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Importaco posts double-digit rise in 2020 turnover



Importaco's Technology Centre in Valencia

Integration of Besana means the group is now Europe's biggest dried fruit and nut marketer

L eading European dried fruit and nuts marketer Importaco Group reported an annual turnover of €661.8m for 2020, a 13 per cent increase on the previous year.

The company said the growth was in large part due to the integration of Besana into the wider Importaco Group and the pandemic's impact on consumer habits, including the significant increase in products consumed at home.

Post-tax profit reached €18.4m versus €22.4m in 2019, mainly as a result of extraordinary expenses paid out to guarantee the health of the workforce, and the supply of products during the pandemic.

The integration of Besana into the group has propelled the company the top position as Europe's largest nut manufacturer with a volume exceeding 105m kg – a 14 per cent increase compared to the previous year.

During the course of 2020, the company reinvested €25m to improve its production plants, as well as almost €18m on expanding the capacity of factories and more than €7m on quality and innovation.

It launched 32 new products into the market, of which our most important range includes pastes and butters with nuts. In the same year Besana launched nearly 100 new product lines in the UK, diversifying its range in line with the changing eating and snacking behaviours of those who have worked from home throughout the pandemic.

Last year also marked the completion of Importaco's 2018-2020 energy efficiency strategy, resulting in a 10 per cent decrease in energy consumption (reducing CO2 emissions by 1,700 tonnes yearly) and 95 per cent renewable electricity usage (reducing CO2 emissions by 15,612 tonnes).

In a press statement, Importaco said it

was also committed to the circular economy, having collaborated with the AINIA and ITENE technology centres to ensure that 100 per cent of its packaging is recyclable and receiving AENOR Zero Waste certifications for all of its production plants by 2025.

The company also its workforce by 6 in 2020, despite the difficult economic circumstances brought on by Covid-19. The company said its management committee was now more gender-balanced with the number of women in leadership positions increasing.

Despite the economic headwinds and with the strong turnover figures, Importaco was able to award its hardworking employees over €3m in performance-related bonuses.

"Food safety and the quality of Importaco's products are the absolute priority for the company, which is why they have created their 'PROA Plan'," the company said.

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

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The Plan seeks to involve Importaco employees with workshops and innovation cells to ensure that the highest quality raw materials are selected in the most environmentally conscious way. All Importaco processing centres are certified to international food safety and quality standards such as BRC and IFS Food standards.

Praising the commitment of Importaco's staff, president Toño Pons commented: "The sheer commitment of Importaco's staff has been the most significant driver in this year's success.

"In the face of the pandemic, our team has supplied food to our customers

around the world, Besana has integrated into the wider Importaco Group, and we have used the crisis to develop and refine our business strategies. These milestones could never have been achieved without the knowledge and determination of our team."

Founded in 1940, Importaco is the largest nut and dried fruit company in Europe, employing more than 2,000 people. Its partnership with Besana ensures that the group's retail offering spans across Europe in Italy, the UK, Belgium, Germany, Poland, and Scandinavia.

With 17 factories worldwide,

Importaco Group's customer base is truly global. The company is a market leader in almonds, peanuts, hazelnuts, cashews, seeds, and chocolates. In the UK, Besana supplies the largest supermarkets such as Waitrose, Sainsbury's, Tesco, Morrison, and Aldi.

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