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Fyffes directors to lead ChiquitaFyffes



David McCann will head up ChiquitaFyffes

David McCann and Coen Bos are set to be at the helm of newly merged company following deal with Chiquita

David McCann, executive chairman of Irish tropical fruit company Fyffes, has emerged as the man to lead ChiquitaFyffes, the company set up to carry forward Fyffes and US multinational Chiquita Brands International as a single commercial entity.

With Chiquita's current chief executive officer Ed Lonergan set to move into a new role as ChiquitaFyffes' non-executive chairman, McCann has been named as the combined company's new CEO and will work alongside his Fyffes colleagues Coen Bos, who will be its chief operating officer for fresh fruit, and Tom Murphy, who retains his present CFO position.

Brian Kocher, erstwhile boss of Chiquita Europe and currently Chiquita's COO, will see his role change to focus purely on running the US group's salads and healthy snacks business.

Chiquita directors James Thompson and

Manuel Rodriguez have also been given responsibility for managing ChiquitaFyffes' legal and corporate responsibility departments respectively, while its chief administrative officer Kevin Holland will continue in his current position, but there is apparently no place on the new board for Chiquita CFO Rick Frier.

"The senior executives will be located in corporate offices in Charlotte, North Carolina and Dublin, Ireland," a spokesperson confirmed. "The combined company's board of directors will reflect an equal combination of directors from both companies and one mutually agreed-upon director."

Chiquita has spent the past four years relocating its European headquarters from Antwerp in Belgium to Rolle in Switzerland, while in the US more recently it relocated its international headquarters from Cincinnati to Charlotte.

The appointment of McCann and Bos to ChiquitaFyffes' two most crucial commercial roles suggests the balance of operational power will be very much on the European side of the Atlantic, despite Chiquita itself having a slight majority in terms of its corporate shareholding.

Chiquita's turnover might be double that of its new Irish partner at more than US\$3bn, but the US\$35.9m net profit Fyffes made in 2013 stands in stark contrast to the US\$16m net loss incurred by the North Carolina-based firm, and perhaps goes some way to explaining why Fyffes has punched so far above its weight in terms of the stake it will acquire in the new business.