

A Successful Debut: Fi Europe CONNECT 2020

High participant numbers and numerous business conversations made this virtual trade show the place-to-be for those in the international food and beverage industry

Amsterdam / The Netherlands, 15 December 2020: The first edition of the virtual event for the food ingredients industry, Fi Europe CONNECT (23 November - 4 December), saw high levels of engagement with more than 10,300 active participants, 272 exhibitors and 200+ online presentations and live sessions. With specific themed content sessions each day such as “Active & Performance Nutrition”, “Plant-based” and “Health & Wellness”, the comprehensive agenda focused on the topics currently driving the industry. For 2021, organizer Informa Markets is planning a hybrid event combining a face-to-face show in Frankfurt with a virtual offering.

In keeping with its name, Fi Europe CONNECT aimed to make networking and lead generation as easy as possible for attendees, thanks to an AI-based matchmaking system. More than 15,400 connections, 6,300 conversations and over 8,800 meetings prove that the virtual platform fulfilled that promise. Like its big sister Fi Europe co-located with Hi Europe, Fi Europe CONNECT had a truly international feel, with 131 countries present at the virtual exhibition.

Innovative exhibitors and an expert audience

In addition to key players such as Bio Springer, Roquette and EXBERRY® by GNT, who showcased their offerings, upcoming startup companies were also able to prove their visionary credentials in the Startup Innovation Challenge. Michroma and Enzymit, for example, both named winners in this year’s challenge, are active in the field of fermented and lab-grown ingredients.

Technologies and ingredients relating to clean label, sustainability and plant-based alternatives also dominated the exhibitor profiles. FUMI Ingredients presented an egg-free egg white, while Sufresca, also a winner of the Startup Innovation Challenge, offers edible coatings for fruit and vegetables. What’s more, functional ingredients for intestinal health, personalized nutrition and immunity played a major role – a result of the pandemic, as revealed by experts from Innova Market Insights, Mintel, FMCG Gurus, and New Nutrition Business in panel discussions and presentations.

The quality of the attendees was impressive too: Around one third of the visitors worked in R&D and product development, 64 per cent had budget authority and were responsible for purchasing in their company, and approximately 30 per cent were in senior management (C-level).

Brand Director Julien Bonvallet says: “The year 2020 was a challenge, especially for the exhibition and event industry. Although we have been well-positioned digitally, the face-to-face meetings remain at the heart of our portfolio. My team and I worked tirelessly to make Fi Europe CONNECT an international and vibrant platform. That’s

why it's great to know that this virtual show and our agenda of expert talks, panel discussions and live sessions were so well received. Virtual events are proving to be a strong channel to reach new and wider audiences, as well as an excellent vehicle for brand awareness and thought leadership.”

2021: Face-to-face exhibition and virtual event series

Informa Markets has already announced that Fi Europe co-located with Hi Europe will return to Frankfurt next year from November 30 to December 2. In addition to the event in November, the organisers will present the Fi Global CONNECT series, which consists of 3 virtual events.

Fi Global CONNECT will start with "Regions in the Spotlight" in April 2021, followed by "Health Ingredients in the Spotlight" in June and "Plant-Based Ingredients in the Spotlight" in September. Informa Markets expects the new virtual formats to link around 350 suppliers with more than 15,000 potential customers.

With a year-round calendar of networking events, a rich content agenda and marketing services, the series will enable attendees and exhibitors to connect through AI-driven matchmaking, discover innovations and do business throughout the year across a variety of markets.

About Fi Global

Food ingredients Global was launched in Utrecht, The Netherlands, in 1986. Its portfolio of live events, extensive data, digital solutions and high-level conferences is now established throughout the world and provides regional and global platforms for all stakeholders in the food ingredients industry. Over 500,000 people have attended our shows over the years, with billions of Euros worth of business created as a result. With more than 30 years of excellence, the events, digital solutions and supporting products deliver a proven route to market, with a truly global audience. Since 2018, Food ingredients Global has been part of the Informa Markets portfolio. For more information, please visit: www.figlobal.com.

About Informa Markets

Informa Markets creates platforms for industries and specialist markets to trade, innovate and grow. Our portfolio of more than 400 international B2B events and brands spans markets including Healthcare & Pharmaceuticals to Infrastructure, Construction & Real Estate, Fashion & Apparel, Hospitality, Food & Beverage, and Health & Nutrition, amongst others. We provide customers and partners around the globe with opportunities to engage, experience and do business through face-to-face exhibitions, specialist digital content and actionable data solutions. As the world's leading exhibitions organiser, we bring a diverse range of specialist markets to life, unlocking opportunities and helping them to thrive 365 days of the year. For more information, please visit www.informamarkets.com.

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