



Mauritius at its Second Participation in Gulfood (26 February to 02 March 2017)

Enterprise Mauritius led the second Mauritian Pavilion at **Gulfood**, held in the Dubai World Trade Centre from 26 February to 02 March 2017. Six local operators took part in the event and showcased special sugar, sugar cubes, dried & instant noodles, juice, infused honey, fruit paste and jams. Following the first participation in 2016, **Gulfood** has enabled the Mauritian companies to tap new markets like Bulgaria, Egypt, Seychelles and the UAE. New products that have been exported include jams, special sugars, infused honey and instant noodles. The 2017 edition allowed meeting with buyers from the following countries: UAE, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Egypt, Bulgaria Poland, India, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Nigeria, Angola, Japan, Seychelles and Maldives.



Gulfood 2017, the 22nd edition, has undergone an evolutionary change in layout and format to comprise eight dedicated segments, organised by sectors, aiming at optimising product sourcing and ensuring that buyers can easily and effectively navigate the big trade show. The Mauritian pavilion was located in the World Food section. **Gulfood** attracts some 95,000 visitors and in this edition, around 5,000 exhibitors showcased their products and services, vying for a share of the multi-billion dollar Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Food & Beverage market. **Gulfood** is proving to be the right platform for new exporters to find export markets in the MENA region, which is less stringent in terms of market exigencies.



The MENA region accounts for a significant and growing portion of worldwide food imports. The region's dependence on food imports is expected to rise from 56% in 2000 to 63% by 2030 (World Bank) as a result of an unbalanced increase in supply and demand. The UAE Food & Beverage market is expected to reach USD 22.3 billion by 2020, according to Euromonitor International. The growth is derived by numerous factors, such as growing urban population, rising tourism numbers, and consumer spending in the region. Domestic exports of the agri & agro sector increased from Rs 20.16 billion in 2015 to Rs 21.07 billion in 2016. Exports to the MENA region witnessed a significant increase of 51%, from Rs 155.8 million in 2015 to Rs 234.9 million in 2016. Major products exported included special sugar, animal feed and fresh fish, and other products like fish oil, pineapples, litchis and honey were exported in smaller volumes. Saudi Arabia positioned itself as the biggest market in the MENA region for agri & agro with 37% share followed by Israel (23%), UAE (21%) and Egypt (9%).

Gulfood is hence considered as a must attend event to tap new markets.

