Lidl sets out Spanish growth plans

The German discounter was once again the biggest buyer of Spanish-grown fruits and vegetables in 2016.

Lidl was the leading purchaser of Spanish fruits and vegetables last year, acquiring 7 per cent of the national total.

In 2016 the group bought 1.4m tonnes of Spanish produce, an increase of 16 per cent on the previous year. Around 85 per cent of this was sold in the group’s European store network.

The German discounter’s sales grew 9.4 per cent to €3.64bn in 2016. It has been steadily gaining ground in Spain’s grocery market and is now the fifth biggest operator behind Mercadona, Carrefour, Día and Eroski with a 4.1 per cent market share.

In 2016 Lidl invested €368m in growing its Spanish store network – its biggest investment in the country since it first entered the market in 1994.

It plans to invest a further €300m in Spain in 2017 as part of its plan to increase its store network to 800 outlets in the medium term.

‘2016 was a good year for Lidl in Spain, where we see potential for further growth by pursuing our policy of offering the lowest price without compromising on quality,’ said finance director Ferrán Figueras during the presentation of the company’s results.

Since its arrival in the country, the proportion of Spanish products on sale at its stores has doubled from 35 per cent to 70 per cent.