



Press Release

CEOs see no let-up in competition in 2006

Paris , France , 19th January 2006

CIES – The Food Business Forum , the independent global food business network, today released the 2006 edition of its exclusive [Top of Mind](#) survey. This year's edition provides more valuable insights into the priorities of the food business. **299 executives from 42 countries** worldwide took part in the survey.

Companies across the sector remain preoccupied by **competition**, which like last year comes top in the overall ranking. Many retailers and manufacturers are struggling in mature markets. Discount has been the main cause of concern but stores and brands are also being squeezed by upscale operators and non-grocery sectors from foodservice to electronics.

In this climate, **retailer-supplier relations** have taken centre-stage (#2 in the survey). Price negotiations have remained tough and tensions have been increased by the expansion of private label by retailers and the entry of manufacturers into discount channels.

But while price is as important as ever, companies have found other ways to adapt their **retail offer** (#4 in the survey): innovation and differentiation have become priorities for lots of operators in order to break out of low growth in the mid-market.

Nutrition, meanwhile, has established itself as a long-term priority for the food business (#3 in the survey). For companies, the area represents both a social responsibility and a commercial opportunity to develop products and services in step with consumers' health concerns.

To mark the **10th anniversary of [Top of Mind](#)**, the new edition also offers a **10-year overview**, comparing the 2006 results with those of 2001 and 1996. The first-ever edition showed that companies were focused on supply chain efficiency and brand development. In 2006, companies are above all feeling the squeeze of greater competition and are having to address lots of different issues, from nutrition to technology, in order to keep up.

This competitive context will be explored at the 50th World Food Business Summit, June 21st-23rd 2006 in Paris. The flagship CIES event will bring together retailer and manufacturer CEOs around the theme, "**Flying HIGH in the face of competition**".

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.

If you would like to quote the [Top of Mind](#) survey in your publication, please refer to the source as "CIES – The Food Business Forum: [Top of Mind](#) 2006".

Any questions?

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