



FRESH PRODUCE NETWORKING IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

28-30 September 2011

Tunis • TUNISIA

Final press release

The 4th Green Med Forum in Tunis hosts 140 business meetings

140 business meetings took place in the B2B hall of the Green Med Forum, the annual conference and business event on the agricultural economy of the Mediterranean Region that was held in Tunis on 28-30 September under the patronage of the European Parliament, the Ministries of Agriculture of Italy and Tunisia and the CIHEAM of Paris. Around **250 companies** attended the event, mostly from **Tunisia** and **Italy** with delegations from **Spain, Turkey, Greece, Belgium and France**.

About **150 Tunisian companies** represented the local fruit and vegetables and olive oil industries as well as the food processing and the fresh produce logistics sectors. Alongside the Forum it was held the assembly of Assomedmarkets, the Association of Mediterranean Wholesale Markets, with the participation of highly representative markets such as those of Barcelona and Istanbul. The workshop on the retail sector, organized by COOP Italia, and that on organic farming in the Mediterranean Region were greatly attended.

The main conference on September 29, divided into parallel sessions for fruit and vegetables and for olive oil, addressed three main topics: **quality** of production, **logistics** and **investments opportunities** in agriculture. The Forum counted on the participation of especially qualified speakers such as **Philippe Binard**, Secretary General of Freshfel Europe, from Brussels, **Jacques Dasque**, Secretary General of the Assembly of the Horticultural regions of Europe AREFLH, from Bordeaux, **Luca Lanini**, Italian professor of fresh produce logistics, and the researchers **Rym Ayadi**, coordinating in Brussels some projects about agricultural investments in the Mediterranean, and **Fatima El Hadad Gauthier** from the IAM-Montpellier.

Key protagonists of the Tunisian agricultural and promotion sectors took part in the meeting, such as **Abdellatif Ghedira**, Director General of Tunisia's Agricultural Investment Promotion Agency APIA, who opened the Plenary Session of the conference; **Soufiene Meddeb**, Director General of GIFruits (the Fruit Interprofessional organization); **Abdellatif Hammam**, Director General of CEPEX.

Other key speakers included **Paolo Bruni**, president of the European Agricultural Cooperatives COGECA, **Giuseppe Politi**, president of the Italian Farmers Confederation CIA and **Cosimo Lacirignola**, director of the IAM of Bari. For the olive oil sessions, **Mohamed Moez Zouari**, Director General of Tunis' ONH (Office National de l'Huile), **Enzo Gambin**, director of Italy's AIPO, **Lamia Thabet**, DG of Packtec and the Spanish **Manuel Torres and Enrique Delgado**, respectively president and secretary general of both INFAOLIVA and UNAPROLIVA.

As a conclusion of the 4th Green Med Forum, a **first draft document** was prepared to be forwarded to the European Union's Agricultural Committee with the signing of the European and Mediterranean organizations that took part in the event.



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The session on olive oil, with a lively panel discussion among the Tunisian, Italian and Spanish representatives, was particularly important: it ended with the wish to open a discussion table on the possibility to create a **Mediterranean brand for olive oil**.

During the Gala Dinner on September 28, held at the Hotel Ramada Plaza in Gammarth-Tunis, the **Green Med Awards 2011** were presented. The winners are the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Bari (IAMB) as Best Service Provider, the Italian fresh produce association Fruitimprese as Best Exporter, and the Tunisian farm of excellence SADIRA as Best Grower.

The Tunisian Authorities at the 4th Green Med Forum confirmed the opening of the Country to foreign investments and their interest in cooperation in the agricultural and agro-food sectors, highlighting the role of Tunisia as a logistics platform and gateway to Countries such as Algeria and Libya. Tunisian goods directed towards the European Union are exempt from duties, foreign businesses registered in Tunisia are exempt from taxes for ten years, the cost of labor is less than half the European average. All this makes Tunisia particular interesting to European entrepreneurs.

The Tunis Forum was organized by the trade magazine Green Med Journal in cooperation with Mida Group based in Tunis and the local governmental agency APIA. The 5th edition of the Green Med Forum will take place in Spain in 2012.

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