

Conference to tackle concerns of food industry

The Consumer Goods Council of South Africa/Efficient Consumer Response (CGCSA/ECR) conference, scheduled to take place 31 October and 1 November 2006, will tackle various interest streams of importance to the food industry, including technology, marketing, demand, food safety and crime prevention, with addresses by key global speakers.

"Over the past seven years, the speakers and topics at the conference have been instrumental in implementing a great deal of change in the industry," says Russell Cagnacci, ECR development manager.

"We have introduced mechanisms for understanding consumer behaviour, implementing innovation that can better impact business and redefining the way in which industry works together. We have created an environment where we understand better what we can achieve together to attain results in a co-operative manner, rather than working at odds from industry silos."

The success is attested to by the dramatic increase in attendance, from 2003 three hundred delegates attended to 2005 over a thousand delegates attended. "Stakeholders are learning the benefits of working together to eradicate troublesome issues and are becoming increasingly involved - to the ultimate benefit of both the consumer and the economy," Cagnacci continues. "We are promoting an integrated environment where all role players strive for common goals to better serve the consumer."

Networking is a vital part of the conference which provides a platform for sharing ideas and experience, frequently bringing together organisations previously ignorant of each other's existence to address real issues concerning the industry. "And it's not just the major retailers and manufacturers that attend," he points out.

"Even relatively small operators are still an integral part of the industry and help to drive it. They frequently even supply to the larger retailers and manufacturers and have just as an important a role to play at the conference as the bigger players."

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