Internationalization, the great challenge of the Spanish ham industry

Boosting the number of industries authorized to export to third countries, in a clear commitment to the internationalization of their activity, is one of the main challenges facing the sector of the ham industry, according to the meeting held in mid Of November by the Working Group of Ham Companies of the National Association of the Meat Industries of Spain (ANICE)**, which groups manufacturing companies from all over Spain. A meeting that served to analyze the situation of the sector and advance in the resolution of the main challenges that this industrial group must face.**

The Group studied the evolution of the market, which presents a situation of stability, *although the participants stressed the need to stimulate the foreign trade of these value added products, as one of the main pending subjects of the ham industry.*

> The ham sector considers that there should be an impulse to the number of industries authorized to export, that reinforce the necessary effort of promotion and positioning in important markets but complex as the one of China

In this line, ANICE will be directed to the Spanish Administration to transfer a series of strategic

actions that contribute to the internationalization of the ham sector. Thus, and in relation to the promotional issues, the ANICE ham sector representatives analyzed proposals such as having a specific trade fair in the meat sector in Spain, which reinforces the visibility and leadership of the industries, focused on marketing, business opportunities and business meetings.

The Group also supported the organization of a new World Ham Congress, to be held in Toledo in May 2017, with the aim of relaunching this initiative, reinforcing the aspects that are of most interest to companies, especially internationalization and marketing, new markets and new sales channels. The meeting called for the Congress to have the strong support of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Food and Environment (MAPAMA) and interprofessional organizations.

The Group also analyzed a number of sectoral challenges and priorities, some of which are of a technical nature, *focused on improving the safety of processing processes and product quality.* Miguel Ángel Asensio, Director of the Department of Food Safety at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Extremadura, was present at this point.

Likewise, Esperanza Orellana, Deputy Director General of Food Promotion, participated in the event. Orellana became, since December 16, the new Director General of Rural Development and Forest Policy.

Javier Maté, Deputy Director General for Differentiated Quality and Ecological Agriculture, intervened to explain to the Ham Group the status of the application process for a Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) for Serrano ham, which was sent to the European Commission having received an acknowledgment of receipt on September 26, the date from which the deadline for processing in the European Union has begun. *Maté said that if there is no opposition in the process of processing the application, the resolution could be published within a period of close to two years*, and if there are oppositions the procedure would be extended by another six months, at best, and that if these oppositions are taken into account the request could fall or enter into a legal process.

ANICE is the main business association of the meat industry of national scope, and it groups to more than 650 companies distributed by all the Spanish geography: slaughterhouses of pig, cattle and ovine, and factories of elaborados, cured ham and Iberian products. It is part of the Interprofessional Organizations of the white pig INTERPORC, the Iberian pig ASICI, the sheep-goat INTEROVIC and the beef cattle PROVACUNO, in CONFECARNE and the Office of Exportation of the Meat of Spain (OECE), as well as in the Spanish Federation Of Food and Beverage Industries (FIAB). It is also a member of the Food Foundation and the Advisory Council of the Food Information and Control Agency (AICA).

At the international level, it participates in the European Union of the Trade of Beef and Beef (UECBV), the Union of Transformation Industries of the European Union (CLITRAVI) and the International Meat Bureau (IMS).

Source: ANICE