

Report on
the
participation
of
Coir Board



International

Horti Fair
Horti Fair

13 - 16 October, 2009

RAI CENTER, AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS





Report on the participation of Coir Board in the International Hortifair at Amsterdam, Netherlands during 13th to 16th October 2009

Shri P C Antonel Vaz, Joint Director, Coir Board was deputed to attend the Hortifair 2009, Amsterdam, Netherlands vide letter No.4(21)/2009-Coir dated 13.10.2009 from the Ministry of MSME, Government of India, New Delhi for a period of three days from 14th to 16th October 2009 excluding travel time.

Introduction

The exhibition theme of Hortifair 2009 “for a sustainable future” extending sustainability process in the floral and horticulture industry all over the world. Around 1000 exhibitors from all over the world participated in this fair for exhibiting their products. The content of the special pavilions like House of Technology, Cut and Green Pavilion, Houses of Software etc. were the attraction of this fair. Amsterdam – the centre for the world cut flower industry which is a highly dynamic industry with varieties of products, production techniques, markets and retail arrangements which were undergoing a continuous change, challenging the adaptive capacity of the stakeholders involved. The industry steadily growing in the world market and new developing country exporters are gaining market share by developing their infrastructure. Countries like China, India, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Malawi, Mexico, Palastine, Peru, South Africa, Sambia etc. are the new entrants in this field. The fair forms a part of showcasing the developments that are taking place in the floral and horti industry all over the world. This venue gives a clear picture of the main exporting and importing countries and the quality control procedures, the new technologies adopted for improving the productivity and profitability of the international traders who are emerging as competitors for the European market. The Dutch Flower Auction Centres are places of international market avenue for trading floral business for the European continent. The auction centres transact 200 varieties of roses and more than 6000 varieties of other floras daily which are packed in uniform ecofriendly packing materials and transported to all centres of the world by mid day.



The fair was for the whole days from Tuesday 13th October to Friday 16th October 2009. The Dutch Horticulture centres of the Bestland and Aalsmeer for the last 50 years the economy has tried through the Horticultural activities. The exhibition is primarily focusing on the technological achievements for developing new products, encouragement of quality, innovation and transfer of knowledge for the sustainable future which is the theme of the exhibition. It is the centre for a collective raising of the international profile of Horticulture. The Hortifair is that, by and from Horticulture precisely in the time of economic down turn in the European continent. However, the role of Hortifair fulfils the international need for showcasing the technological achievement that is taking place in the International Horticulture arena. The Amsterdam Rai Centre at Netherlands was the venue for the exhibition in the horticulture technology and supplies event imparted into hortitech and horticulture production and trade/ services into hortigrow and trade increases. The Hortifair provides the fullest picture of present and future horticulture and the related activities. The inclusion of well attended symposiums on horticulture and its achievements and sustainability for increasing the interest of the horticulture world wide was an added attraction for the fair.

The fair commenced on 13th of October 2009 however the sanction was received late so I was able to attend the fair from 14th onwards only. The Board's stall was already occupied by the following participants who have registered with Board for attending the fair.

M/s Universal Electro-Hydraulicks, Coimbatore
 M/s Madappattu Exports, Kottayam, Kerala
 M/s Saro-Li Bio Organics Pvt. Ltd., Cochin, Kerala
 M/s Sterling Farm Research & Services P. Ltd., Kerala
 M/s United Global Traders, Mumbai
 M/s Charankattu Coir Mfg. Co. (P) Ltd., Alleppey
 M/s Best Coir Mills, Pollachi, Tamil Nadu
 M/s Venugopal Fibre Industries, Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu
 M/s Shaa Pith Media Company, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu
 M/s Sakthi Coir Exports, Pollachi, Tamil Nadu
 M/s Gharana Exports Pvt. Ltd., Calicut, Kerala
 M/s Kannabiran Fibre Products, Pollachi, Tamil Nadu

On arrival of myself at the fair, the materials which were already forwarded by the Coir Board were collected from the transporting agents and which were displayed at



the pavilion. Due to the time constraint, we were unable to allot space for the participants as they have already occupied the stall in my absence. All materials which were available were displayed at the stall with the available facilities for the benefit of the participating exporters. During my official duty at the stall, I visited the pavilions of the major importers of the coir pith, geotextiles, coir garden articles, coco chips etc. and had discussions with them regarding the quality of the products, the delivery schedule, price structure, competitiveness etc. Netherlands being the centre of horticulture activities they are more adaptable for quality consciousness of the products imported to the country for the purpose of horticulture activities. The major drawback which has been noticed was the delivery schedules were not adhered to by the exporters from India. In the case of quality, they are satisfied but in certain cases the standards are not up to the mark which has to be taken care by the Government for maintaining the quality specifications as per international and RHP standards.

As the mining of the peatmoss has been restricted all over the world due to environmental reasons, coir pith has become more popular as a soil substrate for the horti and floriculture activities all over the world. It has been noticed that all most 85% of the international corporate organizations engaged in the marketing of soil substrate are concentrating on importing coir pith and coco chips for replacing the other soil substrates which are available in the international market. The coir industry especially the coir pith processing industry have to take the advantage of the situation so as to expand the market for the coir pith, coco chips, cut fibre etc. export to these countries for earning valuable foreign exchange for the country. The fair is an eye opener for the Indian Coir Sector for marketing the ecofriendly coir materials especially for the horti and floriculture activities in the European continent. I had discussions with RHP Foundation and they are ready to collaborate with Indian Coir Industry for promoting quality consciousness in India especially for the coir pith exporters. Since this is an area of larger extent and more technical aspects and involvement of foreign exchange, no commitments were made by me in this regard. However, I had a lengthy discussion with them for obtaining the first hand information on quality specification, testing parameters, new technologies developed by them for the new end



Observations

During my stay at Amsterdam in connection with the Hortifair 2009, the following observations were noticed benefiting the Indian Coir Sector.

The internationally renowned horti agri companies engaged in the business of organizing large scale glass house, floriculture activities have commenced depending on coir pith as an artificial soil substrate in the growing media.

The RHP Foundation have also organizing research studies on the usage of coir pith and coco chip, coir pith grow bags etc. for the usage of these materials in large scale in the cultivation of flowers, vegetables, fruits etc.

The coir fibre pots have also emerged as a new item for the floriculture activities and there is a good potential for this product in the coming future.

Coir pith and coco chips have already replaced the artificial soil substrates and peatmoss which were actively used by the glass houses for using in the artificial growing media. The market potential for coir pith, coco chips, coir pith grow bags etc. are growing at tremendous level and the participants who have attended the fair have been successful in canvassing sufficient orders for doing business with their counterpart in European continent and other countries who are emerging as exporters of cut flowers, vegetables and fruits. The quality consciousness of the coir pith and allied products produced in India has to be augmented further and major exporters should have the facility for testing of coir pith and allied products as per international standards. Assistance should be provided for setting up of full fledged testing laboratories for the exporters and producers of coir pith and allied products by Coir Board in line with the implementation of this accredited testing laboratories assisted by Marine Product Export Eevelopment Authority, Agricultural Product Export Development Authority etc. Further, research studies have to be organized for value addition of coir pith and allied products in order to increase the value of this coir pith and allied products in the international market so as to earn more valuable foreign exchange for the country. Controlled growing atmosphere study should be conducted in collaboration with international agencies in glass house cultivation using coir pith and allied



products for promoting coir pith as a soil substrate and growing media for all varieties of flori and horticulture products.

The promotional activities for promoting coir pith, coco chips, coir pith grow bags, coir garden articles etc. should be augmented further capturing the untapped international market for these products. The Indian Coir Industry especially, the coir pith and allied products manufacturers should be given more assistance for showcasing the Indian capabilities for the production of coir pith and allied products in the international market by attending fairs of this type in all major horti and flori exhibitions. More leaflets and advertising materials with attractive photographs of the processing and usage of coir pith and allied products should be produced for popularization of this material during international fairs.

Quality standardization of coir pith and allied products shall be made more feasible for the international users of these products which can be attained only through international co-operation with reputed international agencies.

Explore the possibilities for branding coir pith and allied products exported from India.

Conclusion

During the four days fair, as per the details furnished by the participating exporters, total number of 895 visitors visited the stall and 227 number of business enquiries were received by them. They have generated Rs.780 lakhs worth orders to be executed by them during the next six months. In addition to this, lot of activities have been taken place at the fair ground as the participants had their own business partners who have already established contacts with them. The technical upgradation and innovation that have taken place in the world horti and agri industry was witnessed by these participants and the discussions with the technologists who are engaged in the glass house farming have induced the visiting exporters from India for capturing the market potential for the product produced by them.

The list of buyers who have envisaged interest in importing coir pith and allied products from India is detailed in the annexure.



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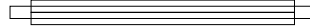


Photo Gallery



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