

Finland is focus of world's largest food fair in January 2019

Finland is the partner country at the world's largest food fair organised in Germany with the theme 'Aus der Wildnis' or 'Greetings from the Wild'. More than 80 companies from different parts of Finland are bringing their products and services to Finland's exhibition hall in Berlin for the Grüne Woche or Green Week consumer fair held 18–27 January 2019. The aim of the partnership country idea is to gain visibility for Finnish food and drink products, ease their path into German markets, as well as enticing more tourists into Finland. Every year, the fair attracts about 400,000 visitors and 1,700 exhibitors, along with 4,000 media representatives, from 65 countries.

"Finland wants to conquer the hearts of German consumers and tourists with its own trump cards. They are the cleanliness and purity of our nature and food as proven by research, responsible production methods, and innovative, delicious foods and drinks of the highest quality, spiced with a sprinkling of wild exotics," says **Juha Marttila**, President of the Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners (MTK).

"The prominent partnership of Grüne Woche will strongly promote Finland's image in the European market so important to us, right at the start of our term of EU presidency. It is commendable that producers and also our small and medium-sized enterprises have boldly adopted a prominent role in promoting Finnish expertise and pure food. I am convinced that this work will be fruitful," stresses **Jari Leppä**, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry. The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry is one of the contributors to the project funding.

The businesses taking part in the show are exhibiting in regional stands combining food and tourism, grain and fish stands, their own stands and the restaurant area. The companies marketing their products and services at the fair include Altia, Hätäla, Arctic Finland, Pro Agria, Birkkala Farm, Helsinki Mills, Kaslink Foods, Kyrö Distillery, Laihian Mallas and Lomalaidun. The Saimaa region, companies in the western lakelands of Pirkanmaa, Häme and Central Finland, North Karelia, South-West Finland and Kainuu have their own regional stands. Companies from Lapland are exhibiting under the joint Lapland Food Club brand.

The catering in the restaurant area is by Bryggeri Helsinki in Berlin, together with Finland's national chef team. Dishes prepared by the national chef team are available at various events aimed at influencers and the media, in addition to Finland's fair restaurant. The restaurant area also contains Lammin Sahti's bar Suuret Oluet - Pienet Panimot [Big Beers – Small Breweries], where one can taste the products of over ten Finnish small breweries and distilleries. There are daily stage performances of Finnish music and other entertainment.

Grüne Woche is also a huge international food sector policymaker and media event. The Finnish hall organises daily press conferences on a variety of themes, as well as meeting influencers. Business Finland's 'Food from Finland' export programme is organising an event for professional buyers jointly with the Embassy of Finland in Germany. During the exhibition, Finnish products are also in evidence in the form of Finland campaigns in local retail chains.

The Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners MTK has signed a partnership agreement with the fair and is responsible for the event organisation jointly with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, SLC, representing Finland-Swedish farmers, and Business Finland. The project is supported by regional food and tourism projects, along with MTK Varsinais-Suomi. The Embassy of Finland in Germany is also lending its support to public relations and the programme. During the fair, Finnish products are also promoted through campaigns run by German retail chains, on which Business Finland will provide further information closer to the event.

The food and drink sponsors at the PR events are Altia, Atria, Arla, Helsinki Mills, Reinin liha and Unilever. The appliances are supplied by Electrolux and the majority of exhibition furniture by Isku. The visual look of the country partnership was designed by the advertising agency Hasan & Partners. The exhibition space is being built by Messeforum. The Embassy of Finland in Germany is closely involved in the organisation of the policymaker or influencer and media meetings at the event. Additional assistance with public relations is provided by the German PR agency Genius.

The exhibition stands and companies taking part in the Finnish hall are here: (link)

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