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Final Report: spoga cologne 2009, 6th to 8th September

spoga 2009: The garden fair in top form

More than 25,000 trade visitors from 89 countries — 59 percent from abroad — High visitor quality: The big decision-makers came to Cologne

In full bloom: The garden fair spoga in Cologne came to a close on Tuesday after three successful days. With 1,389 suppliers from 49 countries, spoga underlined its leading position as a global marketplace for the garden sector. On 168,000 m² of exhibition space, over 25,000 trade visitors from 89 countries were able to learn about the new products in the garden and leisure segments. "Despite the current difficult economic situation, spoga has once again presented the outdoor lifestyle sector at a high international level," said Oliver P. Kuhrt, Executive Vice President of Koelnmesse, to sum up the fair. "We were able to further improve the visitor quality, which played a major role in creating the positive atmosphere at the fair." In addition to the numerous world premieres and innovations that were presented at spoga, there was a very positive response from trade visitors to the target-group-oriented and interactive supporting programme with its special shows, workshops and events. spoga horse, which ran in parallel to spoga in Hall 4, was also able to confirm its position as the leading trade fair for equestrian sports.

From fashionable garden loungers through to high-tech sunshades: With 536 companies, the furniture sector was again very well positioned. 34 exhibitors in the Excellence hall enriched spoga with their furniture for the high-value and luxury sector. 409 companies presented their products for the leisure sector, which included the world's largest range of products from the grilling and barbecue segment. But there was also lots of action for the garden market: 583 companies were represented in the "ambience" area of the fair, including producers of decoration supplies, plants and plant care products. There were also 146 exhibitors presenting their basic garden products from the Far East in the "basic" segment.



spoga Cologne
The garden trade fair

Cologne 2009
September 6 to 8

www.spoga.com

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Positive mood among the sector associations

Germany's garden and leisure sector was satisfied with the turnover in the first seven months of the year. The Federal Association of the German Sports Goods Industry (BSI), the conceptual sponsor of spoga and spoga horse, regards the domestic sales levels so far as stable. However, there were problems with exports, which had an impact on customer contacts from abroad. Désirée Derin-Holzapfel, President of the BSI, summed up the fair on a positive note. "There was a very positive reaction from trade visitors to the numerous new products exhibited. We hope that the good atmosphere at the trade fair will have a positive effect on the development of sales in the coming season," said the BSI President. John W. Herbert, Managing Director of the Federal Association of the German DIY, Building and Garden Specialist Stores (BHB), was also pleased with spoga 2009. "Considering the current conditions, the trade fair went better than we might have originally thought. Expectations were fulfilled in every area." The products with the highest turnover in the specialist building supplies and garden trade segments during the first half of 2009 were flowers and plants. According to the BHB, this product group registered an increase of 7.5 per cent in the first six months of this year, in comparison to the same period of the previous year. The Barbecue Industry Association Grillverband (BIAG) announced that there was double-digit growth in turnover in the grilling and barbecue product segment up to July. Garden centres saw significant growth in the outdoor plant segment — particularly in the areas of shrubs and tree nursery plants. Due to the weather the German Garden Centre Association announced patchy results in other areas for the first half of the year.

Visitor survey: the big decision-makers came to Cologne

"The quality of the trade visitors was excellent; the most important decision-makers were in Cologne," was the comment frequently made at the exhibitors' stands. The visitor survey also backed up this statement. 82 per cent of those surveyed had sole or joint responsibility for making purchasing and procurement decisions at their company. Half of all visitors to spoga are members of their respective management boards. The fair's extensive spectrum of products ensured that over 70 per cent of visitors rated the product range as either good or very good. Nearly 85 per cent would recommend a visit to spoga to a close business associate. 59 per cent of the trade visitors travelled to Cologne from outside Germany.

Interactive supporting programme met with a good response

A lot of attention was given to interaction and communication in the creation of this year's supporting programme — and this concept was a big hit! The exhibitor presentations of the top ten garden furniture, barbecue, and beach and water sports products were as big a hit with the trade visitors as the Excellence special shows "Flower Power", with its attractive presentation of POS concepts, and "Chilling out in the Mediterranean Garden". Events such as the Live Barbecues also attracted large crowds of interested visitors. For those interested in the increasingly important area of contract business, the workshop "Contract potential — everything that now has to be found outdoors" offered lots of information and know-how. The new Plant Park, where growers of young plants presented their products, passed its initial test at spoga. "We've gotten off to a good start. Now we need to let these shoots grow some more," was the general feeling expressed by this segment.

The trends at spoga 2009

In the outdoor living sector "new comfort" was popular — with a modern interpretation. Manufacturers are responding to consumer demands for a sense of well-being by providing models that are comfortable without neglecting design. For example, there are chairs resembling a shell and sun loungers that are reminiscent of a wave. Modular furniture that can fulfil individual wishes is also popular. As far as colours are concerned, warm and muted colours like mocca or cappuccino are currently fashionable. Combined with bright and flashy accessories, for example in lilac, orange or green, outdoor furniture in 2010 will be a real eye-catcher in the garden or on the balcony. The issue of sustainability is increasingly the focus of attention because of greater environmental awareness among consumers. Manufacturers are also adapting to this theme by increasingly using natural materials or developing new high-tech materials, for example a plastic that can replace tropical wood. Quality is still what counts. The trend towards high-quality products continues unabated. This is also true for the grilling and barbecue product segment, where sophisticated new developments in the areas of charcoal, gas and electric products have defined the fair's themes. "The barbecue industry has not felt the effects of the economic crisis," said Kurt Schlieper, Chief Executive of the Barbecue Industry Association Grillverband (BIAG), "In particular, the range of large gas grills — fitted out like proper outdoor kitchens — has grown. Consumers are now willing to invest more in a barbecue than in the past." Alongside the large gas grills, there were also numerous barbecue hearths and

outdoor fireplaces at the trade fair, providing the romance of a campfire and at the same time reflecting the trend towards cosiness. Suppliers from the beach and water sports segments presented the further development of materials like neoprene as well as stylish game ideas for outdoor leisure enjoyment. In the “ambience” segment, appealing lifestyle accessories — ranging from large ceramic items and colourful outdoor XXL stones, right through to metal supporting shelves for the balcony — defined the scene at spoga. Leading brands in the floristry supplies and decorations segments were on hand in Cologne in this non-gafa year as well.

spoga Cologne 2009 in figures

A total of 1,389 companies from 49 countries took part in spoga in Cologne in 2009 on a gross exhibition space of 168,000 m², with 79 per cent of the exhibitors coming from abroad. By way of comparison, the fair in 2007 was attended by 1,547 companies from 56 countries, who exhibited on a gross exhibition space of 190,000 m², with 80 per cent of the exhibitors coming from abroad. This year's participants numbered 280 (2007: 318) exhibitors and 8 (7) additionally represented companies from Germany as well as 1,075 (1,170) exhibitors and 26 (52) additionally represented companies from abroad. When estimates for the last trade fair day are included, 25,350 (2007:27,561) trade visitors from 89 (100) countries, approximately 59 (60) per cent of them from abroad, came to spoga Cologne 2009.*

* All of these figures have been calculated in accordance with the guidelines of the Society for Voluntary Control of Trade Fair and Exhibition Statistics (FKM).

In 2010, spoga+gafa will be held from 5th to 7th September.

Further information is available at: www.spogagafa.com.

spoga Cologne 2009 – Voices from the sector

Stern GmbH & Co. KG, Jürgen Frank Brackmann

“We’re very satisfied. In particular, the quality of the trade visitors was good, and also the turnout at our company’s stand – especially from Germany — was encouraging.”

Münchener Boulevard Möbel GmbH, Roland Stoiber

“We took orders beginning from the very first minute of the trade fair. Our activities abroad, in particular, went extremely well. Our new material Resysta attracted a great response — especially as a result of our workshop at the stand — and was for the first time properly understood. In this respect, it was a very successful event for our company.”

WEISHÄUPL Möbelwerkstätten GmbH, Oskar F. Weishäupl

“We are extremely satisfied with the number of trade visitors from the high-quality furniture trade. Our new products were very well received by this clientele.”

LANDMANN Holding GmbH & Co. KG, Guido Kühne

“spoga 2009 was a resounding success for our company. Our main goal was to restructure the Landmann brand in the barbecue segment. That proved to be a great success. This is due to the fact that our top customers were present on all of the days, providing us with very positive feedback. We have thus definitely achieved our goal for the trade fair.”

Outdoor Chef International Ltd., Roland Stadelmann

“We are very pleased — in terms of both the quantity and, above all, the quality of the trade visitors. We have the feeling that the trade fair has become more international. The visitors from English-speaking countries, Belgium and Holland were particularly good. We’ll be back!”

Scheurich GmbH & Co. KG, Peter A. Baumann

“The trade fair went very well for our company. We’re highly satisfied. That’s because all of our important customers from Germany and many important customers from abroad – especially from the UK, France, Scandinavia and the USA — visited our stand. We’ll certainly be back next year for spoga+gafa and also again in two years to take part in spoga.”

Aqua Lung GmbH, Werner Thomaier

“We’re satisfied with how the fair went. However, the number of visitors from the sports trade could have been better. But this type of restructuring needs time. It was great to see the number of customers from abroad, whether from Europe or the Middle East. The quality of the visitors was extremely good — especially in comparison to other trade fairs. This is because the important decision-makers were present.”

German Garden Centre Association (VDG), Peter Botz

"The Plant Park was presented in a high-quality atmosphere. Some of the important exhibitors were already present, while other leading growers visited the Park during the trade fair and are looking forward with great interest to further developments in 2010. With the dates being ideally placed at the start of September to meet the international trade at spoga+gafa, we see great potential in the future for spoga to become an international centre for the plant sector."

Bellandris Gartencenter Ludwig Haubensack GmbH, Alexander Haubensack

"The range of plants was highly interesting. spoga comes at an ideal time of the year because it's here that important decisions for the coming year can be taken and where important momentum is generated. It's important to see the design and the atmosphere of the trade fair in Cologne for yourself."

Gartencenter Rostock GmbH, Sven Wittenburg

"The dates for spoga are ideal. In direct contact with the producers, it's possible to discuss the season that has just ended and at the same time plan ahead for the coming year."

Note for editorial offices:

Photos from spoga as well as the logo are available in our image database on the Internet [.http://www.spoga.com/](http://www.spoga.com/) on the Press Information pages of the Press section.

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