerbaijan has provided invaluable support to the WorldFood Azerbaijan exhibition. The event is also supported by the National Confederation of Entrepreneurs (Employers) Organizations of the Republic of Azerbaijan (ASK), and the Azerbaijan Export and Investments Promotion Foundation (AZPROMO).

On the first day, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and first lady Mehriban Aliyeva have viewed World Food Azerbaijan and IpackCaspian exhibitions.

The WorldFood Azerbaijan 2017 was accepted by 164 companies from 21 countries of the world, including Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Greece, Italy, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Russia, Spain and others. Mexico was being represented at the exhibition for the first time, while Hungary, Sri Lanka and the Republic of Belarus also presented their own national stands. The Stavropol Territory (Russia) participated at the exhibition with their regional stand. The export potential of Poland was represented by the Polish Embassy in Azerbaijan. For the second consecutive year, the Sri Lankan State Tea Committee Board, which heads the Ceylon Tea Producers Group from Sri Lanka, participated at the exhibition. A network of Belarusian shops in Baku took part at the exhibition for the first time.

It is pleasing that Azerbaijani companies were actively engaged at the exhibition, proudly representing the “Made in Azerbaijan” brand. So, local exhibitors were headed by the permanent participants of the exhibition – Azersun Holding, Gilan Holding and Metak, local exporters of fruits and vegetables were represented by the companies Amoris, Buta Group. Among this year’s debutants were companies like Bal Xurma, representing a new product on the market – dried persimmon using a special treatment method, Sem-Az (laboratory equipment), and Enes (packaging).

Thus, WorldFood Azerbaijan 2017 participants demonstrated products in the following sections: equipment for the food industry, food, vegetables and fruits, meat and poultry, coffee and tea, canned, dairy products, groceries, ingredients, confectionery and flour products, beverages, refrigeration systems, laboratory equipment and much more.

For the first time this year the Organisers had created another business platform, a workshop, for exhibitors and visitors within the framework of the WorldFood Azerbaijan exhibition. Participants of the workshop were, on the one hand, foreign producers and suppliers of food products, and on the other,

local distributors. Both market participants had a unique opportunity to meet with colleagues at the same table and negotiate with several key customers over the course of one day.



WorldFood Azerbaijan took place alongside the Caspian International Packaging, Tare, Label and Printing Ipack Caspian 2017. Compared with last year, the membership of the participants and the range of offered products significantly increased. In the framework of the exhibition companies from Azerbaijan, Italy, Russia, Turkey, UAE and other countries offered both tare and packaging, as well as various solutions for their production.

An innovation of this year's exhibitions was the business breakfast hosted by the organisers, which took place long before the actual opening of the exhibitions. The aim of this business breakfast was to help the participants to take better advantage of the opportunities which the exhibitions present. The event was attended by exhibitors of WorldFood Azerbaijan and the organizer's team. The business breakfast was led by a professional coach from the Big City Coaching Company, Ksenika Borisova, who was specially invited by the Organizers. During the breakfast, the main issues relating to stand organisation were touched upon, and a formula for successful participation at the exhibitions was presented. The coach emphasized the importance of maximizing the use of all the available resources at the exhibitions to establish contacts, and also catalogued the free resources that the organisers offer before, during and after the exhibitions. Besides having organised a business breakfast, the Organizers provided the participants with an opportunity to get acquainted, which many of them would otherwise not have had due to the fact of their working in their respective stands during the exhibition, although they are potential clients of each other's businesses.

Thus, the exhibition of food industry will once again become a reliable foundation for holding meetings, presenting equipment, goods and services for the food industry, finding clients, strengthening existing relationships with business partners, and entering new markets. The organisers of WorldFood Azerbaijan and Ipack Caspian 2017 are ITE Group and its partner Iteca Caspian. The success of exhibitions is the result of teamwork of the entire network of partners of the company ITE Group, actively attracting international companies to participate in the Azerbaijani exhibitions. Among them are companies ITE London, EUF (Turkey), Caspian Event Management (UAE), ITE China (China), ITE Poland (Poland).

According to the audit company UFI – Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, the number of visitors who visited the exhibition this year was 6693. The sign "Approved by UFI" indicates the conformity of the exhibitions to all international standards.

In 2018 the exhibition will take place on 23–25 May.

#WorldFoodAzerbaijan

References

Nargiz Iskenderzade, Director of Aznur

“The “Belaruskiy” Trade Network, which is a part of Aznur, was first presented at the WorldFood Azerbaijan 2017 exhibition. The exhibition of food products is the most effective tool for finding new customers, sales markets and expanding the geography of sales for participating companies, enabling not only to search for relevant partners, but also to participate in entering the market”.

M.N Nazlin, Manager, Sri Lanka Tea Board Representative in Russia and CIS countries

“I really like the way the exhibition is held. Thanks to this event, our company was able to establish new contacts. Of course, we expect to participate in the exhibitions in Baku in the coming years, and we hope to achieve positive results steadily”.

Tural Hasanov, Head of Sales Department, Mirlex Trading Distribution Company for Pieno Zvaigzdes

“We take part in the exhibition every year, and on behalf of our partners and head of Pieno Zvaigzdes, I want to say that we are satisfied with the high level of organization and with the prospects for further cooperation with our partners”.