

Berlin, 31.01.2007



**GFI Panel discussion on the topic of “Price dumping”  
in Berlin’s “Red Town Hall”**

**German wholesale markets: consumer  
protection means paying fair prices for food  
Cheap fruit and vegetables – consumers are  
paying a high price**

***Towards stamping out ruinous competition and avoiding future food  
scares – what effects will the stricter regulations in the monopolies law  
have on growers, sellers and consumers?***

The Federal Government is planning to tighten up the ban on selling food below cost price. With this in mind the wholesale markets’ association, GFI, is holding a panel discussion entitled “Price dumping – its effects on growers, sellers and consumers” on 9th February 2007 from 7 to 9 p.m. in Berlin’s “Red Town Hall” (Rotes Rathaus).

The event has been timed to coincide with the major international trade fair Fruit Logistica 2007. More than 130 guests have registered for this event. As the large number of non-Germans attending shows, the topic is of considerable international interest.

The evening will commence with some words of welcome from **Katrin Lompscher**, Berlin’s senator for health, environment and consumer protection.

The participants can expect stimulating discussion on opposing viewpoints. GFI is proud that the panel will be made up of people who are well known in agricultural, wholesale, retail, political and academic circles:

- ▶ **Eckhard Engert**, Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection
- ▶ **Gerhard Schulz**, Chairman of the Federal Committee on Fruit and Vegetables of the Farmers’ Union (Deutscher Bauernverband)

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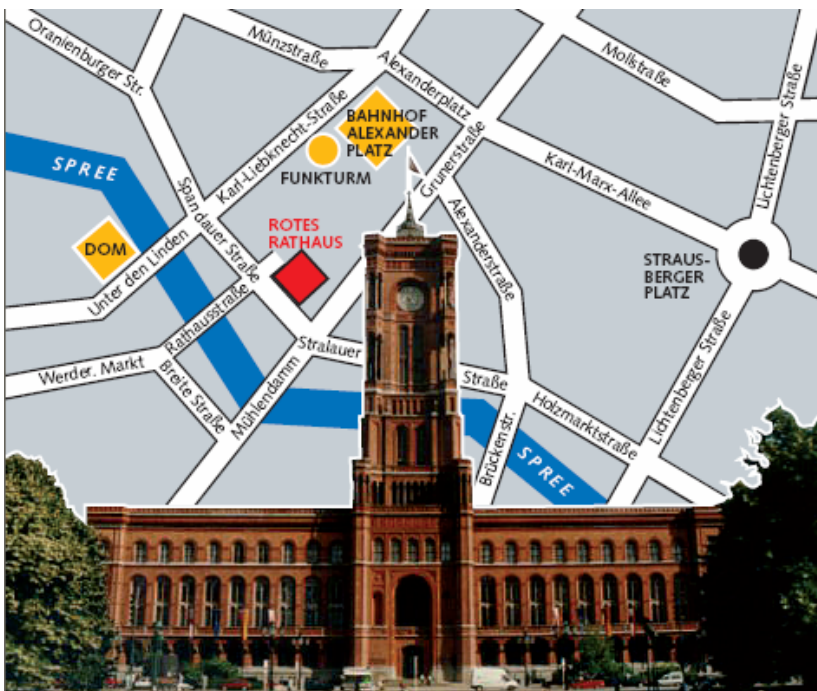
- ▶ **Otto Weihe**, Managing Partner of the fruit and salad business Weihe Früchte & Salate KG, Berlin
- ▶ **Wilfried Thal**, Federal Chairman of the Street Markets Section of the BSM (Federal Union of Showmen and Market Traders) and Vice President of the Hamburg Association of Itinerant Traders and Showmen.
- ▶ **Dr. Detlef Groß**, CEO of the national umbrella organization of retailers, Hauptverband des Deutschen Einzelhandels e.V., Berlin
- ▶ **Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Bokelmann**, Head of the Agricultural Management and Marketing Section at the Faculty of Agriculture and Horticulture of the Humboldt University Berlin
- ▶ **Dr. Carsten P. Oehrichs**, Zenk Law Offices, Hamburg; specialist for commercial and corporate law and the laws on foods, competition and brands.
- ▶ **Uwe Kluge**, Managing Director of Bremen Wholesale Market and Chairman of the Board of GFI

The moderator for the event is **Clarissa Ahlers**, business affairs correspondent and law graduate whose clients include the television channels ARD, n-tv and SAT.1.

To register for this event or for the latest information on the panel and the evening's schedule please contact: **GFI - Gemeinschaft zur Förderung der Interessen der Deutschen Großmärkte e.V.**, Board member **Mr Andreas Foidl**, Berlin office, Beusselstraße 44 N-Q, 10553 Berlin, telephone +49 (0) 30 398961-0, fax -24, e-mail [podiumsdiskussion@grossmaerkte.org](mailto:podiumsdiskussion@grossmaerkte.org), website [www.grossmaerkte.org](http://www.grossmaerkte.org)

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**Rotes Rathaus Berlin (Red Town Hall)**, Rathausstraße 15, 10871 Berlin.  
Vehicle Access:



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**Background: Germany's wholesale markets making a difference**

Represented by their association, GFI, German wholesale markets are supporting the Federal Government in efforts to take action against price dumping through new consumer or economic policies and laws. The GFI, as a professional association, was actively involved in the current process of drafting revisions to the law on monopolies (GWB). Nearly all the proposals for stricter regulations in the monopolies law were approved and have been included in the draft bill.

"Fresh action must be taken to ensure the protection of smaller food shops and street market traders and thus the preservation of small and medium business enterprises as an economic force. Often the special offer prices of the large food chains create a competitive disadvantage that threatens the very survival of the smaller enterprises," says GFI board member Andreas Foidl. "For quite some time we have noted with concern a deterioration in the range that organized food retailers offer their customers."

The variety and quality of products is disappearing because low prices are only viable where there is a limited range of standardized mass produce. The latest food scare scandals illustrate once again the dire consequences of cheap pricing strategies. "This vicious circle must be broken now," warns Foidl. "Fresh food is a matter of trust. But because food is so important it is being misused as a pricing tool."

**GFI German Wholesale Markets**

GFI German Wholesale Markets was founded in 2000 and represents the interests of Germany's 18 major wholesale markets. These fresh produce centres guarantee a wide variety of top quality fresh produce, especially fruit and vegetables. At these central, urban trading platforms around 2,600 small and medium sized wholesalers, importers and growers supply fresh produce from the region and all over the world to more than 53,000 customers in the specialist, independent food retail business such as greengrocer shops and street markets and to large-scale caterers and top restaurant chefs. Annual turnover of goods is around 7.4 million tonnes with a total value of roughly 9.8 billion euros. Germany's wholesale markets thus ensure the availability of good, nutritious food for around 100 million consumers in Germany and neighbouring European countries.