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Hyatt Regency, Istanbul, Turkey

## HIGHLIGHTS WORLD SESAME CONVENTION 2019

The inaugural edition of World Sesame Convention was held in Istanbul during Aug 18-20, 2019. The event was organized by [www.sesameinformation.com](http://www.sesameinformation.com), the portal is owned by Foretell Business Solutions Pvt. Ltd. 307 delegates spread across 34 countries participated in the convention. World Sesame Handbook was released during the event by His Excellency Mohammed Badaru Abubakar, Jigawa State Governor, Nigeria and Mr Hakan Bahceci, Group CEO, Hakan Agro.





## Excerpts from WSC 2019



**His Excellency Mohammad Badaru Abubakar, Executive Governor Jigawa State, Nigeria**

Jigawa State of Nigeria accounts for nearly 75 percent of the total sesame crop produced in Nigeria. In the last four years since I became Governor of the State, we have taken steps in better handling, harvesting and aggregation of sesame so as to ensure compliance on buyers' specifications and to create better and higher value products that meet buyers' expectations. In the first year, we have registered about 22,000 sesame farmers, who are getting support in the form of extension services, better seed and farm inputs to improve their yields and to ensure consistency in quality. Thus, farmers are being increasingly signed by exporters and paid agreed forward price. One of those companies, is presently working with 6000 farmers, have set up their cleaning operations in Government owned

proto type factory and warehouse complex from where they clean and export. This improves the quality and productivity of the produce exported from Nigeria.

The State Government has empowered a powerful consumer protection agency to ensure that quality is maintained from cultivation to harvest until packaging. Also, the government has established an inland agriculture export terminal within the Jigawa State, enabling exporters to aggregate their produce and load it into containers for direct forwarding to the ports at Lagos.



**Mr Hakan Bahceci, Group CEO Hakan Agro**

This event brought together industry members representing different parts of the entire value chain of sesame. We are well aware of the challenges faced by the industry members and seeking applicable solutions.

## WORLD SESAME CONVENTION 2019 - HIGHLIGHTS

Sesame is the most ancient oil crop adapted to tropics and sub tropics around the world. Despite the crop being around for such a long time and being healthy, the productivity of the crop is very low in some of the producing countries due to several reasons. It is not easy for the farmers to grow sesame. There are challenges while growing sesame due to traditional production technologies, weeds, pests and diseases, climate change, market fluctuations, limited research and expertise and lack of skills among the various other challenges involved in sesame production.

Due to ever increasing price of sesame, margins are declining for trading companies. The way forward and to make this product attractive and for the technologies companies to invest more on newer technologies/innovations, and for the farmers to grow more sesame and for the traders to get more appetite, we need to involve more researchers in order to develop new varieties/technologies, apply better crop protection techniques, construct model sesame production in growing sub Saharan countries and increase man power in sesame and thus making it attractive and remunerative for all actors involved in the entire supply chain.

Health consciousness and food eating trends are spreading in US and in European countries as never before. Sesame is being included in healthy snack bar and usage of Tahina is increasing and is expected to double in the coming years. Health benefits of sesame oil are proved and its healing power will play a vital place in the pharmaceuticals. We shall use all platforms and opportunities to spread health benefits of sesame and to increase awareness on consumers.

Turkey used to be a self-sufficient producer and consumer of sesame seeds up until mid-80's; however, turned into a net importer starting early 1990's importing 30-40,000 MT initially, has consistently increased the demand now close to 160,000 MT just on imports.

However, Turkey does produce the best quality of "golden sesame" on the south west coastal of Koycegiz and Fethiye and export the same to mainly Japan at almost the twice value of imported sesame seeds.

Starting from 2000's, Turkey has successfully transformed this traditional, small business into a huge industry on bakery ingredients and nutrition value addition.

Simit (Turkish Sesame Bagel) is produced in stone oven and sold as a street food for ages. Simit is not only consumed by poor or middle class but also consumed by rich class as well. This is the only product that is consumed by the poor and the rich of the country.

History tells us that the earliest known recipes for "humus bi tahini" are recorded in 13th century cookbooks. Humus is a popular dish in Middle East, North Africa and the Mediterranean. Humus is becoming more popular in the western world. Sabra, for example, is a well-known Middle Eastern style food product company that produces over 14 different hummus flavours. The company has been very successful in promoting this product as a healthier dip sauce.

This new trend of healthy foods, healthy snacks especially in the West increased the demand for chickpeas and tahini (sesame seeds). The whole sesame industry benefited from the trend so did some successful Turkish companies setting up production in the states, some increased their production capacity in Turkey to cater this increasing demand. Despite exports of sesame products, the majority of the consumption still remains within the country and have directly impacted by the volatility of the currency.

Turkey shall continue to remain world's third largest importer of sesame seeds after China and Japan, might eventually surpass Japan's never changing import quantity. The application of sesame seeds will continue to increase on bakery ingredients but also on many other healthier spread options that will consistently grow with Turkish consumers. I sincerely believe this event will be a great platform for all of us to carry this industry to the next level.

**Mr. Tarun Chawla, Business Head, ETG** presenting on "Global overview of sesame markets" said, "Bearish cues to outweigh bullish sentiments in Q4 of 2019".

## WORLD SESAME CONVENTION 2019 - HIGHLIGHTS



“Global sesame trade of major origins is likely to be 1.45-1.50 Million tons in 2018/19 (MY: Oct to Sep). Sudan exports plummeted to 240,000 tons (est. for 2018/19) as against 2017/18 export of 385,000 tons owing to political instability. Tanzania auction sales estimated to be more than double in 2019 as against 2018. Mozambique sesame supply in 2019 season is likely to be at par with previous season, despite the country was hit by two hurricanes. China’s import of sesame seed for 2018/19 is estimated to be lower by about 40,000 tons as against previous year, owing to increase in local crop by identical level. India’s imports during 2018-19 season was 100,000 tons mainly for re-exports. During 2019-20 season, supply is estimated to increase by more than 100,000 tons”, he added.



**Mr Sandeep Bhura, Om India Trading** moderated the session on Sesame crop prospects for 2019/20. Mr. Sandeep supported the idea of Global Sesame Council, as it can help in knowledge sharing on industry best practices.



**Mr. Haile Berhe, President, EPOSPEA on Ethiopian sesame market** Ethiopian sesame seed exports declined to 228,212 tons during 2018/19 season (July to June), the worst performance since 2012/13. This is as against 309,548 tons exported during previous season.

“High domestic price, unpredictable demand, declining productivity, export performance pre-requisite for bank loan and forex, contract default etc are some of the challenges faced by Ethiopian traders”, said Mr. Berhe.



**Mr. Amrith Kurien, CEO ComAfrique Ltd** “Guinea Bissau and Conakry supply sesame mainly to Turkey, as they are good in quality and is ideally suited for Tahina and Halwa, even though their

combined production is about 8000 tons. Senegal and Gambia, enjoy duty free treatment (DFT) while exporting their produce to China, where it is used mainly for crushing. Senegal sesame production is around 15,000 tons”.



**Ms. He Qin, Senior Consultant CFNA - China**

“China sesame consumption is increasing moderately despite its economic slowdown. China consumes about 1.2-1.3 million tons of sesame seed and imports close to one million tons. In 2018 China exported 46,725 tons of sesame, of which 77 percent was purchased by South Korea alone. Chinese sesame crop is likely to be around 400,000 tons when compared to normal crop of 300,000 tons assuming normal weather.

China’s annual growth rate of import during 2010-2018 was 11.33 percent and in particular during 2013-2016 it was 28.25 percent. Sudan accounts for more than one fourth of Chinese imports, followed by Ethiopia with 16 percent, Niger 14 percent and Togo with 10 percent. Going forward during 2019-20 sesame market in China is likely to remain volatile due to fluctuation in currency, China-US trade war, geo-political tensions, prevailing global interest rate scenario etc.”



**Mr. Kishore Bheda, Partner Bheda Brothers**

“India exports about 300,000 of sesame seed, which is 15 percent of the global trade. During Oct-18 to Jun-19, India’s imports hit a record high of 127,000 tons, mainly influenced by domestic crop size and price spread between Indian and other origins. Based on the field observations/past experience and considering the weather anomalies so far, India’s kharif sesame crop is likely to be 300,000 tons as against 177,925 tons produced during the previous season. Going forward, if the above scenario prevails, then during the 2019/20, India is likely to see less volatility and softer prices; import coverage would be subdued and value based.”

## WORLD SESAME CONVENTION 2019 - HIGHLIGHTS



**Mr. Satyam Batra, Director (operations), Agropower Industrial Group, Sudan**

The area under sesame in Sudan has increased from less than a million hectare in 2011 to about 4.8 million hectares in 2019 (projected). In Gadarif region, the yield of the crop is the highest at about

0.4 ton per ha in Sudan.



**Mr. Sebastian Andrew, Product Head, TGI Group-Vink Corp DMCC**

Nigeria new crop exports are likely to start from September'19 onwards. As of now weather is favourable for the crop and hence, expecting good sesame crop during the season.

Export of Nigerian sesame during 2019/20 season is likely to be in excess of 300,000 tons (this includes ports of Niger, Nigeria and Chad and our estimate based on destination market arrivals). The major challenge of Nigeria remains the port situation (congestion/delay in transit).



**Mr. Thierry W. Pouya, INTERSEB, Burkina Faso**

"In the last five years, Burkina on an average produced about 200,000 tons of sesame seed. More than 90 percent of the produce is being exported to Japan, China, Singapore, Ghana, Togo etc. 2019-

20 crop is forecast at 250,000 tons."



**Mr. Sanjay Sharma, Olam International** presented Olam's initiatives on strategies for sustainable growth of sesame industry.

Olam emphasized the need to reduce emission and to prevent catastrophic climate risks. Given equal price and quality produce vast majority of the consumers are likely to switch over to sustainable brands. Olam is empowering women in supply chains to foster diversity and inclusion. Apart from that Olam

employs the latest technologies to minimize climate impacts from farming and processing.

On Sesame, Olam has started Sustainable Village Program (SVP) in 2016 with 1500 farmers in the Jigawa and Bauchi state of Nigeria. Farmers were provided free certified seeds, interest free credit on agri input like NPK and Urea. In 2018 SVP reached out to 7986 farmers in states of Jigawa, Bauchi, Yobe, Gombe, Katsina & Taraba.

In 2018 Olam was associated with PM (Propcom-Maikarfi, arm of UK Aid) to provide farmer capacity building training and dynamic monitoring system for weekly data from farmers.

### **Olam aims to**

- Bring prosperity to our farming and rural communities
- Build long-term relationships based on fairness and trust
- Transfer skills and knowledge through partnerships

Olam recognized that by supporting smallholders to improve their yields and quality, it would also benefit, as it could provide customers with consistent volumes of sustainable products.



**Mr Prakash, Hakan Agro DMCC**

moderated the session 'Sesame Trade Forum'. In this session, core trade challenges faced by the industry were discussed.

The world sesame trade is growing year by year and hence it is gaining more importance. The total international trade volume is above two million tons, with production being above three million tons and some portion is being consumed locally. India continues to remain the single largest producer of sesame seeds and China contributes over 50 percent of the imports.

In India the local consumption is increasing due to higher purchasing power. India is concentrating more on processed exports, which is hulled sesame seeds and is the largest exporter, producer of Hulled sesame seed to EU, USA and rest of the World.

## WORLD SESAME CONVENTION 2019 - HIGHLIGHTS

Consider the growth potential of Nigeria, may be in the next few years, Nigeria may become the largest producing country in the African continent. Ethiopia production continue to remain constant. As far as Sudan is concerned production is fluctuating up and down due to climatic issues and political problems.

The trade challenges can be due to operational or logistics problems, counter party risks and performance challenges. Broadly, it can be classified into two parts i) From buyers' side or suppliers' side and ii) pre and post shipment challenges.



**Mr. Mohammed Fakhraan, Rasagra**

Rasagra produces more than 50 tons of sesame per day in their factory in Mersin, Turkey and one of the largest producers of Tahini in the world.

We expect from our suppliers not only good prices all the time, but also on other aspects such as quality improvement, which requires constant research and development for the plantation process itself. We need to see more involvement of agricultural engineers in order to have healthier seed for tahini and for better quality of the oil.

We also need to see more efforts and find solutions to eliminate salmonella, e-coli, from sesame plantations as well as the pesticide residue issues so as to comply with modern day food safety and quality standards across the world.

The global demand for sesame has grown dramatically in the past few years and will keep on growing in future also. Humus, which is a Mediterranean side dish consumed in a very limited geographic area. Today it became No. 1 healthy vegan food especially across the super markets in US, Canada, across European countries, etc.

**Mr. Alok Bhargava, Praramb Agri Trading DMCC**, presented on pre, post shipment and trade challenges arising out of African countries.

There are some quality related complaints received from



countries like China, Japan and Turkey. But the system from Africa is that the middle man will collect sesame from different small holding farmers, then it comes to the warehouse of the exporter or cleaning plants and the quality may vary and accordingly the price of each

origin differs.

Based on my experience in this field in Africa, there is a seesaw change in quality of African produce, now the farmers are being educated and this is not the same Africa what we have seen 10 years ago.

In most of the African countries cleaning process is time consuming. In Nigeria and Ethiopia, we have electricity problems.

Nowadays currency fluctuations are challenging for traders both at origin and at destinations. Another challenge is with respect to shipping and port restrictions, i.e., short shipments.

Most of post shipment complaints are about transit time especially from West African countries. Other issue of importance is pesticide issue with respect to Japan, where in the cargo is being rejected even for minor variations.



**Mr Sheriff Balogun, National Sesame Seed Association of Nigeria**

On the quality front, In Nigeria most of the sesame seed producers are small holder farmers, with production ranges from 200 kg to 500 kg. One can't ignore them and they should get decent

amount for their produce so that it encourages the farmers to continue farming.

Some of the challenges by Nigerian farmers are issues related to aflatoxin and salmonella. Shipments problem exists in Nigeria and improved considerably in the last few months. Short shipment problems were discussed which is the problem faced by the shipping lines just in the case of transit time and

## WORLD SESAME CONVENTION 2019 - HIGHLIGHTS

exporters have no control over that. We will discuss the same with shipping lines and how to overcome on the same.



**Mr. Tomohisa Fujimoto, Mitsui & Co.**

Japan on an average import around 150,000 to 160,000 tons of sesame seed annually. Some of the operational challenges faced by traders include delay in shipment (almost two months) and cargo damage while at transportation (inland and ocean). Due to stricter enforcement of pesticides regulation, countries while exporting to Japan should adhere to their criteria; otherwise may face rejection of their cargos. In the last 18 months, 8 cargoes have been rejected for high pesticide levels.



**Mr. G Chandrashekhar, Independent Director, Foretell Business Solutions,**

advocates the need for the Global Sesame Alliance (GSA), as currently, sesame's potential is under explored, considering its health benefits, excellent ingredient for processed foods, usage in pharma and cosmetics.

According to him, GSA to be conceived as a global platform to share best practices, can help in addressing quality and trade issues and sustain the demand growth through clinical studies and promotions.



**Mr. Jay Chandarana, Dhaval Agri**

Global Sesame Council is a very good idea which needs to be supported. I believe it would help in sustaining and growing the demand for sesame which is very important for the industry.

**Mr. Mukul Gupta, Shakumbhari Expo Impo Ltd, India**

In India, the combined sesame production in 2018-19 witnessed a sharp decline at 540,000 tons as against 751,000 tons produced in 2017-18. The fall is due to massive decline in production during the winter (kharif) season. China accounts for about 42 percent of global sesame trade, followed by EU at nine percent, Japan and Turkey at 8.50 and 8 percent



respectively. The growth rate of sesame trade globally is pegged at four percent per annum.

The port stocks of sesame in China has reached 150,000 tons, which in turn spiked the consumption over there due to ready availability of the product all time, which is bound to be replicated globally.

**Mr. Jack Zhuang of Aglook** presented on financing the sesame supply chain. According to Mr.



Jack, quality is a major problem; also, the capital cost is exorbitant and the imported price of sesame seeds from abroad to China markets is cheaper than from the country of origin, are some of the major problems in the China sesame

industry.

According to Mr. Jack, the warehouse receipt system could solve the above problems of the industry.

**Mr. Shohei Kagoshima, ITOCHU Corporation, Japan**



Japan uses edible grade for non-crushing product with purity of 99.5-99.97 percent, for hulled, roasted and pasted sesame. Japanese customer chooses not only purity of the product but also prefers good colour, taste and flavor. In 2018, Japan imported around

157,000 tons of which crushing volume is about 70 percent and edible grade at 30 percent.

**Ms Berham Bahceci of Hakan Agro DMCC** moderated the session on understanding the sesame



value added industry of Turkey. On being asked by Berham on the challenges facing Turkey markets, Mr Huseyin Celik of Tunas is of the view that price is the foremost challenge and nowadays market perception is changing with

newer and innovative products.

## WORLD SESAME CONVENTION 2019 - HIGHLIGHTS



### **Mr. Yaniv Tal, Prince Tahina, CFO, Israel**

Prince Tahina, is the world's leading manufacturer of Tahini and sesame-based products, with the Tahini production capacity of 18,000 tons per annum. Prince purchases 23,000 tons of sesame per annum, of which more than 60 percent is exported. In 2018, Israel consumed about 64,000 tons of sesame seed, which is about five percent share of global imports, with a growth rate of 6.63 percent.



### **Mr Levent Buyukince Inci Food Co., Turkey**

"Inci" is the Turkey's leading tahini and sesame seed producer with a daily capacity in excess of 25 tons. Tahini is the raw material of halwa and it is mainly consumed in the country during breakfast. We ship our products under the most hygienic conditions with chrome and insulated tankers suitable for food preservation and shipment."



### **Mr. Alper Onel, Chairman Orgin Agro, Turkey**

Sesame seed production in Turkey since 2011 averages about 18,000 tons per annum. Turkey sesame import ranges from 130,000 and 150,000 tons of which 65 percent is used in confectionary industry and 35 percent in bakery industry.

Small size is used mainly for Simit and occasionally for Tahini and big size is used mainly for Tahini-Halva and breads. Turkey's daily simit consumption is about 2.5 million pieces mainly in cities of Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir. Apart from this, Simit is also one of the main products consumed in schools.

The hub of sesame trade in Turkey is Mersin port, which handles 95 percent of the imported sesame.

Turkey's sesame seed exports have gone up by four times since 2014. In 2018, Turkey exported close to 14,000 tons

of sesame seed. Greece, Japan, Iraq, Israel, Syria and Poland were the major buyers of Turkey's sesame.



### **Mr Huseyin Celik, Tunas & Celiker Food Industry**

Tunas is one of the biggest producers of value-added sesame products having more than six decades of experience. Tunas accounts for 15-20 percent of the total sesame seeds imported by Turkey.

We supply hulled sesame, and produce sesame paste and hand-made halwa tahini and supply to retailers in Turkey and abroad.

Easy access to emerging market destinations, geographical advantage of logistics and no duty on import for re-export of sesame seed are some of the growth drivers in sesame value addition industry in Turkey.



### **Mr. Ali Tugbay, Akyurek Technology, Turkey-Mersin**

Akyurek Technology company has been manufacturing machineries for post-harvest cereal, pulse, seed and oilseed food processing technology industry since 1973.

With assembling works and technological innovations, Akyurek is exporting its machineries to more than 30 countries. Akyurek comes out with various processing technologies on sesame such as sesame peeler, zig zag air husk separator, seed brush cleaner, aspiration air channel, sesame seed dryer, seed brush cleaner, optical colour sorter etc.,





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