

SIAL Group launches new events

In 2009, world leading exhibition organiser SIAL Group and Turret Middle East joined forces to create a SIAL specific to the region, located in Abu Dhabi, the richest city in the world and capital of the UAE.

SIAL is a global business platform for all those involved in the food industry – retail, trade, manufacturing, catering, services and more, and a place where business and innovation meet. SIAL Middle East, the new addition to the SIAL Group is set to become a must-attend event in the region.

The trade-only exhibition will take place in Abu Dhabi, UAE, which is now regarded as the richest city in the world, said the organisers. The Middle East, despite the economic downturn, remains a booming business and tourism destination – passenger traffic grew by 18.1% in 2007 and is to continue to grow at 7.1% up to 2015. The Middle East still holds its place as the fastest growing economy in the world, with a foodservice market now valued at US\$ 35 billion. Over 600,000 new hotel rooms are set to be available in the MENA region from 2010 onwards. The UAE ranks 4th in the global retail index and Saudi Arabia is rated as a US\$ 7 billion import market for food and agricultural products alone. As the potential for agricultural production is limited, food imports will grow with the population throughout the GCC - a region now home to over two billion consumers.

The growing demands from the industry for professional B2B meeting points in the region, resulted in a launch of SIAL in the Middle East. Focused on bringing together high profile buyers with manufacturers and service providers from around the world, SIAL Middle East is set to become a must-attend event in the region for the industry.

Middle East Food Summit

In cooperation with the Abu Dhabi Food Control Authority, a conference on *Food Standards and Security and Retailing* in the Middle East will be held alongside SIAL & IPA Middle East. Attendees will include the agricultural ministers from Arab countries, regional municipalities, regional chambers of commerce and

industries, CEOs of hypermarkets and supermarkets operating in the region.

The organisers have announced that topics will include best practices from around the world, debate and policy statements on food production and security, food retailing speakers from major hypermarkets and supermarkets such as Carrefour, LuLu and others.

The summit is also to include workshops on food hygiene, food production and distribution, and competitions showcasing best practices.

Meet the Buyer

A *Meet the Buyer* programme has been specifically designed to match target buyers with the organiser's extensive business profiles to achieve exhibitors' unique show objectives. In addition to inviting thousands of targeted trade visitors, the programme has a budget to host up to 500 key industry people from around the region. A strong focus will be set on the following top 10 countries in 2010: Egypt, India, Iran, Kenya, Lebanon, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, and Turkey. Buyers from other countries in the region will also be identified and invited to be part of the programme. Qualified buyers include purchasing and procurement executives of major wholesaler groups, supermarket chains, hotel chains, government bodies, catering companies, cruise line operators, airlines and military forces.

Top buyers from the region will be identified through working closely with exhibitors, industry associations, embassies and other government bodies related to the specific sectors in addition to accessing the largest buyer database in the world, said the organisers.

In a time when travel budgets are the first to be cut back, SIAL Middle East, together with the Government of Abu Dhabi will be at the forefront to support the industry. The *Meet the Buyer* programme will cover major travel costs and enable participants to be present at this new business platform in the Middle East, source products and services efficiently through pre-arranged appointments with worldwide suppliers and manufacturers, see new product launches and stay in touch with the industry.

Hosted buyers will receive benefits such as one to one meetings with selected exhibitors,



free access to conferences and seminars, entry to the *Meet the Buyer/VIP Lounge*, attendance at SIAL & IPA Middle East networking functions, an invitation to the SIAL & IPA Middle East Gala Dinner, return flights to and from Abu Dhabi, hotel accommodation in Abu Dhabi, airport 'Meet and Assist' service upon arrival, and complimentary transfers to and from the show venue.

Exhibitors of SIAL Middle East are entitled to nominate up to three of their top buyers to qualify for this programme. The nomination form is available on info@sialme.com or by calling +971 2 444 6011.

1st Middle East Bakery Competition

A competition has been designed to bring together the bakery industry and distinguish the best of the best in this sector - the best skilled regional baker, the best skilled chocolatier, and the best skilled pastry chef. A detailed competition programme will be available soon, the organisers announced.

The competition is a unique opportunity for bakery suppliers, whether with machinery or ingredients products, to get together and meet with their direct buyers, chefs and pastry chefs, see what the competitors are up to, find out who is new in the market and watch the best compete. This is the first of its kind and unique event in the region for all professionals involved in the bakery sector be it as a baker, pastry chef, chocolatier or supplier to the industry, concluded the organisers.

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