

The international marketing magazine for fresh produce buyers in Europe



By Mike Knowles

Tuesday 22nd January 2013, 15:04 GMT

## **FRESH returns to Paris in 2013**

Leading conference event for Europe's fresh produce business to mark tenth anniversary with return to French capital



**F**RESH, the leading conference and networking event for the fresh produce business in Europe, will mark its tenth anniversary this coming June with a return to Paris, the location of its inaugural congress back in 2003. Organised by industry magazine Eurofruit and the European fresh produce association Freshfel Europe, the congress takes place on 12-14 June at the **Pullman Bercy hotel**, located close to the city centre in the 12th arrondissement.

Having established itself over the past decade as the premier meeting point for executives and senior managers working in the European fruit and vegetable sector, this year's FRESH will bring together hundreds of major players from across the continent for a conference event packed with keynote speakers, top-level discussions and valuable networking opportunities.

In the ten years since FRESH was last held in France, the outlook for fresh produce companies in Europe as a whole

has altered considerably, with recession cutting deep into public confidence and competition intensifying as new markets and sources of supply have come into play. With the cost of living increasing and average salary levels falling, consumers have become more careful with the money in their pockets and have begun to shop around more. Hypermarkets have lost out as a result, while discount chains have seen their sales rise.

In the European Union, France illustrates perhaps better than any other country the major challenges and opportunities now facing the fruit and vegetable trade in Europe. On the one hand, it finds itself struggling to sustain consumer spending as the cost of living increases; on the other, it still has the second-highest food retail sales per capita in Europe, with almost 60 per cent of its retail revenues from that sector. The country is forecast to continue growing as a market and remains a centre of excellence in terms of both haute cuisine and new product development.

FRESH2013 will present the business with new ideas and potential new strategies to combat the recent stagnation in fresh fruit and vegetable sales not only in France but across the whole of Europe. Focusing on nutrition and consumer health, a full programme of expert speakers and panelists will offer their insight into how innovation and investment can improve the health of the sector and the customers and consumers it serves.

With concerns growing not only about public health but also the health of the fresh produce industry itself, this year's conference will also consider new ways to engage with consumers better. FRESH2013 takes place just prior to the start of Fraîch'Attitude week, a series of promotional events organised by interprofessional organisation Interfel across France on 14-23 June to encourage greater public interest in fresh produce.

Further details about FRESH2013 are available on the official congress website at [freshcongress.com](http://freshcongress.com).

<http://www.fruitnet.com/americafruit/article/1474/parts-of-san-diego-quarantined-as-psyllid-count-mounts>

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