



# Press Release

12<sup>th</sup> January 2005

## What keeps food business CEOs awake at night ?

Paris, France, 12<sup>th</sup> January 2005

**CIES – The Food Business Forum**, the Paris-based independent global food business network, released today the 2005 edition of its *Top of Mind* survey. This year's edition presents the views of 308 food business executives from 65 different countries on the major issues for the year ahead.

While **retailer-supplier relations** still features as one of the top issues, **competition** now claims first place. This high score reflects the pressure felt by both retailers and manufacturers in the face of intense competition, particularly from discount stores. This competitive squeeze is also about reinforcing **customer loyalty** which retains a high position in the survey.

Another important emerging trend is **consumer health and nutrition** which has moved up the table following another year of public debate and polemic over obesity. Manufacturers have been in the front line, but retailers are also taking a closer interest as consumers and governments expect them to offer clearer guidance in the store.

While priorities vary between retailers and suppliers and from one region to another, overall the survey shows that food companies are expecting 2005 to be a **tough year** leading to further restructuring and requiring more collaboration, particularly on technical standards (ranked number 4 in the survey).

**CIES - The Food Business Forum** is the only independent global food business network. It serves the CEOs and senior management of 175 retailer and 175 supplier member companies, and their subsidiaries, in over 150 countries.

Providing a platform for knowledge-exchange, thought-leadership and networking, CIES has been growing with the food business for over 50 years. Its strength lies in the active commitment of its member companies and its privileged access to key industry players which allows the organisation to facilitate the development of common positions and tools on key strategic and practical issues affecting the food business.

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