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Africa's Big 7

Africa's food suppliers target international exports in the drive for growth and profit

Suppliers at the continent's largest food expo that begins on Sunday reveal aggressive plans for investment and expansion in the run up the three-day exhibition

Companies from across the world arrive in Johannesburg this weekend for the start of the biggest food and beverage expo on the continent.

Africa's Big 7 (AB7) brings together visitors and buyers from more than 50 countries to see 300 exhibitors - and more than 100 are from Africa alone.

AB7 is the continent's biggest food and beverage expo, which runs from June 19 to 21 at the Gallagher Convention Centre in Midrand.

Nigerian D-Dynamic-D will be targeting retailers and processing companies with a range of produce, which it says will appeal to "West Africans around the world".

"In addition to raw commodities, including ginger, sesame and hibiscus, we will be displaying processed Nigerian foods such as pounded yam flour, plantain flour and the finely ground ogi/pap flour," says DDD spokesman Ibrahim Bayero. "We are at AB7 looking to find partners who can benefit from sourcing foods desired by West Africans."

Vegieflora is also from Zimbabwe and is attending AB7 for the first time offering fresh produce from beans and peas to oyster mushrooms and sweet potatoes.

"Exhibiting at AB7 gives us the opportunity to showcase our fresh produce and meet the buyers, hear their views and discover what they need," said a statement from the company.

Also from Zimbabwe is Lobels Biscuits, which began baking bread in 1946 and moved into biscuits in 1954 now seeking expansion following recovery from the 2009 economic crisis, according to Marketing Manager David Lecluseis.

"This is the first time that Lobels Biscuits will be exhibiting at AB7 and we're eager to showcase our range and discover export opportunities across Africa," he says.

"This is the platform we've been searching for, to spring board our highly competitive product range into external markets."

South Africa's Hume International imports 8,000m metric tonnes a year of frozen meats into southern Africa every year serving countries including Lesotho, Namibia, Botswana, Congo and Zambia. It will also be looking for new clients.

“The 2016 Africa’s Big Seven Expo is an exciting opportunity to identify and engage with new suppliers and customers from around the world as well as potential diversification into new markets and sectors,” says Angela Newton, the company’s marketing and sales manager.

Cape Town-based Garner Wafers is promising a new line of profit for retailers and it sees AB7 as a key part of its development strategy.

MD of Marketing Elsabe Hoal, who founded the company almost 20 years ago, said: “We will exhibit our sugar cones, waffles and frozen dessert lines that include Tiramisu ice cream cakes as well as our ice cream sandwiches, ice cream mini cones and our Luv U Lots range that is ice cream in a 80ml pouch. “

Another first time exhibitor is the Mauritius Sugar Syndicate (MSS), the commercial arm of the sugar sector in Mauritius, responsible for the marketing and export of sugar produced in the country.

“We manufacture a wide range of ‘special sugars’, ingeniously crafted for locking-in rather than refining out, the natural elements of sugar cane juice while providing all the quality and food safety assurances required by the consumer,” said Ashween K. Bunwaree, Chief Marketing Officer.

Mauritius supplies 110,000 tonnes of unrefined cane sugars to 50 countries including across the Middle East, Far East, Australasia and Europe as well as the USA and Canada.

“We are already present in South Africa with these special sugars but wish to increase our presence through participation at AB7.”

Press information

Africa’s Big 7 (AB7) runs from June 19-21 at The Gallagher Convention Centre, Midrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. It is the continent’s largest food and beverage industry trade expo. Its seven specialised sectors cover everything from fresh produce and ingredients to manufacturing technologies, processing and packaging equipment, retail ready products, hospitality and catering equipment and much more. For more information visit www.africabig7.com

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