

Case Study on:



Ruban D'Honneur Recipient

European Business Awards 2011

The Import/ Export Award
Scelta Mushrooms BV



Scelta Mushrooms A Champion among 'Champignons'

Words from the Judges

"Scelta Mushrooms is the undisputed global leader in mushroom production and distribution."



Scelta Mushrooms is internationally recognised as a leader in developing and supplying mushroom products to the food, food service and retail industries. The company is a well-deserved recipient of the Ruban D'Honneur for the Import/Export award at the European Business Awards 2011. The accolade has been given in recognition of its impressive international export success and commitment to bringing innovative products to market.

Scelta Mushrooms was founded in 1993 by a man with a passion for quality mushrooms and a desire to grow a global business bringing the very best mushrooms to the global stage. This man was Jan Klerken who, 18 years and billions of mushrooms later, has realised his vision. The company is now leading the way in frozen mushrooms, pouches, snacks and flavourings.

"Mushrooms are our life. Every year we produce 80,000 million kilos of mushrooms which is equivalent to a third of the total Dutch mushroom production. It is our experience, innovation, quality and customer service that have ensured we are now an established and leading player in the global mushroom world!" Jan Klerken, Founder, Scelta Mushrooms

From its high-tech headquarters in Venlo, Scelta exports mushrooms all over the world. These headquarters are the company's hub for sales & marketing, innovation and support services. Known as "The Scelta Institute", the head offices provide state-of-the-art facilities for employees, partners, customers and the general public who often take part in Scelta's extensive tasting sessions.

Scelta is the world's largest player in the Individually Quick Frozen (IQF) frozen mushroom segment with a global market share of 45%. The company is also the global leader in the frozen mushroom snack segment with a market share of 45% in Europe. In English supermarkets, Scelta has a 90% presence with its breaded mushrooms. Market share in the European pizza industry is ever increasing and currently sits at 60%.

The company is continuously expanding its export volume by exploring new markets and introducing new and improved products.

Ruban D'Honneur Recipient



Recently the company began exporting to Poland and China, the two biggest competitors of the Dutch mushroom industry. China is particularly significant as it is the world's biggest producer of mushrooms yet struggles to achieve the consistent quality of Dutch mushrooms.

In each new territory, Scelta is aware of the country's cultural differences which are often based on centuries-old traditions and the population's own consumption patterns. Each exporting country receives its own tailor-made approach which is developed through close collaboration with Scelta's distributors or in-the-field sales teams.

Export currently makes up 85% of Scelta's business activity. The company has a global mindset and is continuously researching trends in major international markets. Once recognised, Scelta reacts quickly to these trends, making them reality.

In contrast, the company is also focused on its local environment and improving conditions for its national producers and partners. All of Scelta's raw ingredients are sourced locally and the company's relationships with its partners are all based on long-term goals.

Innovation is part of Scelta's DNA. It has shaped the company and taken it from a business focused solely on mushrooms to one that offers a much wider range of products. Past innovations such as **Ecobags** have become leaders in the industry. Ecobags took mushroom packaging to a new level, with Scelta turning its back on traditional canning and developing a new, flexible, sustainable and user-friendly polybag. The manufacturing process for Ecobags is more energy efficient and has significantly less waste.

In the past two years, the company has introduced many new products to the market which have been very positively received and which reflect the Scelta's new direction as a brand. One of these, **Waste2Taste** has the potential to replace the use of Monosodium Glutamate (MSG) as well as significantly reducing salt intake. In this process, waste parts of the mushroom are turned into high quality, natural and healthy mushroom concentrates and powders for use as flavour enhancers.



"There are very few organisations in the world that truly dominate the sector in which they operate; Scelta Mushrooms is one such company which has developed its business to be the undisputed global leader in mushroom production and distribution, selling billions of mushrooms across the world."

Phil Forrest, Chairman of Judges, European Business Awards 2011



Looking to the Future...

Scelta is continuously innovating and bringing new products to market. Typically it takes between three and four years to take an idea from concept to launch and the company has new products already in the pipeline to launch right through until 2015.

"Our future plans include expanding our geographical sales area and bringing new products to market. Across the world, people are starting to look at food differently, they want their food to be healthy, tasty and sustainable, Scelta Mushrooms is perfectly placed to meet these new requirements and aims to maximise its position as market leader."

Scelta has two future projects that move the company into completely different spheres. They are long-term, wide reaching and truly ground-breaking schemes that have the backing of the Dutch government, the European Commission and global organisations including the European Food Safety Authority.

Scelta Ceuticals – A breakthrough in 'Fungal' Foods

Breaking into the world of dietary supplements, Scelta is taking the healthy properties of mushrooms, in particular the almond mushroom (*Agaricus blazei murill*), and bringing them to both humans and animals in order to support the immune system and reduce the over-use of antibiotics.

Scelta Ceuticals is actively researching the preventive effects of mushrooms with the aim of bringing these unique dietary supplements to the market in 2012. Large trials are on-going as part of a joint venture with SylvanBio Europe, the world's largest mushroom spawn producers. These trials have been looking at mushroom spawn as a chicken feed material. The results have been very positive, with decreased mortality and increased food conversion of the broilers.



Kokkerelli & The Kids University for Cooking – Changing the health of the nation

Taking Scelta's expertise and the company's inherent love of food, the Kokkerelli & The Kids University for Cooking project aims to bring healthy eating, an understanding of nutrition and basic cooking skills to younger generations in a fun and interactive way. The Kids University for Cooking works on three levels; the physical platform, where kids visit the University and experience a whole range of educational and interactive activities; the virtual platform, where children can use online learning tools to develop knowledge, skills and behaviour and finally the education platform, where healthy nutrition is being introduced to the curriculum in Holland's primary schools. The schools will be supported by materials produced and developed by The Kids University for Cooking.

Kokkerelli is a brand that will sell products developed by the children at The Kids University for Cooking. At the Kokkerelli family restaurant, children will become mini-chefs to create their own dishes. The restaurant will also be used for scientific research to gain valuable insights into the eating patterns and habits of children. This project will be fully up and running by 2013.

"Our Kokkerelli & The Kids University for Cooking project has ministry backing and has already received interest from other European countries who would like to replicate the scheme. Scelta is proud to play its part in the fight against the global obesity epidemic and also to help inspire children to eat healthily and care about their food."



“Our business, since launch, has had the following goals: to grow great mushrooms, turn clients into friends, build a global network, make customers’ wishes come true and finally to have fun while making a profit. We are achieving all of these and thank the European Business Awards for acknowledging our achievements.”



Jan Klerken,
Founder, Scelta Mushrooms

About Scelta Mushrooms
Funginal foods – Fun, Functional Fungi

Founded in 1993, Scelta Mushrooms has seen unprecedented growth in the last 18 years and now exports over 80,000 million kilos of mushrooms as well as other products in its ever growing portfolio. The company’s turnover has reached €59,000,000 with a 10% sales growth and increased market share predicted for 2011. The company invests approximately 5% of its revenue in R&D per year.

Scelta supplies a wide range of processed mushroom and vegetable products to all the leading brands in the food sector. Scelta’s products find their way into pizzas, soups, sauces, ready meals and the frozen aisles of the world’s major supermarket chains. The company works with the top 25 food multinationals in the world including Heinz, Unilever and McCain to name but a few.

The privately-owned company and its production partners, who work with the company on an exclusive basis, have 200 employees in total. All of Scelta’s employees and partners are seen as the heart of the company and are supported by the unique “Dare to Share” programme, which incorporates sharing with staff, shareholders, the local community and the environment. Each of Scelta’s production facilities has different shareholders, a different name and a different area of excellence with Scelta Mushrooms holding a central role specialising in sales, marketing and innovation.

As a company that cares for the environment and the local community, social responsibility is very important. Scelta actively supports disabled people and subscribes to the 1% FairShare® campaign that gives money to fund disabled sports on a national level. Scelta supports many other causes and organisations as well as sponsoring VVV-Venlo, the local football club.

About the European Business Awards

Since 2007, the European Business Awards programme has been shining a light on the most pioneering businesses on the continent by promoting excellence, best practice and innovation in the European business community. The awards programme recognises excellence in all disciplines of business including individual business functions. Last year entrants ranged from fish farming organisations to renewable energy firms. Together they had a combined turnover greater than €766 billion Euros (6% of EU GDP) and employed over three and a half million people between them.

Businesses from each of the 28 European territories are invited to enter the Awards. The competition for finalist places is fierce with many of the Europe’s most established brands being represented.

The judging panel is comprised of experts in their fields who each bring experience, business acumen and understanding to the board. The overall winners in each of the categories will be announced at the Awards ceremony in Barcelona on 22nd November 2011.

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