

Taking the world to market

At a time when almost every major wholesale market in the UK is considering, or has undergone, a redevelopment to tackle ageing structures and reflect transformed cities, there are also major changes happening around the world. Alex Lawson travelled to Turkey to discover what approaches are being taken across the globe

There are few better opportunities than the World Union of Wholesale Markets (WUWM) Congress for market managers to gain an insight into other projects and

share best practice. Some 200 delegates from 65 countries gathered for the three-day event in Istanbul, representing markets of different sizes and types. It was the first

WUWM event in a year which will see the organisation host another retail meeting in Amsterdam and a further wholesale trip to Shenzhen, China.

LONDON, ENGLAND

Jan Lloyd sounded a note of caution to the South Koreans, warning it is going to be "a long and painful process", but there are still opportunities for wholesale. The Covent Garden Market Authority CEO said: "Where you are in a retail-dominated market, you have to operate differently. We saw this morning [with a presentation on wholesale in South Korea] that they are battling to deal with Tesco but still moving large volumes of fruit and veg. We have been through that and it's a long and painful process but there are still very real opportunities for moving volume."

MEXICO CITY, MEXICO

Authorities at the 328ha Central de Abasto de la Ciudad de Mexico have stepped in to reduce the shocking violent crime rate by bringing in the ex-police chief and installing 200 cameras – achieving a 90 per cent drop in crime in the process. The huge market – best viewed by helicopter – has more than 70,000 employees and is worth more than \$9 billion.

SÃO PAULO, BRAZIL

The main wholesale market in the sprawling South American city was established in 1969 and shifts 2.8 million tonnes of produce per annum. The market has been involved in a number of initiatives to feed the poor via food banks.

PARIS, FRANCE



Paris's Rungis market's rail links are now fully operational after a multi-million euro development. SEMMARIS president Marc Spielrein gave delegates an insight into the

€19m project which looks to arrest the decline in railfreight with two nightly services from Perpignan to Paris.

COPENHAGEN, DENMARK



WUWM chairman Torben Flinch of Grønttorvet København said it is of "paramount importance that new wholesalers and entrepreneurs can enter markets and be successful".

KIEV, UKRAINE

New wholesale markets are set to start trading in the Ukraine. Kiev will open up a market in June and Donetsk in August.

ISTANBUL, TURKEY



A new market – The IMM Tuzla Aydinli Food Trade Center – is set to be built on the Asian side of the city at Tuzla. The modern market will see an increase in accessibility, surrounded by major roads, parking and improved storage within units.

VIENNA, AUSTRIA

Dr Hans Strauss of certification giants CCS-SGS cited PAS 220:2008 as the benchmark for markets. The systems and certification manager said the accreditation was a good basic food standard for wholesale markets to be used in conjunction with the WUWM *Guide to Good Hygienic Practice*.

HAMBURG, GERMANY



The Grossmarkt Hamburg is to have a farmers' market attached to the wholesale offer at the end of the working day. The secondary business is set to open in 2012 when a new 150,000sqm hall

will open. The market will begin at the end of the working day for the 300 fruit, vegetable and flower wholesalers.

NANJING, CHINA

Nanjing market is to be vastly upgraded as part of a RMB 5bn project. The 200 hectare market in south east China began the process in May 2009 with the first 70ha phase set to develop six specialised trading markets constructed within the whole site.

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA



There is to be a large-scale redevelopment of Garak market in Seoul to accommodate 5,000 traders attached to a

shopping mall, with gardens on its roof for the public to grow food. The market is currently 543,451sqm in size and built in 1955; a retail phase from 2009-2013 will see a metrolink to the mall followed by the wholesale project from 2013-2018, said SAMACO president Kim Joo-Soo.

PERTH, AUSTRALIA



Perth Market has launched a new brand as it looks to push the profile of the 20-year-old Western Australian market. The "triple G" Great Greengrocer brand, taglined 'Join

the fight for flavour', looks to engage consumers by passing on a message of quality from the market. The brand will be present on in-store materials within retailers, on print media and recipes, with seasonality charts and growing information on the market's website.





As new developments rise up in markets worldwide, Alex Lawson examines the key themes that got the delegates talking at this month's WUWM Congress

Gathering under the theme of 'Globalising Wholesale Markets: Encouraging supply and demand between the East and West', delegates could hardly have been better placed than in Istanbul – a city split by the border between Europe and Asia.

A stroll along a main road in the Turkish capital will quickly reveal it is a city drowning beneath traffic congestion, a thorn in the side of any wholesale market. So plans for a new 240,000sqm wholesale market in Tuzla – in addition to the existing Atasehir market on the Asian side and Bayrampasa on the European side – will come as welcome news for market operators attempting to feed the city's 13 million people. Wholesale revenue in the city reached \$45.5 million last year, up from \$38m in 2009 and the target for 2011 is \$64m.

Hamburg market's Torsten Berens raises a key point in highlighting the importance of a food culture in dictating the size and structure of associated wholesale markets. Berens explains: "It is very important to have food at the centre of a culture. We go to schools and companies to tell them how vital it is to have local, healthy food available to them." In the UK, where these priorities

have slipped down the agenda in favour of price for the majority, there is not the capacity for huge sprawling markets serving both independent and large-scale retailers and a plethora of street markets. But, as CGMA chief executive Jan Lloyd points out, the avenues offered by foodservice – at least for the London markets – have proved a salvation for a trade undermined by the growth of the retailers.

Elsewhere, two main themes rose to the top of the agenda: safe food and logistics. On the first point, Selman Ayaz of the Turkish ministry of agriculture's directorate of protection and control says the ministry's decision to consider making market inspection results public would be "like a sharp sword". "You might just kill a brand if you present negative results to the public. Our purpose is to provide safe food and that's our priority." An interesting stance given the Rural Payments Agency in the UK actually issues press releases about HMI discoveries of poor quality fresh produce for retail traders.

In terms of logistics, a palpable sense of intrigue ran through the room as Marc Spielrein ran through the Rungis railfreight development in Paris. Twice

nightly deliveries at 140km/hr from Perpignan shift 1,100 tonnes per delivery via 24 refrigerated containers arriving at 2.30am and 4.30am. Despite problems with the quality of service from the French rail network being patchy and the project relying on considerable public funding, the savings in energy, fuel and traffic reduction have greatly benefited the market. Spielrein's assertion that the project is a long-term reaction to plans for high speed links from Spain into northern Europe will interest those in the UK who may benefit from the controversial high-speed rail project on these shores.

The international wholesale scene appears to be almost running along a set timeline. The UK and western Europe may prove the example of how things could develop with supermarket domination dictating the shape of diminishing markets. Whether this trend will continue worldwide, as seems inevitable, remains to be seen, however the shifting trend in WUWM congress attendees towards the Asian market delegates would suggest market managers across the continent are looking to learn the lessons from those in more developed economic nations. ■

