

Fruit Attraction last week became one of the first major international trade fairs to bring together members of the produce industry in person since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Taking place at the IFEMA event venue in the Spanish capital of Madrid from Oct. 5-7, the event drew an impressive crowd of 65,000 professional participants from 108 countries.

There were also 1,300 participating companies from 43 countries, spread out over eight pavilions of space for exhibitors covering a total of 40,500 square meters (132,874 feet).

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Speaking with Fresh Fruit Portal during the event, Fruit Attraction director Raúl Calleja said that he was hugely satisfied to be able to put on such a successful event, having had to cancel last year's in-person edition.

"We feel very satisfied by the opportunity to have finally been able to reunite with the fruit industry amid all the uncertainty that we have had," he said. "So there is a lot of emotion, and a great feeling of responsibility.

"We are also very grateful to IFEMA, all the companies of the sector and all the media for coming and being part of the Fruit Attraction family."

Calleja explained that until June, it was unclear if the event would even be able to take place, as it was largely dependant on the rate of vaccination in both Spain and Europe. Once it was clear that it could be held as an in-person event, the question then became about how many people would attend from overseas.

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Fruit Attraction director Raúl Calleja

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"Then in the two weeks before Fruit Attraction, the rate of registrations of international visitors and buyers skyrocketed," he said.

"What is clear is that an in-person, professional, B2B trade fair, provides a certain level of value and function that digital cannot."

Asked about how the event differs from other trade fairs, Calleja said: "As the organizers of the trade event we try to create an relaxed, friendly and fun atmosphere. That's why we created the message 'Smile you are at Fruit Attraction, which we put on the face masks and in all the messages around the trade fair - to create that environment in which the people feel comfortable. The atmosphere doesn't create itself, you have to create it."

Having been forced to move last year's edition fully online thanks to the incorporation of the Live Connect virtual platform, this year's event used a hybrid format so that people could participate either in person or from anywhere around the world.

"Technology and Live Connect are a complement to the value of Fruit Attraction. Why? Because nowadays technology offers us solutions that in-person events cannot," Calleja said, explaining that the platform allowed for participants to do such things as set up video calls and enjoy the educational sessions.

"Fruit Attraction is much more than a trade fair, it is a business ecosystem of supply and demand, with a 365-day platform in which we are organizing many things, such as Ecological Week, Germany Week, Tropical Fruits Week. We bring together everyone from the platform so that they are in permanent contact.

The 2022 edition will take place from Oct. 4-6.

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Please find Fresh Fruit Portal's photos from each day of this year's event:

[Fruit Attraction in photos: Day one](#)

[Fruit Attraction in photos: Day two](#)

[Fruit Attraction in photos: Day three](#)