

BUY GEORGIAN

The 1-st International Business Forum

TBILISI, OCTOBER 10, 2017, HOTELS & PREFERENCE HUALING TBILISI

"Buy Georgian" – the 1st International Business Forum

"Buy Georgian" – the 1st International Business Forum will be arranged at "Hotels & Preference Hualing Tbilisi" on October 10, 2017.

The forum – "Buy Georgian" will gather producers, retail & wholesale trading centers / networks / shops, hotels, restaurants, cafes, distributors, logistical centers, wholesale markets, transport / courier / postal companies, certification service providers, exporters and buyers from abroad, Georgian diplomatic mission representatives, emigrants and Diaspora organizations, foreign embassy representatives in Georgia, foreign trade chambers, field related International organizations / projects, Georgian business associations, business media, and the representatives of the ministries and the parliament committees, about 300+ individuals in one space with the following three goals:

1. To further encourage export activities by arranging an International event, where the local producers and the exporters meet and negotiate new opportunities;
2. To kickstart the talks about the distribution, logistics and sales of the quality local products in the local retail and HORECA networks on the domestic market as well as talk about marketing and other related challenges;
3. To establish a high class annual International event, that will play a significant role in increasing the sales of the Georgian quality products on the local market as well as on the export markets;

There will be 1) speeches, 2) panel discussions, 3) product expo/degustation and 4) the B2B meetings on the "Buy Georgian" forum. The event is organized by the KAR.GE Movement, whose mission is to increase awareness, sales and exports of the quality Georgian products.

"Buy Georgian" is supported by the Georgian Producers' Federation (GPF), the Georgian Employers' Association (GEA) and the Tax Payers' Union (TPU). The World-OKTA - Overseas Korean Trade Association Tbilisi Branch and EU4Business-EBRD Credit Line are the International partners of the event. The Business Media Georgia (BM) and IMEDI FM are the media partners of the business forum. Rustavi AZOT is the general sponsor of the event.

Challenges

Export

- The exporters often lack information about the Georgian producers, the quality of their products, their prices and supply terms. They need to have a chance to meet the producers in person and see their products by their own eyes;
- The Georgian emigrants and their Diasporas lack information about the exportable Georgian quality products and their producers. We need to invite the emigrants and provide them a communication platform with the producers. We need to appeal them to start exporting quality Georgian products;
- The investors need to clearly see the specific investment opportunities in the areas of distribution, sales and marketing of the Georgian products on the domestic and International markets;
- The local producers get minimal support for participation in the International fairs and expos. There should be a better system in place to effectively support the motivated local producers to start up export activities;
- As a result of signing the FTAs with the European Union and China the doors are open to new markets, but the producers need to enter them themselves. How? There is a lack of this information within the producers;
- The new - Economic attaché component was recently activated in the embassies of Georgia abroad. How do they work? What should the producers know about their activities? This is interesting for all;

Domestic market

- The Georgian population spent up to 13 billion GEL cash on the domestic market in 2016 in Georgia, while the awareness of the Georgian population about the quality Georgian products is at a very low level. People cannot find products on the shelves of the supermarkets. No awareness results in no trust and no sales. This existing potential of the domestic market should be wisely used and we need to kickstart talks about this great unused asset;
- The prerequisites of the product entry in the retail networks often are the unsurpassed barriers for the local producers. Sometimes there are problems with timely payments of the due amounts too. Some retail networks even refuse to place the Georgian products on their shelves for no reason. What are the challenges in this area? What should the producers know about relations with the retail networks? The forum will kickstart the talks about these issues;
- The HORECA sector has a huge potential in Georgia in terms of the ability to increase the sales of the quality Georgian products, especially the quality farmer products. What kind of specific requirements do the representatives of the HORECA sector have? What should the producers know about the relations with the hotels, restaurants and cafes? The forum will kickstart the talks about this;
- The government purchases in Georgia surpassed 4 billion GEL in 2016. The significant steps should be made in order to stimulate the government institutions to buy Georgian products;
- Distribution of the Georgian products is one of the toughest challenges of the local producers. What are the specific problems? What are the requirements of the distributors and the logistical centers towards the producers and retailers? The forum will kickstart the talks about these issues;

- The courier and postal services are on a lower level of development in Georgia. One of the results is that we do not have even a single developed online store in Georgia. This is a topic of a special attention;
- The local producers need a platform to communicate with these target audiences and among themselves, but only those local producers should be represented, that are ready for the opportunities. The expo is the best “tool” for that;
- The local producers often face unfair competition practices from the importers. What are the specific laws under consideration in the parliament of Georgia? What does the competition agency plan? The forum will kickstart the talks about these issues;

Common issues

- The quality of the Georgian products, standards, certification, food safety, DCFTA and compliance to other International regulations are also important aspects to consider;

The tactics of tackling with the existing challenges

There will be 1) speeches, 2) panel discussions, 3) product expo/degustation and 4) B2B meetings on the “Buy Georgian” forum. The event will have 300+ invited participants / visitors.

- The goal of the speeches component is to describe the challenges and provide facts. This will create a ground for the interesting panel discussions;
- Each panel will be devoted to the ways of facing and overcoming a specific challenge. Once summarized, the next steps will be defined as well as the responsible person/body for it. Each panel/topic will have its moderator, who will do a follow up;
- The Expo is a mechanism for every visitor and the producer to get to know each other and pave the way of cooperation;
- The goal of the B2B component is to spark cooperation among the business people;

The speeches and the panel discussions of the event will be summarized and the reports in writing as well as the recommendations will be delivered to all the interested bodies for further follow up.

Important:

We invite the representatives of the government and parliament of Georgia to support the civic initiative (the initiator and the organizer – the KAR.GE Movement is a community organization) by attending the official part of the “Buy Georgian” forum and engaging in the panel discussions afterwards. This will further catalyze the development of the relations among the business people which we think is the main way of reaching forum goals.