



## **PRESS DOSSIER**

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## 1. International Nut and Dried Fruit Council

**The International Nut and Dried Fruit Council (INC) is the world's umbrella organization representing the interests of the global nut and dried fruit industry. INC is the international source of information about nuts, dried fruits, health, nutrition, food safety, statistics, government standards and government regulations regarding trade barriers and quality standards. Its members include nearly 700 nut and dried fruit sector companies from over 70 countries.**

Founded in 1983, INC aims to encourage consumption worldwide and to promote research. INC supports the whole nut and dried fruit industry in reaching its international growth objectives and provides the platform that ensures the sector remains united and focused.

INC leads strategic actions and initiatives addressed to the common interests of the industry across several pivotal areas like health and nutrition, food safety, statistics, international congresses and exhibitions, government standards and government regulations regarding trade barriers and quality standards.

Since the 90s, INC has led campaigns for the recognition of the benefits of nuts and dried fruit in human health. Moreover, INC has funded many scientific studies that prove those benefits.

Also, INC has a worldwide view of production, trade and consumption. For this reason, INC provides the most internationally relevant statistics about the sector, which are presented in the *Nutfruit* magazine, the annual book *Global Statistical Review*, the World Map of Trade Flows, and the online Database.

The Annual World Nut and Dried Fruit Congress is celebrated every May and is open to the whole nut and dried fruit industry. It is the only international gathering of food professionals, suppliers, traders and buyers dedicated to the nuts and dried fruits business. INC Congress is held every May in a different city, promoting nuts and dried fruits around the world and creating networking opportunities among all members.

### **The objectives of INC are:**

- Increasing understanding about production, processing, marketing, distribution and consumption trends in the nut and dried fruit industry.
- Increasing market access by monitoring customs duties and trade barriers and advising governments on behalf of INC membership.

- Assuring global quality standards and trading terms are within the framework of existing national and international bodies and do not inhibit trade within the industry.
- Promoting research, especially health, nutrition, education and new product development.
- Promoting international cooperation by interacting with public, private, national and international organizations that share its common goals.
- Increasing goodwill and mutual understanding of the nut and dried fruit industry by promoting international meetings in producing and consuming countries.
- Providing a single source of annual statistical information from producing and consuming countries.

## **a) Members**

INC membership is open to companies and people engaged in trade, production, distribution or consumption of nuts and dried fruits worldwide.

By 1991 there were 241 members, more than double the number of members in 1983. Ten years later there were more than 360 members, and 2012 saw the number of members climb to 600. At the present time, INC members include nearly 700 nut and dried fruit sector companies.

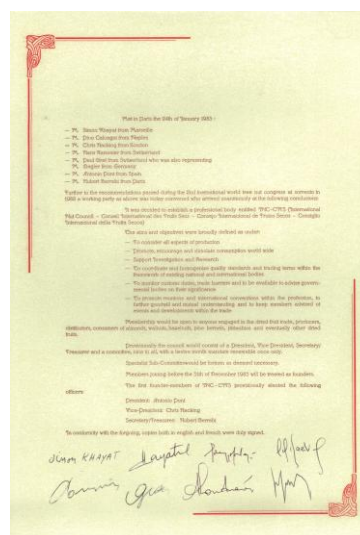
## b) History

INC was founded thirty years ago by industry entrepreneurs who were passionate about transforming and expanding the tree nut sector, while making a positive and lasting impact.

In 1980, INC celebrated the first World Tree Nut Congress in Reus, Spain. It was the first large international gathering of businessmen of this sector, with the objective of harmonizing standards and efforts in promoting and improving their professional work.

With the aim of providing continuity for these meetings and to defend and develop INC members' common interests, several representatives of world-renowned nut companies met in Paris on January 24th, 1983. This meeting resulted in the decision to formally found an association of international scope, INC - International Tree Nut Council.

In its early years (1980s), INC took a major step forward with the formation of various groups, such as the Scientific and Government Affairs Committee and the Ambassadors Committee. Furthermore, *The Cracker* magazine (current *Nutfruit* magazine), as the official voice of the industry, was launched in 1987 to spread the word about the nut and dried fruit businesses.



During the second decade (1990s), INC focused on expanding the knowledge base and gathering scientific evidence linking nut consumption to good health. INC's dream was to reverse the bad image of nuts, as they were on the "Do Not Eat" list of many doctors and nutritionists. In 1993, INC launched a successful campaign on nutrition and health research with literally hundreds of studies proving exactly the opposite.

Information is clearly the backbone of change, especially with regard to industry projections and consumer behaviour. During the third decade, much of INC's energy was centred on the creation and development of well informed industry members and consumers. As a result, the UN Program of Databases made INC the recognized international source of information on nuts and dried fruits with regard to health, nutrition, food safety, statistics, government standards and government regulations regarding trade barriers and quality standards.

Many barriers have been removed in markets that did not even exist thirty years ago, and now INC is recognized as ‘the voice of the industry,’ representing almost 700 companies and associations from more than 70 countries.

## 2. Congresses

The Annual World Nut and Dried Fruit Congress is held every May and is open to the world nut and dried fruit industry. This is the largest international gathering of food professionals, suppliers, traders and buyers dedicated to the nuts and dried fruits business.

The World Nut and Dried Fruit Congress has become the “must-attend” event for the industry, as the figures show. In recent years, an average of 800 industry leaders, professionals and academics have gathered for a stimulating three-day program to exchange and disseminate knowledge and experience in market development, supply chain, consumption, product innovation, food safety, nutrition and research.



This unique event provides the only international platform to share and debate the industry’s most relevant and hottest topics. During the Congress, hundreds of key decision-makers get together to discuss high-priority issues. This informative meeting provides a stimulating program with renowned speakers and panel discussions. It also offers the opportunity to socialize with industry peers in a relaxing atmosphere. Furthermore, the INC Awards Program serves to highlight the best of the industry.

In addition, INC annual Congress provides a cutting-edge product and technology Exhibition featuring latest trends and products.

### 3. Industry

#### World Tree Nut Production

In season 2015/16, tree nuts production achieved 3.8 million metric tons, up 5% on the previous year and **52 percent up compared with 2005/06**. Almonds were the most produced tree nut with 1.1 million MT (kernel basis), followed by cashews (738,861 MT), walnuts (712,410 MT) and pistachios (523,850 MT, inshell basis). In the last decade, almonds were the tree nut that experienced the greatest growth almost doubling its production.

#### World Dried Fruit Production

More than 2.6 million MT of dried fruits were produced in 2015/16, that is, up 2% from the previous season and 21 percent up compared to 2005/06. **Dried grapes (raisins, sultanas and currants) were the most produced dried fruits in 2015/16 with almost 1.3 million MT.**

#### World Peanut Production

**Almost 39.5 million MT of peanuts** (inshell basis) were produced in 2015/16, that is, 15 percent up compared with 2005/06.

#### World's Main Producers

USA was the world's largest tree nut producing country in season 2015/16, with almost 1.3 million MT. USA was followed by Turkey (531,180 MT), Iran (272,180 MT), China (252,990 MT) and India (187,781 MT). The United States has also been the tree nut producer with the highest growth in the last ten years, reporting an increase of 66%, and followed by China (46%) and Turkey (31%).

In 2015/16, middle-income countries (MIC) led the production of tree nuts, accounting for 51% of the total. High-income countries (HIC) were the income group with the highest consumption (56%), being almonds the most consumed tree nut.

North America was the region with the highest tree nut production, followed by Asia and Middle East. It should be noted that 86% of the tree nuts produced in 2015 in Africa were cashews, and that Europe, which only produced 8% of world tree nuts, ranked second in tree nut consumption.

USA, Turkey and Iran led the production of dried fruits in 2015/16 with 418,250 MT, 355,000 MT and 290,000 MT respectively. These three countries represented the 55% of world dried fruit production.

MIC have historically led the production of dried fruits. In 2015/16, MIC produced almost 60% of the world total, 20 percentage points more than HIC. Dried grapes were the dried fruit most demanded by MIC.

China was the main producer of peanuts with 16.7 million MT (42 percent of world production), followed by India with 4.7 million MT (12 percent) and Nigeria with 3 million MT (8 percent). Peanuts are basically produced by MIC.

## **Consumption Increased**

Total consumption of tree nuts and dried fruits has grown 59% and 22% respectively over the last ten years, being almonds and dried grapes the products with the highest increases.

In 2014, high-income countries (HIC) led the consumption of tree nuts, accounting for 56 percent of the world total. HIC increased 17 percent their tree nut consumption in only five years. It should be noted that middle-income countries (MIC) have doubled their consumption of tree nuts in the last decade.

As for dried fruits, HIC led the consumption of dried fruits, although MIC have achieved similar rates. In only ten years, MIC have increased by 47 percent the consumption of dried fruits.

MIC lead the consumption of peanuts. In 2014, MIC accounted for 91 percent of world consumption.

## **Supply Value**

Tree nuts and dried fruits reached a supply value of almost 30,000 million dollars and more than 7,000 million dollars respectively, that is, an increase of 118% and 47% since 2006.

## **World Exports**

World exports of tree nuts, peanuts and dried fruits average 2, 1.5 and 1.9 million metric tons respectively. In 2014, total exports of tree nuts, peanuts and dried fruits reached 5.7 million metric tons.



## 4. Health and Nutrition

The scale of tree nut consumption has expanded dramatically, growing as much as 250 percent since 1983, and reaching 3.4 million metric tons in 2014. Credit should be given to industry efforts and the health properties of nuts and dried fruits.

Back in 1993, Dr. Joan Sabaté, from Loma Linda's School of Public Health, and his fellow investigators reached a milestone in the history of the sector when they demonstrated the positive effects of walnut consumption on cholesterol reduction. The study "Effects of walnuts on serum lipid levels and blood pressure in normal men", published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, showed a 12.4% drop in mean serum total cholesterol when participants in the research included walnuts in their diet.



From then on, the body of scientific knowledge has continued to grow and there is ample scientific evidence demonstrating the beneficial effects of nuts on cardiovascular diseases, endothelial function, metabolic syndrome and diabetes.

As Prof. Jordi Salas-Salvadó from Rovira i Virgili University, Chairman of the INC World Forum for Nutrition Research and Dissemination outlines, "nuts have been considered important through history for their nutritional and medicinal properties. In the future, we need to study the protective effect of nuts and dried fruit on cancer."

Currently, information on the health benefits of the daily intake of nuts and dried fruits for the treatment and prevention of many diseases can be found in hundreds of dedicated and specialized journals and medical reports.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the first qualified health claim about nuts and reduced risk of heart disease in July 2003: "Scientific evidence suggests, but does not prove, that eating 1.5 ounces per day of most nuts, as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol, may reduce the risk of heart disease".

The European Food Safety Authority approved two health claims related to nuts in April 2011. EFSA concluded that walnuts contribute to the improvement of endothelium-dependent vasodilation, and consuming a handful of peanuts every day as part of a diet low in saturated fat helps achieve healthy cholesterol levels, and thereby promotes cardiovascular health.

Nevertheless, the health-cost burden from the scarcity of nuts and dried fruits in people's diet is immense. When one considers the trend data for heart diseases, diabetes and obesity prevalence, one realizes there is still much to do.

## **INC World Forum for Nutrition Research and Dissemination**

INC aims to continue to make nuts and dried fruits a prosperous industry and spread consumer confidence through scientifically demonstrable data. With this in mind, INC founded the INC World Forum for Nutrition and Research Dissemination in 2012, led by Prof. Jordi Salas-Salvadó. It is intended to become the international umbrella for scientific research on health and nutrition related to nuts and dried fruits. The Forum defines research priorities, coordinates annual calls for research and dissemination projects, and monitors health claims.

INC World Forum activities include:

- Defining research priorities in relation to nuts and dried fruits
- Annual Call for Research Projects
- Annual Call for Promotion and Dissemination Projects
- Award for Excellence in Research

## **INC Call for Research Projects**

Every year, INC launches an Annual Call for Research Projects. The aim of this grant is to promote clinical, epidemiological, basic and strategic research that may contribute to enhancing the understanding of the health effects of nuts and dried fruits consumption. This call is open to public and private institutions as well as not-for-profit organizations, and encourages cooperative research. INC specifically looks for cooperative projects that bridge different research areas, since the interaction of disciplines and research groups often leads to new knowledge and understanding of correlations.

INC has funded 900,000 Euros in research grants in three years (2013-2015), including a scientific study funded by the Global Cashew Council –which INC coordinates.

## **INC Call for Promotion and Dissemination Projects**

INC also launches an Annual Call for Promotion and Dissemination Projects. INC funds projects aimed at building consumer demand for nuts and dried fruits worldwide and increasing the use and consumption of nuts and dried fruits, whenever such projects are beyond the scope of INC, i.e. projects that INC cannot fit within its regular activity, for instance due to language or geographic challenges.

The Call is open to projects from public and private institutions, as well as not-for-profit organizations, and encourages cooperative projects involving INC associate members.

50,000 Euros were provided through the 2015 Call for Promotion and Dissemination Projects.

## **Symposia**

INC promotes scientific meetings, such as symposia and seminars, involving leading researchers in the fields of health and nutrition. By facilitating debate and discussion, these events help to further develop and disseminate knowledge about nuts and dried fruits. Participants have the opportunity to review the latest findings, explore the practical implications of new knowledge and identify new research avenues.

The last event was the 12th European Nutrition Conference in October 2015, in Berlin (Germany), where INC sponsored the symposium 'New Findings on Nuts and Health'.

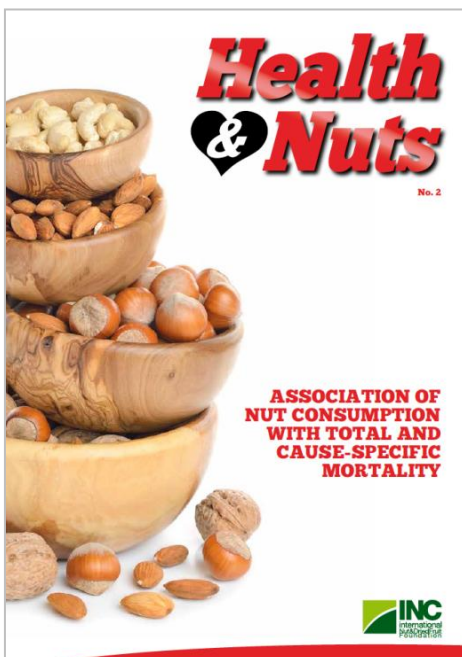
## 5. Publications



### **Nutfruit Magazine**

The *Nutfruit* magazine is the most important publication within the nuts and dried fruits sector. It features industry leaders, government officials, guest food experts and researchers who provide a global network of information about statistics, new crop information, food safety, trade issues, government regulations, new promotional campaigns, scientific findings and many other topics.

With a circulation of 2,500 copies, the *Nutfruit* magazine is addressed to nut and dried fruit production, distribution and marketing companies, professionals in the fields of agriculture, science, consumption and health, government agencies, authorities and consumers.



### **Health & Nuts**

With the *Health & Nuts* magazine, INC works to spread the facts about nuts, dried fruits, health and nutrition. Its purpose is to assist health professionals and researchers in gaining access to information and to promote research.

The first issue incorporates the scientific data and advices from the landmark study PREDIMED; issue number 2 informs about the study "Association of nut consumption with total and cause-specific mortality", both published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* in 2013.

The *Health & Nuts* magazine can be read online:

<http://www.nutfruit.org/what-we-do/publications/health-and-nuts/>

## 6. Press contact

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