

Cyprus



Far from just a lazy tourist destination, Cyprus is a rich resource for products and natural reserves that make the modern world go around. The country's greatest food exports include potatoes, halloumi cheese, citrus, fruit and vegetable juices, and vegetables but exports also include pharmaceuticals and textiles. The country's plethora of export companies enjoy increasingly active trade and prominence on the global commercial stage.

Undoubtedly the Food and Drink Industry is a significant sector of the Cyprus economy. Its uncompromised quality and reasonable pricing, coupled with the professionalism of the Cypriot businessmen and women, ensure that the industries of this sector meet all prerequisites for a successful and sustainable development in foreign markets.

Centrally located for trade with Europe, North Africa, Russia and Asia, the islands' commercial potential is enormous.

Along with The Cyprus High Commission Trade Centre, the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism plays a major role in the development of international trade for the island, developing a favourable business environment and structure, that will help Cypriot enterprises to overcome successfully, the challenges of today's competitive business world.

Following and invitation by the Ministry and Commission, we sent our reporter Tim Barnett in search of the treasures the island has to offer and he was introduced to a number of companies, offering products and services which would rival any found elsewhere in the world.

Kimagro Fish Farming Ltd

is a fish farming business based in Limassol, where there is the ideal environment and climate conditions to produce high quality farmed Sea Bass and Sea Bream.

The owner of the business Antonis Kimonides was born and raised in Limassol. With a passion for the sea he studied Marine Biology in Marseille, France, where he specialised in Marine Aquaculture. After successfully obtaining a Masters in Oceanography in 1983, his experience and knowledge led to several high level appointments, with a position as an Expert for the UN Food & Agriculture Organisation, jobs as a consultant in Marine Fish Farming, for several companies and in 1988 Antonis became the Manager of Sagro Aquaculture Ltd, a position he held until 1993. Antonis founded Kimagro Fishfarming Public Ltd in 1989. At last, with his own business, Antonis said "he finally could realise his vision of producing the highest quality fresh fish in the Mediterranean." Kimagro was the first company in Cyprus to research and develop the open sea Fishfarming concept in floating infrastructures. As Antonis says " his unique Platform structure, which was purpose built for aquaculture, revolutionised the fish farming industry on the Island, making Kimagro the most modern fish farm in the Mediterranean." The cages allow for better husbandry practices and an automatic feeding system, improving the prospects of producing high quality fish. Antonis told us "each of the cages contains between 4.5 million fish at any one time."

Antonis puts his customers' needs first when it comes to their individual requirements and this has resulted in the Company's steady growth into successfully exporting fresh fish currently across Europe, Russia and around the Mediterranean, it also

resulted in the company winning "The Cyprus Special Export Award" in 2004.

Currently much of the companies exports go to Russia as Antonis told us "A number of countries have now taken an inferior product, that is cheaper as it is frozen then transported by road, so arrives not as fresh". "The product Kimagro can supply, costs a little more, but is flown in to the customer on the same day as it is harvested." According to our reporter it tastes very good too!

With an ambition to become a leading supplier of the highest quality fresh fish both at home and abroad Kimagro will continue to progress the development of high quality aquaculture off the Island of Cyprus.

Website: www.kimagrofisheries.com



M.P. Theodorou Salt

M.P. Theodorou Salt Industry found in Aradippou, Larnaka is one of only two companies in the world able to supply natural sea salt on a commercial basis and has been delivering a unique service for over 45 years.

M.P. Theodorou Salt Industry now produces six tons of salt per hour and realizing the increase in demand for natural products, now has a dedicated unit for salt flakes production, which was created in 2001, covering an area of 3000sq metres. The company is ISO:2000 and HACCP certified for the production, packaging and distribution of salt products and in 2007, the company registered with ISO / HACCP 22000:2005, and became organic certified.

Well known for its Sailor branded products, the range is now extensive, including table salts, Sea Salt Flakes and Sea Salt flakes flavoured with natural spices.

Many chefs prefer to use Mediterranean Sea Salt Flakes for cooking as it is believed to have a much better taste than ordinary table salt. The salt is also healthier than common table salt, with a unique flavour of the sea. Unlike most salts which contain additives to prevent them from caking, Mediterranean Sea Salt Flakes are a 100% totally natural product, containing traces of minerals including magnesium and calcium. The large delicate sized crystal flakes have a light clean salt taste, a gleaming white colour, an amazing texture and adds a curious, totally new geometry to food. The unique texture allows them to dissolve quickly when sprinkled on food, bringing out an entirely different taste and a natural flavour to any dish, compared to regular grains of table salt. Although Sea Salt Flakes are a gourmet finger salt, they are excellent for use in salt mills.

The flakes are produced in the old fashioned traditional way. The sea water is channelled through a series of ponds. The brine is fed

into large pans where the natural process of sun and wind - in a dust free environment - slowly heats the brine to the point where delicate pyramid shaped crystals appear. Experienced salt makers control the temperature in order for the pyramid shaped crystal to get the right texture and flavour. The salt is then harvested, dried, sieved and finally packed, all by hand. The result is a salt that is beautiful to look at and has the right 'crusty' feeling when crushed between the fingertips and sprinkled onto the food and salads. It simply brings out the best in every cuisine.

Spices play an important part in our life. Spices have the ability to bring out the extra scent and taste necessary to fully enjoy our food. Why not try the latest range of Sailor Sea Salt flakes flavoured with natural spices such as chili, rosemary, lemon, ten mixed spices, sea weed, or Smoked Sea Salt Flakes. Upon request, M.P. Theodorou Salt Industry may be able to mix any spice requested, as long as it is approved by their quality staff for its naturalness.

Website: sailorsalt.com



Mitsides Public Company



Mitsides Public Company Ltd can be found further in land in Nicosia, which is where we met Dinos Mitsides a family member who is proud of the company heritage. He told ISN that the Company was founded in 1932 by the Mitsides brothers, who operated a traditional stone mill. In the decades that followed, the small family business flourished into the largest flour and pasta manufacturer in Cyprus. Mitsides now dominates the Cyprus market, commanding approximately, a 50% share of the local pasta and flour retail markets.

Locally, the company owns two flour mills and two fully-automated mixing plants, producing a wide range of quality flours, semolinas, specialized flours and mixes, and one pasta factory, producing some 40 shapes of dry pasta, as well as a line of fresh/frozen filled pasta items. "It employs around 160 people and is certified to both the HACCP and ISO Quality Systems", said Dinos. Mitsides is also active in grain trading, the sale of pasta sauces, processed tomato products and other foodstuffs, as well as the sale of bakery and confectionery raw materials.

Mitsides is the major exporter of pasta and flour from Cyprus, with most exports being contracted flour sales to "Pizza Hut" restaurants, in a growing number of Middle and Far Eastern countries, as a result of Mitsides' cooperation with Yum!Brands Inc. (Mitsides has been an approved global flour supplier for Pizza Hut International since 1998). "The export business for the company continues to grow," Dinos said "Pasta exports are also increasing globally, with Lebanon, UK and Greece being the main destination, although we are looking

into the market in Saudi Arabia," he added. "We are able to provide customers with Private Label product from the factory in Serbia and our Own Label from Cyprus."

Dinos also told us that "the company recently expanded its operations in Serbia, through the acquisition of Mitsides Point a.d. This is a joint venture which operates 2 flourmills, a fresh pasta factory, a bakery plant, several bakery outlets and a recently constructed dry pasta factory in Sremska Mitrovica".

Website: www.mitsidesgroup.com



Cyprus

Ambrosia Oils (1976)

Ambrosia Oils (1976) Ltd was established in 1976 in Larnaka. Since then the company has grown to achieve its present status as one of the largest and most reputable companies in Cyprus. Ambrosia is well connected world-wide due to the close connection with the Nidera Group of Companies / Holland, who are major shareholders.

Ambrosia Oils (1976) Ltd maintains very high standards by employing the latest technology in vegetable oils, fats and emulsified sauces production. The factory is a refinery of vegetable oils (such as Soyabean oil, Corn oil, Sunflower oil) with capacity of 300 M/Tons daily, packer of Extra Virgin Olive oil, manufacturers of Table Margarine, Shortening, Pastry Margarine and other associated products with capacity of 30 M/Tons daily and Emulsified Sauces (Mayonnaise, Ketchup, Tomato paste, Mustard etc). The factories are located in Larnaka, Cyprus and attain the latest European standards for hygiene and efficiency.

Ambrosia is fully equipped with the most developed machinery and equipment for the industry, to enable them to meet international needs, with high quality and low prices. The well-known brands (La Fleur and Dorina) are currently exported to 22 coun-

tries covering Europe, the Middle East, Gulf, Eastern Europe and Africa. Ambrosia offers a great variety of products, for good cooking and healthy living.

Website: www.ambrosia.com



Ostman Spices Ltd

Ostman Spices Ltd has been dealing with the packing and selling of herbs and spices since 1983 and can be found in Limassol, where they have a brand new 3500 m2 manufacturing facility, in the new industrial area Ayios Silas.

We met with Zac Panayi who said "Our state-of-the-art packaging and manufacturing facility was purpose built and is designed to ensure that Ostman can deliver the highest quality finished products available, in the spices, herbs, rice, sugar and tea industry, and ensure that we are able to offer customers a consistently high quality product".

The factory has computerised processing and warehouse systems for storing product within a carefully controlled environment. The production unit is highly sophisticated and enables the flexibility to adapt to individual customer requirements. Dedicated warehousing reflects the stringent requirements for the storage and handling of food products, and the distribution systems ensure these are maintained to the end-user. Zac said they would "welcome potential clients to visit and satisfy themselves with our processing capabilities".

The result of all these efforts has been rewarded with the award of the highest ratings in ISO 9001-2000 ELOT certified. In addition, Ostman is in the progress of HACCP accreditation.

Ostman Spices carefully choose every product directly from the producers - whether they are of Cypriot, Asian, American or European origin. Ostman proudly says they offer customers "The Cream of the Crop!", and they mean it!

The company strives to give the market high quality products, which Zac told us "are produced by investing in the latest technological equipment for packing herbs and spices".

Today, the Ostman brand is becoming well known and it has a large share of the Cypriot market, with expansion in progress within the markets of the EEC, the Middle East and Africa. Ostman currently supply Lidl, Netto and Aldi in the UK but Zac said "if any of the top five supermarkets are interested, we are ready to supply them".

The range is available in Private and Own Label and includes a huge selection of herbs and spices, rice, salt, sugar, vegetables, etc.

Website: www.ostman-spices.com



A. Zorbas and Sons Public Ltd

A. Zorbas and Sons Public Ltd was founded in Athienou, an area of Nicosia, in 1975 by Mr Andreas Zorbas and is now run by Andreas and his three sons. The company has continued to produce quality bakery products for the past 35 years. Our reporter met with Mr Michalis Chrysostomou who told him about the company.

From small beginnings the Company grew and developed, extending its activities in the production and sales of “homemade style” cooked food for take away, catering services, Zorbas Pizza and sandwiches, meeting the needs of the Cypriot consumer.

The small bakery in Athienou transformed into a Group of Companies, however, the Zorbas Group, which now employs 1200 individuals, is still based on the same human approach and values, it had in years gone by.

Michalis commented that “The main activity of the company is the production, distribution and sale of top quality bakery products, fresh pastries and confections, available in both Private and Own Label formats“. He also said “The company is also currently introducing frozen foods into our own stores“.

Zorbas purchases high quality ingredients and produces high quality bakery products along with a variety of top quality pastries, confections, and take away home cooked food and pizza. Sales are

made primarily from the company operated retail stores nationwide. The company today has 45 stores all over Cyprus (20 in Nicosia, 9 in Limasol, 9 in Larnaca, 3 in Famagusta and 4 in Paphos) and five in Romania, with three production units in the Aradippou Industrial Area, equipped with the latest of technology.

Through exhibiting at various trade shows and visiting target countries, the company has now developed an export business which includes Russia, The Far East, UK & Greece.

A fundamental concern of the company is the ability to guarantee the finest quality and hygiene of products, with respect to the needs of the modern consumer. The company is certified with the international certificates ISO 22000 and HACCP for the production and distribution of confections and pastry products.

Michalis was proud to say that “A. Zorbas and Sons Public Ltd is considered one of the most economically healthy companies in Cypriot industry“.

Website: www.zorbas.com.cy



The Company is known for its dry products range and its frozen products range. The dry products range focuses on traditional Mediterranean dishes, while the frozen products range focuses on Pasta, Pizza and Pastry.

Website: www.lisko.com.cy

Lisko Foodstuff Ltd

Lisko Foodstuff Ltd was established in April 1984. Originally intended just as a means to support the family but is now a major producer in Cyprus. Lisko is in fact, the largest manufacturer of Bulgur wheat in Europe, exporting its products to most European countries the Middle East and Asia.

Initially Lisko produced Bulgur wheat and Trahana, a traditional soup made of wheat and yogurt. This was an area in which the company had knowledge and experience. Competition, when the company first started, was almost non-existent. However, within a short period of time Bulgur wheat, which then was a dish for low income families, became very popular, because of its health properties and consumers interest in better nutrition.

The company also exports pasta products filled with Halloumi cheese, frozen pastries and frozen ready meals. Lisko products are found in many countries, usually under Private Label.

Lisko has modern production facilities in the Industrial Area of Larnaca and is HACCP and ISO certified. At first it covered an area of 1000m². In 1997 this area was doubled and in 1999 another extension was made to the building and more machines were installed for quantitative upgrading of production.

The distribution network covers all areas of Cyprus, delivering the products in convenient packages and at reasonable prices. Exports are also made to other European countries as well as the Middle East and Asia.



The Three Bakers Ltd



The Three Bakers Ltd has been in operation since September 1995 and has its manufacturing base in Nicosia.

ISN met with Christina Mavrohonna who told him about the company.

“If I have to sum up the company in three words I would say Quality, Service and Traditional Recipes,” she said.

The Three Bakers supplies a wide range of products, as their own brand or private label, including cakes, pasta and sausages, not only to the market in Cyprus but to Greece parts of Europe and England. In fact, according to Christina “the company has a distributor already in England, as it supplies pre-cooked macaronni to several customers in the country”. The company also has a contract to supply one of the largest supermarkets in the world, Carrefour in France.

The company prides itself on their choice of high quality raw materials and the application of high standards of production and controls. The Three Bakers already conforms to ISO 22000 and HASSP and is BRC approved.

Christina said one of the important things about the products produced by the company was that “they are made with good quality ingredients and we still use traditional recipes which

represent the islands culture and heritage, which makes the products rather unique and popular with consumers.” She also said that “one of the companies main goals is to provide a friendly, fast and efficient delivery to the end consumer, as well as to the wholesale industry.”

The company is certainly serious about exporting in Europe, as future plans include the possible expansion of manufacturing facilities either in England or mainland Europe.

Website: thethreebakers.com

