

Quality and Handicraft



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www.messe-stuttgart.de/slowfood/agb

Dear Exhibitors,

Slow Food has defined features for the quality of food that are reflected in the exhibitor regulations for the Slow Food trade fair in Stuttgart. It lists in some detail the additives and manufacturing methods that are **not** permissible at the trade fair. But why, you may ask, does Slow Food reject these additives, which are otherwise in use everywhere? Why do we demand traditional, artisanal production, and what does this mean? The following explanations are intended to provide answers to these questions.

The artisanal tradition is the opposite of the so-called industrial production that predominates nowadays. Industrial production means - in brief- that goods or products are manufactured or processed with a high degree of mechanisation and automation - often based on raw materials that are produced at diverse locations and then processed at completely different locations. The products themselves are interchangeable and standardised, they are mass-produced and sold to an anonymous market. The processes involved, based on a high degree of division of labour, in part no longer require any qualified knowledge about the components and manufacturing methods. And the same applies for the consumers, whose individual wishes and requirements are likewise reduced to the act of anonymous consumption of an ever greater quantity. Unfortunately, food production has also increasingly followed this logic.

With handicraft, on the other hand, humans are the focus of attention. Artisanal production is based on human knowledge and skill regarding chemical, physical, biological and technological correlations and processes. In the case of food, it is the knowledge and skill of the craftsmen and women (as well as farmers and gardeners) that results in good food quality. According to the Slow Food philosophy, good food means sustainably grown, basic products produced in a way appropriate to the respective species - including animals - , as well as processed foods consisting of high-quality ingredients and manufactured as far as possible without technological aids and additives.

This in no way means turning one's back on innovation or further technical development. However, technology and innovation must serve the quality of real, genuine food and not vice versa. Machines that relieve back-breaking work (e.g. kneading machines for bread dough) allow more scope for creative, innovative ideas, as well as time and energy for the non-repetitive, artisanal skills in the manufacturing process, which can be handled better by humans than by machines. Slow Food therefore rejects production methods in which nature is adjusted to the machine and not vice versa.

The means and methods rejected by Slow Food can be described as economy measures that require less time, costs and/or skill. What they try to achieve - e.g. consistency, balanced acid content, ripeness, aroma, even shelf life and much more - can be achieved by means of artisanal skill and the original quality of the product ingredients. Slow Food therefore rejects industrial production methods - for the sake of variety of real taste and uniqueness, and not least because the knowledge and artisanal skill of humans then no longer has any value.

Slow Food is precisely the opposite: individuality, sociability, respect for the environment and regional conditions, and awareness of cultural influences. Instead of the global fast-food products that are available everywhere and all the time, we set store by regional specialities produced and processed using traditional or innovative artisanal skills in accordance with the seasons and climatic and geographical conditions.

We hope that you accompany us on this path and enrich our food offer with unique, high-quality products that appeal to all the human senses, thus making the world of food a much more diverse and sustainable world for all of us.

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