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# Middle East Food

## مأكولات الشرق الأوسط

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Serving the Food Processing, Ingredients, Packaging & Catering Sectors in the Middle East & North Africa - Since 1985  
تخدم قطاعات تصنيع المأكولات والمكونات والتوضيب والتموين في الشرق الأوسط وشمال أفريقيا - منذ ١٩٨٥

### A Panoply of Global Sources Helps Satisfy

MENA's Fruits Needs

(p.28)

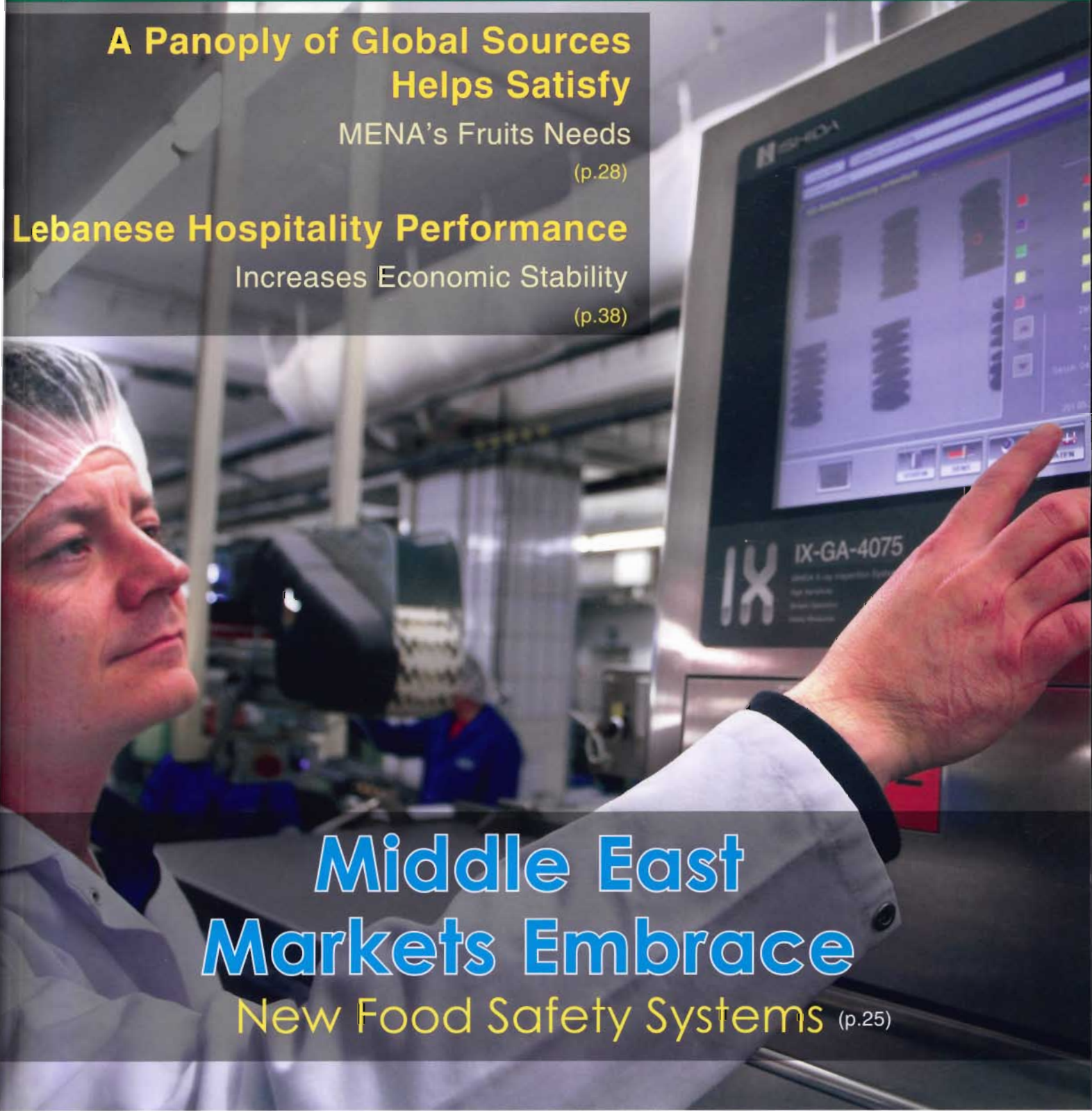
### Lebanese Hospitality Performance

Increases Economic Stability

(p.38)

## Middle East Markets Embrace

New Food Safety Systems (p.25)





## Prestigious Business Awards for SME

Exemplary corporate philosophy secures growth – once again **Stern-Wywiol Gruppe** was a finalist for the 2010 Entrepreneur of the Year award and came second in the German Entrepreneur Prize – recognition of a family-owned enterprise's innovative power and will to secure future prosperity.

A growing number of awards presented to Stern-Wywiol Gruppe shows an appreciation that the values held by Group founder and owner **Volkmar Wywiol** are key to the success of small and medium enterprises. In 2010, for the second time in a row, the Hamburg businessman was named a finalist in the Entrepreneur of the Year competition held by the accountancy company **Ernst & Young**. The Harvard Club of Germany placed the company second in the "Company Succession" category of their 2010 German Entrepreneur Prize.

Courage, imagination and leadership are the ingredients Stern-Wywiol Gruppe uses to create a climate that inspires employees to give their very best. This philosophy has been one of the reasons why the company that started as a "one-man shop" has grown over the past 30 years into a leading specialist on the world market for functional food and feed ingredients – employing more than 600 people and posting sales of over 220 million euros.

A key factor behind the success in the "Entrepreneur of the Year" contest is the Group's ability to create innovative products and services in response to rapidly changing markets. The rather unusual corporate structure of Stern-Wywiol Gruppe facilitates this process. Eleven autonomous companies based in Germany, each highly specialized, ensure that very specific industries receive a top service tailored to clients' needs. The companies within the holding company produce a wide variety of functional ingredients for food and animal feed. These include, for example, brand products such as flour improvers from **Mühlenchemie**, baking ingredients from **DeutscheBack**, stabilizing systems for dairy products, ice-cream, deli foods and processed meats from **Hydrosol**, enzymes from **SternEnzym**, vitamins and mineral premixes from **SternVitamin**, choco-



The founder of the Stern-Wywiol-Group Volkmar Wywiol (on the right) and his son Torsten Wywiol lead the company together.

late from **Herza Schokolade**, feed additives from **Berg & Schmidt** and lecithins, emulsifiers, flavorings and food supplements.

The holding company is directed by owner-founder Volkmar Wywiol and his son Torsten Wywiol. The specialist companies are headed by directors from outside the family.

Thanks to their flat hierarchies, these firms are nimble and able to pursue unconventional courses of action. The advantages of this are especially apparent in research and development, which are the cornerstones of corporate strategy. In Ahrensburg, near Hamburg, the Group has invested some 15 million euros in building a modern technology center offering a broad range of applications technology for bread and pastries, dairy products, deli foods and processed meats, enzymes, vitamins and lecithins. In 2011 this private research institution – much prized by the food industry – is to be extended by further trials facilities costing four millions euros.

"In consultation with our customers, we develop and improve foods with tailor-made functional systems. Our clients do not have such a breadth of applications technology themselves, so that makes us an interesting sounding board," says Torsten Wywiol.

More than 45 employees are engaged in research, which translates into over 10 percent of the Group's German workforce. The interdisciplinary exchange between the various

units is what gives the Group its great potential for innovation.

The Group's directors are convinced that the good qualifications and dedication of their employees are what makes it possible to launch successful innovations. Volkmar Wywiol sees the accumulated knowledge within the Group as its greatest corporate asset. To keep these skills in the enterprise, he cultivates a very special corporate style. Volkmar Wywiol says: "Innovative, passionate and future-oriented work can only happen when the whole work environment – atmosphere, architecture, art and design – is that of a "feel good company". There is a permanent return on investment in the shape of our employees' job satisfaction and, indeed, in their potential and pride in their work." The senior managers have been with the Company for many years and have helped build the individual firms from day one. The low rate of churn keeps employee skills in the enterprise, where they generate long-term benefits for customers.

Care has been taken well in advance to ensure company succession. More than ten years ago Torsten Wywiol took over the managing directorship of **Herza Schokolade**, the Group's Norderstedt affiliate. Three years ago the 44-year-old joined his father at the head of the holding company. For the steady, long-term nature of plans to ensure this transition, father and son were awarded second place by the German Entrepreneur Prize jury. ■