

Twelve companies from western Finnish Lakeland to participate in IGW2019 Berlin

The International Green Week (IGW2019) in Berlin is the world's largest consumer fair in the food industry, annually visited by approximately 400,000 people over 10 days. This year, Finland has greater visibility at the fair as the partner country with the theme "From the Wild". **The Finnish fair hall 10.2 will be filled with 80 Finnish companies.**

The Tasty Western Lakeland (Leckere Westliche Seenplatte) stand provides the opportunity to get to know micro and small enterprises and products of the Finnish countryside, most of which have so far only been available in Finland. The participating companies are Ahontuvan Tarhat, Hakamaa Sheep Farm, Markkulan Marjatila, Konttiaho Highland Ranch, Säilyke Herttua, Suomen Hampputuotteet, Polar Spring, Luonnon Magiaa, Teiskon Viini, Jukolan Juusto and Birkkala Farm at the grain section. The strengths of the products are locality, unique character and high quality. The ingredients are gathered and grown near the processors: some even at their own farm or next door. Some of the companies participating at the fair also offer accommodation services in the forested Finnish Lakeland.

'**Polar Spring hopes for new channels into the German market.** To us, participation in IGW would have felt like too big a challenge in relation to visibility without the partner country project. The experience is going to be an educational experience and a true crunch in many ways. Nevertheless, IGW offers an opportunity to gain visibility and work with other Finnish operators. We are really looking forward to the IGW fair.' **Hanna Kopra – Polar Spring representative at the fair.**

Some of the companies at our stand have also **come along to seek new momentum for their current operations, or a new approach and ideas for the domestic field, as well.** To a small company, preparing for this kind of a fair with a tight schedule and committing to the actual participation is a tough endeavour during the busy end of the year. Both the preparation and the participation make you look at your company's and your own operations from a new perspective. Almost all of the companies are unfamiliar with export.

'This has been a major stress factor and even larger expense for us: brochures, new labels, website and everything, but also a really fantastic opportunity. We have "been forced" to rethink our business and what products to develop, what we offer and what we display to new customers. **We are going to the fair with an open mind; we will listen to our customers' opinions both on our products and their appearance. We will also aim to create contacts.** It is an honour to participate in the fair with other Finnish companies. Thank you.' **Nina Abraitis – entrepreneur at Luonnon Magiaa.**



'The companies' enthusiasm and courage to participate has been admirable. We are looking forward with great interest as to what kind of experience and feedback the companies bring back from the fair.' Suvi-Tuulia Leinonen – project manager at JAMK.

The IGW2019 trade fair held from 18 to 27 January 2019 will be participated in by seven (7) exhibitors from Central Finland, three (3) companies from Pirkanmaa and one (1) from Tavastia. There is also one company from Southwest Finland on show at the grain section. These companies have been granted rural development funding for company groups by the Central Finland ELY Centre for preparation for the fair, product development, marketing communications and participation in the fair. JAMK University of Applied Sciences is responsible for the management of the company group projects and the implementation of the fair participation. JAMK will also send students to assist the companies at the fair, some of whom will carry out surveys regarding the visitors at the Finland exhibition hall, commissioned by the Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners.

The companies at the Tasty Western Lakeland stand will get to know the hopes and opinions of German consumers concerning the products and visit the KaDeWe department store to see the campaign of Finnish products on display during the fair. A total of 11 companies participated also in the professional event organised along with the fair at the Embassy of Finland in Berlin on 16 January.

Further information:

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