
Brazil Wants to Sell the World More Water

Contributed by Geovana Pagel
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The second Global Bottled Water Congress, to take place in Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates on September 20th to 22nd, may be a starting point for the formation of an export consortium between Brazilian bottled mineral water companies.

This information was disclosed yesterday by the president of the Brazilian Mineral Water Industry Association (Abinam), Carlos Alberto Lancia.

According to him, from 2004 to date, five Brazilian mineral water companies have received the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) international certificate of quality, compulsory for sales to the foreign market, and 20 are currently undergoing a certification process.

The certified companies are Ouro Fino (from the southern Brazilian state of Paraná), Santa Bárbara, Lindóia Biolene and Daflora (from São Paulo, in the Southeast) and Ingá (from Minas Gerais, also in the Southeast).

"What we now have to do is define an import market," explained Lancia. "We are going to Dubai to research and negotiate," he added.

The United Arab Emirates are currently the country with the largest per capita bottled water consumption, at 265 liters a year.

According to the businessman, Brazil has the potential to export 500 million liters of bottled water a year.

"We are privileged because we have 30% of the world potable water reserves," he explained.

"Water is currently what poultry was 20 years ago, when nobody believed in the sector's export potential," he compared.

In 2004, Brazil had 42.8% of the world chicken meat market, consolidating the country position as the main world exporter both in terms of revenues and volume.

So as to establish the consortium, Abinam presented a project for a partnership with the Brazilian Export Promotion Agency (Apex), which forecasts investments of approximately US\$ 200,000, divided between both organizations, for participation in international fairs, research and development of new equipment and packaging technologies.

The president of the Abinam also pointed out that certification is more accessible due to the opening in São Paulo, the largest business center in Brazil, last April, of an office of the North American NSF.

The NSF is responsible for supplying the certificate and, according to Lancaia, company presence in the country is going to generate a 20% reduction in the certification cost and is going to make it possible for more Brazilians to enter with the request.

In 2004, the world bottled water market totalled US\$ 50 billion. A total of 155 billion liters of water were sold. The 10 greatest world producers were the United States, Mexico, China, Italy, Germany, France, Indonesia, Brazil, Thailand and Spain.

Brazil, however, is the eighth country in the world ranking, with annual production of approximately 6.5 billion liters. The

per capita consumption in the country is approximately 30 liters a year.

Up to the year of 2008, world water production should reach 206 billion liters. And the ranking of largest world producers may also be altered. Brazil should add 2.2 billion liters to its annual production. For this year, the growth estimated by Abinam is 15%.

Congress in Dubai

The president of the Abinam stated that the organization is going to take a group of at least 10 Brazilian businessmen to Dubai.

"Four have already been confirmed," he guaranteed. The congress is going to bring together businessmen and executives from the mineral water industry all around the world, to discuss and analyse, for three days at the Global Bottled Water Congress, the routes for the sector.

Organized for the first time in Evian, France, last year, with the participation of 130 delegations from 30 countries, the congress is the only global bottled water event of this size.

The schedule begins on September 20, with a visit to the Masafi installations, the main mineral water producer in the Gulf, one of the sponsors of the event. On the same day, those participating in the congress will go on a jeep ride through the desert sand dunes.

The congress will take place at the Madinat Jumeirah hotel, a giant resort that was recently inaugurated in Dubai. With architecture inspired on the ancient Arab fortresses, the complex includes a typical covered market and over 30 restaurants, most facing the sea.

On the 21st, the main conferences will take place. The last day, the 22nd, will be dedicated to debates about water and to the closing of the event, with design awards being given.

Brazilian Congress

Between October 16th and 19th, the Abinam should hold the 14th Brazilian Mineral Water Congress and the 4th International Mineral Water Congress. The meeting will take place at the Pestana hotel, in Salvador, Bahia.

Abinam promises a new configuration, with talks and workshops to stimulate and guide the mineral water industry to the new market reality.

"Special attention will be paid to the beverage market, especially that of bottled water, to the moment for redefinition of its industrial and commercial strategies when faced with the growth of competition in all categories," stated Lancia.

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