

Press release
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More than 100 French companies at Gulfood 2012 **France: a major food and equipment supplier in the Middle East**

French agrifood exports to the United Arab Emirates **increased significantly in 2011** (January-November), with a **€206 M** turnover and a **31% rise compare to the same period in 2010**. France is the 15th food supplier of the U.A.E. Historically French exports to the Middle East were essentially made up of poultry and dairy products. Since a few years, French producers are offering a diversity of products, with also significant exports of apples, biscuits and chocolates, fine products like foie gras, oysters, caviar, tapenades, dips, condiments, mineral water and other beverages...

This growth is in line with the expanding Middle Eastern food service market as it continues to develop rapidly due to a rising population, purchasing power, and a strong hospitality sector. 90% of food items in the GCC are imported and French food products benefit from an excellent reputation (image and quality) in the Middle East.

Moreover, Dubai has a strategic position in the region and is a real trade hub. About 50% of food imports are re-exported to 160 countries including the Gulf countries, the Indian subcontinent, North Africa and East and Central Asia. Therefore, Dubai is one of the largest re-exporters in the world thanks to its efficient infrastructures (ports and airports) associated with large free trade zones.

Both agriculture and the agrifood industry are huge assets of the French economy, making France one of the world's leading producers and exporters of food and beverages. Agriculture and food industries in France account for about 13% of the value-added of French industry as a whole. This industry employs 557,000 and generates a value-added of €31.7 billion. The agrifood sector in France is the leading industrial sector with a €148bn turnover. It accounts for 1.7% of French GDP and 7.1% of total French exports.

France is also the **5th largest exporter of equipment for the food industry**, and is therefore among the leading global providers. France's strength is its presence on all major food industry markets, especially with French companies exporting machines and equipment for bakeries, milk and meat industries. For instance, France is the first supplier of bakery equipment in the U.A.E with 21% market shares. In 2011 (January-November), **French exports of food equipment in the U.AE increased by 20%** compare to the same period in 2010 and reached €6 million.

As a consequence, it is not a surprise if France's presence at Gulfood 2012 will be very strong with almost 100 French exhibitors on our national pavilion: 53 companies will attend the French pavilion dedicated to food, beverages and ingredients while more than 44 will attend the French Pavilion dedicated to equipment and process. And we do not mention the dozens of French companies exhibiting on their own or with their importers. Gulfood for French companies is essential to develop their business in the region. Since its creation, France has not missed a single edition of Gulfood and over the years the French presence has kept growing. Our counterparts from Ubifrance India and Saudi Arabia will join us to participate at Gulfood this year and organize B2B meetings between French companies and importers from these countries.

Last but not least, the French Trade Commission-UBIFRANCE in the United Arab Emirates launched "So French So Good" to promote France's food-and-drink sector and gastronomy. The successful dinner has been organized at the Sofitel Jumeirah Beach, the 25th October 2011, in conjunction with the French pavilion held at the Speciality Food Festival. We will renew our exclusive event next November.

According to François Sporrer, Director of Ubifrance UAE & Qatar:

"With Gulfood as a worldwide event and Speciality Food Festival as an exciting show dedicated to gourmet products, DWTC provides a comprehensive and very efficient platform for food professionals. Therefore, we will undoubtedly increase the French participation on both events in the coming years".

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