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IFFA 2025: technology leap for meat and protein processing

Frankfurt am Main, 29 April 2025. The global meat and protein industry meets at the leading international trade fair IFFA – Technology for Meat and Alternative Proteins. 1,019 exhibitors from 52 countries will showcase innovative solutions for all stages of the production and distribution process under the motto "Rethinking meat and proteins". With the use of new technologies such as AI and robotics, many processes are being elevated to a new level – so IFFA 2025 promises a real technology leap for the industry.

Every three years, the Frankfurt exhibition grounds are transformed into an innovation hub for the global meat and protein processing industry. IFFA – Technology for Meat and Alternative Proteins – will bring together 1,019 exhibitors from 52 countries from 3 to 8 May 2025. With their machines, technologies and solutions, they will present a comprehensive picture of the value chain – from processing, packaging and innovative ingredients to the latest trends in sales. In addition to the market leaders, many of whom are based in Germany, smaller specialised companies and start-ups are also taking part – the latter particularly from the field of alternative proteins. A good quarter of the companies (27 per cent) are exhibiting at IFFA for the first time. Including Germany, the top 10 exhibiting nations are Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Poland, China, the USA, Denmark, France and Belgium. "Not only we, but the entire industry is looking forward to IFFA with great expectations," says Wolfgang Marzin, President and CEO of Messe Frankfurt. "Meat and protein processing is on the threshold of profound change – driven by new technologies such as artificial intelligence, robotics, and automation. Many of our exhibitors are developing their innovations specifically to coincide with IFFA and are presenting them to an international audience for the first time here. Alongside these high-tech solutions, creative approaches for new products based on a wide variety of protein sources will also be a focal point."

IFFA is the leading trade fair in its sector and has an extraordinarily high level of internationality. 70 per cent of visitors travel from abroad, from 150 countries. The top visitor countries in 2022 included the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, Poland, the USA, Brazil, Austria, the UK and Switzerland. The trade visitors come from the protein processing industry, the butcher's trade, the food trade, the catering industry and a wide range of supplier industries. To make it easier for visitors to find their way around the trade fair, IFFA Worlds will be introduced for the first time in 2025. This new hall structure bundles related product groups under the focus areas of ingredients, processing, packaging, alternative proteins, craftsmanship and sales. They are called World of Processing (halls

8, 9, 11 and 12), World of Ingredients (hall 11), World of Packaging (hall 12), World of New Proteins (hall 11) and World of Skills and Sales (hall 12).

Artificial intelligence and the use of data are revolutionising meat processing.

The meat processing industry is undergoing significant change - driven not least by the increasing shortage of skilled labour. This poses major challenges for many companies, but is also proving to be a catalyst for innovation. In recent years, automation and digitalisation in particular have helped to reduce costs and make processes more efficient. Currently, the use of artificial intelligence is opening up new prospects for the industry. As the next stage of development, it promises far-reaching changes in production. One example is the use of AI-supported image recognition for the automated sorting of meat. This reduces the workload for staff and allows them to concentrate more on more complex tasks. Another forward-looking field of innovation lies in the intelligent utilisation of production data. Real-time data analysis, condition monitoring and predictive maintenance not only make processes more transparent and efficient, but also more sustainable. Systematic creation of value from data thus lays the foundation for sustainable meat processing.



The global meat and protein industry meets at IFFA 2025 in Frankfurt am Main. Source: Messe Frankfurt

Messe Frankfurt's partner associations, VDMA and the German Butchers' Association (DFV), are also looking forward to IFFA 2025 with high expectations. Richard Clemens, Managing Director of the VDMA Food Processing and Packaging Machinery Association, says: "IFFA is the most important platform for innovations and a catalyst for investment. According to a VDMA economic survey conducted in April, 55 per cent of companies in the sector expect an increase in turnover in 2025 and a further 40 per cent expect stable business development. In the context of the current difficult conditions, this is a very positive result and also implies that companies have high expectations of IFFA. The measures planned by the new German government to ease the burden on companies and reduce bureaucracy are also contributing to the positive mood. The swift implementation of the new depreciation regulation would be an important signal and a strong incentive to invest." Bureaucratic requirements, such as those relating to origin and husbandry labelling of animals, also present challenges for the German butcher's trade. Herbert Dohrmann, President of the DFV, reports: "The butcher's trade is facing a variety of challenges and is therefore focussing on innovations that combine quality craftsmanship

with efficiency. IFFA offers the ideal platform for presenting solutions for modern business structures, digital systems and pioneering packaging technologies. The fair also showcases the impressive diversity and excellence of our craft and fosters international exchange, which is indispensable for the development and preservation of traditional craftsmanship."

The topic of alternative proteins, an integral part of IFFA since 2022, will be represented by the Federal Association for Alternative Protein Sources (BALPro), among others. Chairman Fabio Ziemßen explains: "Interest in innovative protein sources has risen sharply, especially in Europe. Germany is playing a pioneering role here: Numerous start-ups, established companies and research institutions are driving the development and commercialisation of new products. I expect exciting new developments in the field of extrusion technology and 3D printing as well as innovative recipes from new plant-based sources at IFFA. Of course, I am also looking forward to personal dialogue with the international smart protein community."

In addition to exhibitors' solutions and products, IFFA features a varied event programme. In the IFFA Kitchen, visitors can look forward to specialist discussions, live demonstrations, and show cooking. The IFFA Factory will showcase exemplary solutions to the shortage of skilled labour in production, while the curated Discovery Tours will provide orientation along the IFFA Worlds. Other items on the programme include the German Butchers' Association's quality competitions, the "Butcher of the Year 2025" award and the presentation of the "New Meat Award".

Further information can be found at: www.iffa.com

Messe Frankfurt accompanies the dynamic growth of the food industry with four trade fairs on three continents. The industry meets at the events in Argentina, Thailand, the USA and Germany. Find out more at:

www.food-technologies.messefrankfurt.com

IFFA

Technology for Meat and Alternative Proteins

3 – 8 May 2025 in Frankfurt am Main

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