



The European Union announces its presence at the Annapoorna Food Festival by showcasing Europe's culinary heritage

Fair showcases plethora of culinary delights from EU

Strengthens bilateral ties between the EU and India

Mumbai, 24th September, 2014: For the first time ever, the European Union will participate in the Annapoorna Food Festival that runs from September 24th to 26th 2014 at the Bombay Exhibition Centre in Goregaon. In the 9th edition of this mega food and beverage industry event, the EU has one of the biggest pavilions—sprawling over 249 sq. mts. - where visitors can take a culinary tour of the EU and experience the diversity of European produce. Lined up are interactive sessions to inform and educate consumers on the availability of quality products such as fresh and processed fruits and vegetables, a variety of cheeses and other dairy products, the high-on-demand extra virgin olive oils and wine. There are live cooking sessions and food tastings by experts to acquaint visitors with how best to use these products.

Experts will share recipes and tips on European cooking; and seminars will highlight the uses and benefits of various European foods. An event that promises to be of interest to audiences is the seminar on extra virgin olive oil where a nutritionist will explain why olive oil is healthy in daily diet. Another interesting seminar is on EU quality schemes - including how to identify products with characteristics strongly linked to their geographical origin from the information on labels; methods of identifying products which have specific characteristics; and the certification of much-in-demand organic produce from Europe.

H.E. Dr João Cravinho, Ambassador of the European Union said, "With 28 Member States which stretch from the Arctic Circle to the Mediterranean, the EU produces a spectacular variety of quality food, from wines and spirits, to olive oils, cheeses and other dairy products, fresh and processed fruits and vegetables and many more. Few of these products have already become an integral part of the Indian kitchen. Through this campaign we encourage the Indian consumer to add some EU flavours to her already rich culinary tradition!"

In agricultural trade, the EU is currently a modest partner for India, but one with big potential. EU exports to India over the last ten years have been oscillating around € 250 – 300 mn. On the other hand, the import of Indian agricultural produce into the EU currently stands at € 2.7 bn, of which a large part is accounted for by Basmati rice followed by coffee, fruit and nuts, vegetables and spices. Products like olive oil, essential oils, sugars, chocolates, confectionary and prepared vegetable and meat constitute a large share of the EU's agriculture-based exports to India.

Mrs. Monique Pariat, Deputy Director-General, DG Agriculture & Rural Development, European Commission said, “European foods and wines are known throughout the world for their high quality and tremendous diversity. But much more than this, Europe has very high standards for food safety, environmental protection and animal welfare. The EU and India are working together to draw up a Free Trade Agreement (FTA). This will enable Indian consumers more than ever to experience the tastes of Europe. And likewise, the FTA will also enable Europeans to enjoy India's unique culinary traditions. Indeed, a future FTA will present significant benefits to consumers from both countries.”

Prior to participating in the Annapoorna Food Festival, the EU launched its three week-long ‘Tastes of Europe Campaign’ on September 6th 2014 with a ‘Restaurant Week Festival’ for which ten participating fine dining restaurants designed special European menus to showcase Europe’s culinary heritage. Some of the restaurants that participated in the festival were the Olive Bar and Kitchen, Smoke House Deli, Indigo, Vetro at The Oberoi, Maritime By San Lorenzo at Taj Land's End, Prego at The Westin, Nido and Botticino at The Trident. This was followed by the ‘Food Retail Week’ that ran from September 15th – 21st 2014 in which, leading food retail outlets such as Palladium Food Hall (Lower Parel), Hypercity (Malad), Haiko Super Market (Powai) and Godrej Nature’s Basket (Bandra) set up EU kiosks that gave visitors samples of European flavours.

The EU’s presence at the Annapoorna World of Food India signifies Europe’s focus on India as a key country for agri-based products trade. In India, there is a fast-growing demand for European foods such as dairy, olive oil, malt and processed agricultural products. For the EU, India is a potential growth market for exports. Agricultural product exports have been growing steadily over the past few years from 0.9 percent of total exports in 2009 to 1.3 percent in 2013 and are set to increase even further. With the ‘Tastes of Europe’ Campaign, the EU also believes that the campaign’s many customer-centric initiatives will help the Indian consumer to be better informed in their choice of European food products.

About the European Union (EU):

The EU, which consists of 28 countries, has the world's largest economy and its third largest population, after China and India. Though richly diverse, the countries that make up the EU (its 'Member States') are all committed to the same basic values: peace, democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights. They have set up common institutions so that decisions on matters of joint interest can be made democratically at European level. By creating a frontier-free single market and a single currency (the euro) which has been adopted by 18 Member States, the EU has given a significant boost to trade and employment. It is also at the forefront of policies on sustainability.

EU-India relations

Over 50 years the EU and India have worked together to reduce poverty, prevent disasters, expand trade, and promote joint research in energy, health, agriculture and many other fields of mutual interest.

More information at: <http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/india>