



INSIDE WHOLESALE MARKETS / KÖLN
 Offer of offices, stands, stallages and stalls for rent in one of the oldest and most important German markets. "Our structure provides many possibilities for growth for the business-

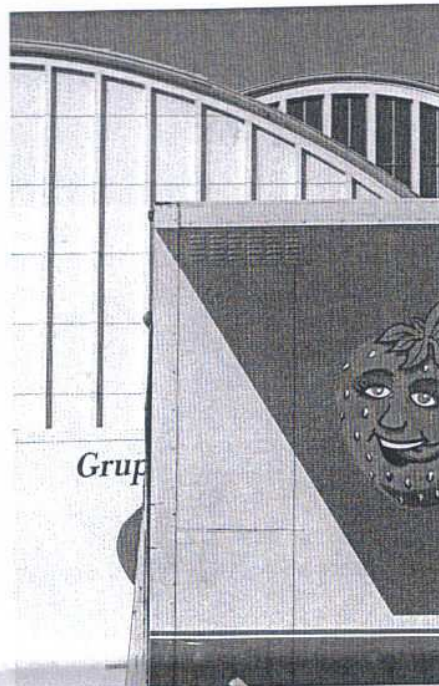
WELCOME TO GERMANY

The flow of 1.2 million tonnes of goods per year that transit through the 90 thousand m² Cologne market make it one of the five major wholesale markets of Germany. With a long history behind it, dating from the year 1000, the Cologne market asserted itself as a point of reference for German commerce in 1940, when the so-called Markethalle was built, which is taken as an example of architecture even in our own day. But it began its true escalation in 1950, when the Grossmarkt-Köln became a point of reference for trade on the international level.

"Currently - explains the director Rainer Ströblt - out of a total of about 270 businesses, two thirds are wholesalers, prevalently import-export firms, dealing in foodstuffs and fruit and vegetable produce, in particular. There are also many transportation companies, banks, lift truck firms and lawyers, who provide assistance to ensure the proper operation of the structure. It is a structure - Ströblt stresses - that offers many possibilities for growth for the businesses, with an offer of offices, stands, stallages and stalls for rent, which has not yet reached saturation. It is a modern structure where it is possible to use refrigeration cells, cool rooms and covered storage space, in addition to the large external warehouses. The covered storage space can be reached by lift and/or by access ramps."

The products sold at the market include fruit and vegetable produce, flowers, meat and wild game, dairy products, fish, beverages, wines and alcoholic beverages, as well as products for hygiene and paper products. About 2.5 million consumers per year purchase Cologne Grossmarkt products, which are distributed over a range of 200 km by wholesalers, shops, catering firms and large-scale distribution groups, as well as private parties.

As far as fruit and vegetables are concerned, Chiquita and Dole are present with their multinational branch offices and companies that do business on the most important German wholesale markets, such as Cobana, which has branch offices throughout Germany; the firm is represented in Cologne by their business partners Rosenbaum and Emil Pott, or



EdekaFruchtKontor, whose headquarters is located in Holland, but which is present in the most important wholesale markets like Hamburg, Munich and Berlin, in addition, of course, to all of the firms that have a consolidated and often centuries-old experience in the fruit and vegetable sector.

As we said, Rosebaum, a historical name on the Cologne market, and Emil Pott, are members of Cobana, which has its headquarters in Hamburg and two branch offices, Fruitac Scrl and Benjamet, located respectively in Naves (Avignon), France and in Valencia, Spain. Cobana is a coalition of German wholesalers and the three European branch offices coordinate the

Un flux de marchandises d'1,2 millions de tonnes par an véhiculées sur une aire de 90 mille mètres carrés fait du marché de Cologne l'un des cinq majeurs marchés de gros en Allemagne. Environ 2,5 millions de consommateurs par an acquièrent les produits du Grossmarkt de Cologne, ils sont véhiculés sur un rayon de 200 km. Depuis 1950, le Grossmarkt-Köln est un point de référence pour les échanges commerciaux au niveau international. « Actuellement, sur un total de 270 opérateurs environ, les deux tiers sont des grossistes - explique le directeur Rainer Stroebli - principalement des compagnies d'import-export d'agroalimentaire, et de fruits et légumes en particulier. Nombreuses sont ensuite les compagnies de camionnage, les banques, les compagnies de chariots élévateurs et les avocats qui coopèrent pour le bon fonctionnement de la structure. Une structure avant-gardiste - spécifie le directeur - où au-delà des vastes magasins de stockage à l'extérieur, existe la possibilité d'utiliser des cellules de congélation, cool-rooms, espaces de stockage couverts. Quant aux fruits et légumes, sont présentes avec leurs filiales les multinationales Chiquita et Dole et les compagnies actives dans tous les principaux marchés allemands de gros comme Cobana par exemple, qui est une coalition de grossistes allemands avec des filiales dans toute l'Allemagne, au-delà naturellement de



es", explains the director Rainer Ströblt. Köln market is a modern facility with refrigeration cells, cool rooms and covered storage space, in addition to the large external warehouses. The covered storage space is reachable by lift

toutes les compagnies consolidées et souvent centenaires d'expérience dans le secteur des fruits et légumes. L'Espagne et Italie mais aussi la France, la Grèce et la Turquie avec leurs spécialités agroalimentaires et de fruits et légumes sont les Pays dont la majorité des marchandises arrivent au GrossMarkt de Cologne. Les Pays de la Méditerranée réussissent à couvrir l'offre d'assortiments de fruits et légumes pour presque toute l'année. Green Med Journal a interviewé quelques principaux grossistes du marché de gros de Cologne.



Con motivo de un flujo de mercancías consistente en 1,2 millones de toneladas anuales, vehiculadas sobre un área de 90 mil m², el mercado de Colonia se volvió uno de los cinco máximos mercados al por mayor en Alemania. Alrededor de dos millones y medio de consumidores por año adquieren los productos del GrossMarkt de Colonia, los que van distribuidos en un radio de doscientos km. Desde 1950 el Gross Markt-Köln es un punto de referencia para intercambios comerciales a nivel internacional. Su director, el Sr. Rainer Ströblt, relata que "En la actualidad, sobre un total de más o menos 270 operadores, los dos tercios son comerciantes al por mayor, principalmente firmas de export-import agroalimenticio, de fruta fresca en particular. Numerosas luego son las firmas de auto-transportes, los bancos, las empresas de maquinaria elevadora, los abogados que coadyuvan la buena



flow of products for the Cologne market, as well as for 34 independent companies that do business throughout the German territory. Thanks to its organisation Cobana succeeded in achieving a turnover of 2,353 million euros in 2007, dealing directly with overseas producers, establishing the quality and prices of goods and ensuring that the partners have a complete range and assortment throughout the year, which is delivered with their own fleet of trucks. Dry trademark products arrive directly from the place of production and are produced exclusively for Cobana partners. The 28 exclusive organic products references of the Bio trademark, which includes apples, bananas, pears, grapefruits, kiwis, mangos, oranges, grapes, watermelons, avocados,

fennels, potatoes, garlic, peppers and tomatoes, will be further developed in future.

Most of the goods that arrive at the Cologne GrossMarkt come from Spain and Italy, but also from France, Greece and Turkey, with their agricultural and food specialities. The Mediterranean Countries succeed in covering the offer of fruit and vegetable assortments for almost the entire year.

One of the historical companies that do business on the Cologne market, Zimmermann GmbH&CoKG, which was founded in 1937 by Gerhard Zimmermann and is still managed by his grandson Joerg, imports products above all from Italy, but also from Spain, France and Greece. "Our company - explains Joerg Zimmermann - has a controlled temperature warehouse at the market, with four loading and unloading ramps for heavy trucks, where the products bound for retail shops, large scale distribution, weekly market traders and restaurant operators of the Rhineland and Ruhr arrive and depart."

Mr. Dieter Uerlich, who spends his days on the phone negotiating Zimmermann sales, explains how the offer of the assortment is organised. "Alongside the references of local producers, primarily apples, strawberries, asparagus, basil, corn and parsley



and access ramps. Chiquita and Dole are present with their multinational branch offices, and Cobana too, which represents a coalition of German wholesalers to coordinate the flow of products for the Köln market as well as for

- explains Uerlich - in the fruit sector, French apples and Spanish clementines are the only references for which the Countries of origin have an exclusive contract, while lemons come from both Spain and Greece. Oranges also come from Italy in addition to these two Countries, while peaches, nectarines, grapes, pears and strawberries come from France, Spain and Italy, apricots also come from Greece, along with cherries, kiwis and melons, which come from both Italy and Greece. As far as vegetables are concerned - continues Uerlich - Italy is still our most important supplier. In fact, while we receive only asparagus from Greece, we import asparagus, artichokes, cauliflowers, tomatoes and various types of salad from France, asparagus, tomatoes, peppers and zucchini from Spain and a great many references from Italy - with the exception of tomatoes and peppers - including artichokes, asparagus, cauliflowers, various types of salad, zucchini, turnip tops, fennels and parsley.

Derkum, another historical company on the Cologne market, was founded in 1886; it has a wide offer of Italian, French and Spanish products. The top of the line are Bayard trademark French apples, pears and peaches, and the Corinne trademark apricots, which arrive directly from the producers of the Mas de Bariel in the south of France. Asparagus and strawberries also arrive from France. The offer for the most demanding customers, gourmet chefs, is satisfied with mini-vegetables (witloof, mini carrots and beets), mushrooms and potatoes with truffle flavouring and edible flowers, whose use in the kitchen is becoming very trendy.

The firm Merz-Ewenz, founded in 1970, is less "ancient", but no less dynamic. "Merz-Ewenz - explains Boddenberg, director of the purchasing office at the Cologne market - has a single headquarters in Cologne and supplies local merchants, wholesalers and large-scale distribution. The company abandoned direct imports from overseas some time ago, while it entertains interesting and in-

creasingly intense commercial relations with Spain, Italy and France. Apples and cauliflowers arrive from France. Nectarines, peaches, kiwis, grapes, pears and other fruits come from Italy. "Moro" and "Sanguinello" oranges also come from Italy, while other varieties come from Spain, especially from Valencia and Murcia. Murcia and Almeria vegetables complete the offer of products arriving from Apulia, Latina and Naples. Onion melons and various fruits also come from Spain. We have International Food Standard (IFS) certification - specifies Boddenberg - therefore we inspect all of the goods upon arrival. The inspections are based on European Community and IFS directives. Additionally, we regularly perform two analytical tests per month. We are also partners for the Deutscher Fruchthandelsverband e. V. (DFHV) monitoring initiative. All of our suppliers must also have Global Gap certification and they also send us analyses. Alongside our importation activity, we also do business in the IV range, exporting products towards France and, if we find customers for the IV range in the summer period, we also export to Italy. We also do a limited business in Belgium and Holland", concludes Boddenberg.

In addition to companies that have contacts with several Countries, direct fruit and vegetable importers from single Countries and companies that deal in a single product also do business on the Cologne market. In this connection, we can cite the company Fermin Montaner, which imports directly from Spain and Portugal and owns a fleet of 24 trucks to ensure daily deliveries. In the same manner, with daily deliveries and direct imports from Holland and Belgium and specifically of salads, we can also mention the company Hackenbroch, or the Greek company Iraklis Savadis. The Turkish company Yzici is specialised in cherries from Turkey. The Diamond of Europe is specialised in dry fruit. The West Frucht Handelsgesellschaft mbH deals in peppers, Basak Tueketim ve Gida Maddeleri

marcha de la estructura. Una estructura de vanguardia, aclara el director, en la que los amplios almacenes especializados se acompañan a la posibilidad de utilizar celdas de congelación, cámaras frigoríficas, espacios de depósito cubiertos".

Por lo que concierne frutas y hortalizas, notable la presencia de filiales de empresas internacionales tales como Chiquita y Dole, además de empresas que tienen actividad en todos los principales mercados al por mayor alemanes, tales como Cobana, una coalición de comerciantes alemanes al por mayor que tienen sedes en la entera Alemania, además de firmas con experiencia en el campo del comercio de fruta fresca, ya consolidada y a menudo certificada desde siglos. España e Italia, y con Francia, Grecia y Turquía con sus especialidades agroalimenticias y de fruta fresca, son las naciones desde las cuales llega al Gross Markt de Colonia la parte preponderante de mercancías. Los Países del área mediterránea alcanzan a cubrir el caudal de surtido en fruta fresca durante casi todo el año. Green Med ha entrevistado a unos cuantos entre los principales operadores pormayoristas del mercado al por mayor de Colonia.



Un flusso di merci di 1,2 milioni di tonnellate all'anno veicolate

su un'area di 90 mila metri quadrati fanno di quello di Colonia uno dei cinque maggiori mercati all'ingrosso della Germania. Circa 2,5 milioni di consumatori all'anno acquista-



34 independent companies that do business throughout the German territory. Cobana headquarters is based in Hamburg and it has branches also in Avignon and Valencia. Most goods arrive at Köln from Spain and Italy

no i prodotti del GrossMarkt di Colonia, che vengono veicolati in un raggio di 200 Km. Dal 1950 il Grossmarkt- Koeln è un punto di riferimento per scambi commerciali di livello internazionale.

"Attualmente, su un totale di 270 operatori circa, i due terzi sono grossisti - spiega il direttore Rainer Stroebli - prevalentemente ditte di import-export agroalimentare, ortofrutticolo in particolare. Numerose sono poi le ditte di autotrasporti, le banche, le ditte di carrelli elevatori, gli avvocati che coadiuvano il buon funzionamento della struttura. Una struttura all'avanguardia - specifica il direttore - dove oltre ad ampi magazzini di stoccaggio all'esterno, esiste la possibilità di usufruire di celle di congelamento, coolrooms, spazi di stoccaggio coperti.

Per l'ortofrutta sono presenti con le loro filiali le multinazionali Chiquita e Dole e le ditte che operano in tutti principali mercati all'ingrosso tedeschi come ad esempio Cobana, che è una coalizione di grossisti tedeschi con filiali in tutta la Germania, oltre naturalmente a tutte le ditte di consolidata e spesso centenaria esperienza nel settore ortofrutticolo.

Spagna e Italia ma anche Francia, Grecia e Turchia con le loro specialità agroalimentari e ortofrutticole sono i paesi da cui arriva al GrossMarkt di Colonia la maggior parte delle merci. I Paesi del Mediterraneo riescono a coprire l'offerta assortimentale ortofrutticola per quasi tutto l'anno. Green Med Journal ha intervistato alcuni dei principali grossisti del mercato all'ingrosso di Colonia.

Sanayl ve Pazarlama in figs and walnuts and Noppeney in peppers and walnuts. Euro Paradeis deals in potatoes and onions, while Gottfriedwurz kartoffel is specialised in apples and onions and Sion deals in potatoes.

Fruit from all over the world: Birken Heyer brings local season products to market for retailers, large scale distribution, discount stores and catering companies, as well as French fruit and vegetables, Peruvian asparagus and winter legumes with the Israeli Carmel trademark and premium range products for large scale distribution: French Prince de Bretagne, chateau Perousei peaches, while Spain dominates

the offer of citrus fruits with the Safta, Rotkehlchen, Boquet and Borja trademarks for strawberries; Reginella trademark grapes arrive from Italy. The panorama of the Cologne market could go on and on, and although none of the businessmen interviewed wanted to express themselves in relation to the volumes and values of fruit and vegetable imports, it was abundantly clear that Italian and Spanish and, to a lesser extent, French products, play an important role, not only on the Cologne market, but also on the German fresh produce market as a whole.

by Maddalena Sommariva