

Coffee, Oyster, Chicken and Jelly: Brazil Is Turning Organic

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Over US\$ 930,000 in business should be closed in the next six months. This is the result of the total declared by the participants of the First National Business Roundtables of Organic Products in São Paulo, which took place on Thursday, October 26, during the Biofach 2006, the largest organic product fair in Latin America.

The business roundtables involved 41 sellers from eight Brazilian states - São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais and Espírito Santo, in the Southeast; Paraná and Santa Catarina, in the South; and Bahia and Rio Grande do Norte, in the Northeast - and 10 buyers, among them large supermarket group Pão-de-Açúcar and Monte Verde, a large organic product retailer, and emporiums, grocery stores, restaurants and export traders.

Among the organic products presented were coffee, eggs, honey, cane spirit, sugar, milk and derivatives, bars of dehydrated fruit, seasonings, grain (rice, beans and maize), meats, chicken, sausages, jellies, sweets, preserves, yoghurt, shrimp and oysters, among others.

A total of 131 meetings took place throughout the day. "As this was the first of the kind in São Paulo, we are very pleased with the results. The buyers showed great satisfaction in the quality and presentation of the products," stated Aristóteles Abreu Filho, coordinator of the roundtables and consultant at the Brazilian Micro and Small Business Support Service (Sebrae). All buyers have as their end users people in the upper classes.

This is the case with Mundo Verde, the largest company in the sector, which has 115 shops in 12 states in Brazil. Company partner Jorge Eduardo Antunes da Silva, who participated in the roundtables, was enchanted with the presentation of the products, mainly those made in the state of Mato Grosso.

"We should do business with at least 50% of the companies we met during the roundtables. The highlight goes to the state of Mato Grosso. We will certainly close deals to have Bioagrega on our shelves."

According to Antunes, most of the companies, cooperatives and associations participating showed great professionalism in the negotiations. Mundo Verde is going to start operating on the foreign market next month, with the inauguration of a shop in Luanda, the Angolan capital. The company's main focus for growth, however, is in the state of São Paulo, where there are already 11 shops.

Mundo Verde participates constantly in Sebrae business roundtables. "I owe very much to the Sebrae since the beginning of my company. I did various management courses and also got employees and collaborators to participate," explained the businessman. According to him, the company has 7,000 items on its shelves, made by 1,200 suppliers. Of these, 1,050 are micro and small companies.

Biofach 2006 ended Friday, October 27, at Expo Transamérica, in São Paulo. The Sebrae also participated in the fair with a 200-square-meter stand, with products made by 45 companies.