The newsletter is a monthly publication of the Enterprise Greece, the national trade and investment promotion agency.

Greek food exports growing

Greek food and beverage producers continue to lead the country's export boom, reflecting the growing export orientation of a sector long viewed as one of the country's most competitive industries. With its quality Mediterranean produce, Greece's 750 food and beverage companies account for more than one-third of the country's total manufacturing output, while F&B exports have grown by almost 50% since the start of the crisis. Overall, Greek exports are up 15% so far this year, compared with last year.

The industry has been undergoing a transformation—refocussing its efforts on markets abroad, as it goes through a restructuring at home. At this year's Anuga 2017 fair in Germany, the world's leading F&B trade exhibition, the number of Greek companies taking part jumped sharply, with 160 Greek companies exhibiting at the Greek national pavilion.

"This year's participation is 30% higher than the previous show and we are here to promote the export orientation of these companies," Enterprise Greece Chairman Christos Staikos said at the fair in October. "The response is positive, something which is evident in the increase in Greek exports."

Next year, Greece will also be the honoured country at the Summer Fancy Food Show, one of the largest F&B exhibitions in North America, taking place in New York in June 2018. Two years ago, Greece was the honored country at the 2015 Anuga fair.

Meanwhile in Greece, the sector is restructuring with leading businesses consolidating and new investors entering the industry. Greek snack foods company Chipita bought out leading Greek meat processor Nikas this summer, part of its plans to create a major food manufacturing group. Currently, the French bank Lazard is in the process of selling a 75% stake in Greece's two biggest aquaculture companies, while foreign investors have shown significant interest in investing in the country's baked goods sector.

"Greece's food and beverage industry represents a dynamic, competitive and export oriented sector with significant investments and business activities in Greece, the Balkans and all of Europe," according to a recent report by the Foundation for Economic & Industrial Research. Despite the years of crisis, the sector has shown "it remains a basic lever of economic growth."

Anuga Fair In Numbers

Number of visitors: **165,000**

Number of countries participating: **107**

Number of exhibitors: **7,400**

Greece's rank in terms of national participation: **6th**

Size of Greek national pavilion: **2,800sqm**

Number of Greek companies hosted in national pavilion: **160**

Increase in Greek companies participating: **30%**

Year-on-year growth of Greek exports (through August): **15.1%**

Number of Greek business contacts with visitors: **10,500**

Number of investor meetings with Greek F&B companies: **25**

Source: Enterprise Greece

Greek Pavilion at Anuga.
Source: Enterprise Greece

news in brief

American Ties

During a visit to the White House on Oct. 17 by Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, President Donald Trump said American businesses are ready to invest in Greece, a sign that the U.S. sees Greece increasingly as a vital strategic partner in the eastern Mediterranean. Recently, U.S. firm Calamos Investments agreed to buy Greece's biggest insurer for $1 billion, and U.S. oil giant ExxonMobil is part of a consortium looking for oil in Greece. American investors have also shown recent interest in Greece's tourism and food sector. During his U.S. trip, Mr. Tsipras spoke in Chicago about economic and security cooperation between the two countries, and also visited a technology hub there.

Private equity

Greek economic prospects are looking up, say leading U.S. private equity firms Blackrock and Hayman Capital. In a recent report, Blackrock described Greece as "resurgent" and foresees a surge in investor interest. In confirmation of the above, CVC Capital Partners acquired the 70% of Greek private healthcare company Metropolitan Hospital Group, about € 80 m.

Greek Budget

Greece's draft 2018 budget sees the economy growing by a robust 2.4% next year, and with a primary surplus topping 3.5% of GDP. This summer, Greece formally exited the European Union's excessive deficit procedure after surpassing budget targets, and in late October the European Stability Mechanism approved an €800 million disbursement to the country. The IMF sees the Greek economy growing 2.6% next year.

Greek Banks

Two major Greek lenders – National Bank of Greece and Eurobank – have each issued three-year covered bonds following the country's return to debt markets this summer. The €750 million issue by NBG, and the €500 million issue by Eurobank, were both highly oversubscribed and priced to yield 2.9% and 2.98% respectively. The strong demand and low yields reflect growing confidence in the Greek economy.

Hellenikon

Central Archaeological Council has cleared the development of the old Athens airport at Hellenikon, after setting aside select areas of the site for archaeological research. The project, along the waterfront south of Athens, represents Greece's biggest development project.

Economic Indicators

Greece's economic sentiment index climbed above 100 points in September, its highest level in almost three years. Manufacturing activity, also in September, hit a nine year high.

Mediterranean Resorts

Athens will host the next Mediterranean Resort and Hotel Real Estate Forum in October 2018. Enterprise Greece, with the support of the Ministry of Tourism, won the bid to bring one of Europe's most important investment fora to Greece.

Foreigners Buying Greek Property

Foreign demand for Greek real estate is soaring as overseas investors are drawn by attractive asset prices and amid signs the Greek real estate market has bottomed out after years of decline. Data show that foreign investment in Greek property has more than doubled since last year to well over €1 billion euros, while property-linked residency visas issued under Greece's Golden Visa program are up by a third and recently surpassed 2,000 in total. The vast majority of foreigners are buying properties in and around Athens, say industry sources, with investors coming from China, Turkey, Russia, Israel, Egypt, Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates. After falling by as much as 50% from their pre-crisis peak, Greek property prices have now stabilized, data show.

Greek Property Prices Are Stabilizing

Source: National Bank of Greece
(Link: https://www.nbg.gr/en/the-group/press-office/e-spot/reports/greeces-economic-recovery-picks-up-supported-by-exporting-activity---september-2017)

German Tourism Giant Invests in Greece

In a vote of confidence in the Greek economy, German tour operator TUI plans to sharply expand its investments in Greece after seeing a further increase in customer demand this summer. The company – one of the largest travel groups in the world – said it will invest in 10 new, four- and five-star hotels in Greece, adding to its existing portfolio of 32 properties. TUI recently purchased land on Crete to build its third Robinson Club branded resort in Greece.

The announcement is the latest in a string of new hotel investment in the country. In Athens alone, more than half-a-dozen hotels – most in the four- and five-star category – have either been bought, sold, renovated or announced in the past 18 months, including several marquee projects in the center and beachfront districts of the Greek capital.

Greece Had a Strong Summer Tourism Season

Incoming Tourism | Administrative Data

Air arrivals

August: **+5.9%**

ytd: **+8.0%**

Air seats schedule

Up to August: **+8.3%**

Total season: **+8.6%**

Road Arrivals

August: **+14.5%**

ytd: **+9.6%**

Sea arrivals

June: **+14.0%**

ytd: **+12.4%**

SETE Intelligence (Link: http://www.insete.gr/Portals/0/statistics/statistiko-deltio-09-2017_EN.pdf)

COMING UP

NOVEMBER

- The Big 5 East Africa building materials trade fair (Nairobi, Nov. 1)
- Abu Dhabi International Real Estate & Investment Show (Nov. 2-4)
- Thessaloniki International Film Festival (Nov. 2-12)
- Batimat building materials fair (Paris, Nov. 6)
- The Big 5 Construct Indonesia (Jakarta, Nov. 8)
- EU-Arab World Summit (Athens, Nov. 9-10)
- Investment Roadshow in Australia: Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth (Nov. 13-20)
- Cosmoprof Hong Kong (Nov. 14-17)
- 27 Greek Jewelry Designers exhibiting at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York (Nov. 16-19)
- The Big 5 Show Dubai (Nov. 26)

CONTACT US

To learn more about the many investment and trade opportunities Greece offers, visit us today at www.enterprisegreece.gov.gr

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