

18/12/2020

Press Release

54th SNIFL General Meeting

The National Syndicate of Fruit & Vegetable Importers & Exporters (SNIFL) of Saint Charles International held its 54th General Meeting on Thursday 17th December under the chairmanship of Mr. Denis Ginard. In light of the current sanitary situation, this meeting was held behind closed doors.

In his report, the Chairman spoke of the various trade shows that were not able to be held as usual in 2020, including MEDFEL in Perpignan and FRUIT ATTRACTION in Madrid, and wanted to highlight the fact that the profession was suffering greatly today from not being able to hold events as per usual.

The Chairman also stressed that, due to this unprecedented sanitary crisis, the “*Saint-Charles*” spirit was still very much alive. He used the examples of the pooled orders for surgical masks and hand sanitiser that Saint-Charles Export had made available throughout 2020, with support from the National Syndicate of Fruit & Vegetable Importers & Exporters, for the benefit of all member companies, as well as any other company or institution who had made a request. This service was made available to as many people as possible, which shows that despite the economic and organisational difficulties encountered, the platform had lost nothing in terms of solidarity and humanity!

After the 6th pooled order in November / December, the quantities distributed by Saint-Charles Export and the SNIFL exceeded 1 million masks and a very high amount of hand sanitizer and other disinfectants (*1,680 100 mL bottles, 2,970 500 mL bottles, 301 5 L containers, 684 sachets of wipes, 354 sprays, 303 bottles of air freshener, 108 aerosols*)... the 1st deliveries were made on the 11th April 2020.

Despite the challenging sanitary situation, there has been plenty of work to do this year and the Syndicate's various Commissions have been working hard!

The **Transport Commission** intervened once again during this project, to recall our platform's role in the project for the railway line between Perpignan and Rungis.

As for the **Quality Commission**, a key event this year was the recruitment of a second Quality Officer, to provide much-needed support for the Syndicate's “Training” division, as well as the advisory and support role for member companies with issues related to “Quality”. During the summer season, a new department was therefore created, for “Audit, Advice and Support” for various “Quality” systems.

Again this year, it was also important to specify that thanks to investment from everyone, the “Démarche Qualité Saint-Charles” Label was renewed by the SGS certifying organism, with 99% conformity with audited standards.

The **Training / Recuitment Commission** worked on establishing partnerships with the Université de Perpignan, the IAE, the IUT, as well as the Lycée Notre Dame de Bon Secours to provide young graduates and current students with information about the wide range of career opportunities available at Saint-Charles.

Finally, the **Third-Countries Commission** closely monitored any changes in regulatory procedures for phytosanitary inspections, and worked with the General Directorate for Food (DGAL) to ensure that the sanitary crisis does not hinder inspection procedures for imports and exports. Other topics are still being discussed within this Commission, especially with the different departments of the DRAAF, such as extended opening hours at the International

Control Centre, the possibility for “Exports” on Saturday mornings, or preparation for BREXIT on the 1st January 2021 by already organising and facilitating “Exports” from the platform to Great Britain, so that the British market is not penalised.

He also stated that the investment made over the past 2 years in the Saint Charles Import/Export Database, *with the aim of making it a declarative tool that is adapted to the issues faced in our sector, and for which various applications from French Administration provide support in gathering relevant information for monitoring purposes, when certifications are issued for example, or authorisation for release into free circulation*, in partnership with the Central Board of Excise and Customs, the DGCCRF and the DGAL, make Saint Charles International a national and even European leader in data processing and procedures for customs clearance of fruit and vegetables.

As for the work carried out by this Third-Countries Commission, Mr. Ginard wanted to thank Henri Ribes, the former head of the Syndicate, and tell him it had been a great pleasure working alongside him during the first years of his term of office. Henri Ribes had been Managing Director since 1998 and member of the Bureau since 2002. He is now retiring, but not before fulfilling his Role as Head of the Third-Countries Commission, in ensuring that all loose strings were taken care of before he left. Mr. Ribes was also an exemplary Vice-Chairman, all the while both present and discreet so that the torch could be passed on effortlessly and in the best conditions. There were special thanks from the whole of the Board of Directors to this man, who worked tirelessly for the Syndicate, and they thanked him for his unwavering involvement and commitment for the benefit of all and at the service of all members!

In conclusion, the Chairman pointed out that although holding this meeting behind closed doors, with an electronic system of votes, was the best solution to be able to meet our Syndicate’s legal obligations, nothing could replace the warmth of physical contact, a facial expression, eye contact or different tones of voice, and that he was very much looking forward to being able to bring together the Members and Associate Members again, to be able to talk face-to-face about important topics that impact our sector, or about our present situation or any evolutions in the sector... because as he pointed out, *“it is all together, Full Members and Associate Members, that we make up Saint-Charles International; and it is through discussion and contact, that we provide each other with support!”*.

On the topic of an Elective General Assembly, Denis Ginard presented the promising figures from the 4 years of this term of office, in spite of current events that had been both difficult and rather unpredictable, including the current sanitary crisis or the “Gilets Jaunes” uprising. After discussion with the Board, he confirmed that he would be honoured to put his name forward for a 3rd term of office.

The elected Bureau for the periods 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 is as follows:

Chairman:	Mr. Denis Ginard
1st Vice-Chairman:	Mr. Jean-Luc Angles
2nd Vice-Chairman:	Mr. Gérard Fabre
Treasurer:	Mr. Emmanuel Eichner
Secretary:	Mr. Yann Fourcade

The elected Board members for the periods 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 are as follows:

- Mr. Jean-Marie Alberny ALMA TRANSITAIRE
- Mr. Jean-Luc Angles ANECOOP FRANCE
- Mr. Philippe Arroyo BUONANNO
- Mr. Stéphane Bieules CAMILOR FRANCE INTERNATIONAL
- Mr. Alain Blasco ALROPRIM / BLASCO

- Mr. Jean-Philippe Darees MARQUILLANES
- Mr. Emmanuel Eichner ALTERBIO
- Mr. Gérard Fabre TOP FRUITS
- Mr. Manuel Faus FAUS DURA
- Mr. Yann Fourcade FONTESTAD
- Mr. Arnaud Gendre PA SA GE INTERNATIONAL
- Mr. Denis Ginard PRIMSUD
- Mr. Xavier Ribes SUNCROPS
- Mr. Jean-Marie Roger PLAINE DU ROUSSILLON
- Mr. Olivier Skrock FESTIVAL

Saint-Charles International is the top European hub for marketing, transportation and logistics in the fresh fruit and vegetables sector. Based in Perpignan, in Pyrénées-Orientales, it is worth 1.95 billion euros, handles 1,768,000 metric tons of fruit and vegetables, and employs 2,200 people. Production is concentrated mainly in the Mediterranean area.

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