

A Year in Review

2023



Director General's insight

Looking back at 2023 we cannot say that it was easy swimming, but there is ample room for a positive future outlook!



The cost of living has increased and we saw a drop in sales volume across our categories in Europe. However, despite these challenges, the sector remained very resilient and with supply chain problems easing and inflation falling, we look optimistic into the future.

On the legislative side, 2023 was a pivotal year for the savoury snacks industry which was marked by a wave of legislative changes driven by the "From Farm to Fork" initiative. These changes prioritized transparency, sustainability, and health, reshaping how snacks are produced, packaged, and marketed across the EU. The savoury snacks industry had to adapt quickly to meet these new regulations while catering to evolving consumer preferences for healthier and environmentally conscious options.

With the strong help of our members, we managed to shape and direct the policy-making process by communicating facts and figures to achieve successful outcomes in relevant policy files!

With a new European Parliament and Commission next year, we have an excellent opportunity to present our sector and educate policymakers on the industry's opportunities as well as challenges.

Enjoy reading our insights into last year's milestones and achievements.

My team and I are looking forward to working together with our members to succeed in key policy topics that are relevant to our wonderful sector.

Sebastian Emig
Director General*
European Snacks Association

*in his capacity as permanent representative of PrimeConsulting BXLBCN SL

Highlights of the year

Another eventful year for the European Snacks Association and the savoury snacks sector. This timeline looks back at last year's landmark moments.



January

Publication of the first ESA Sustainability report

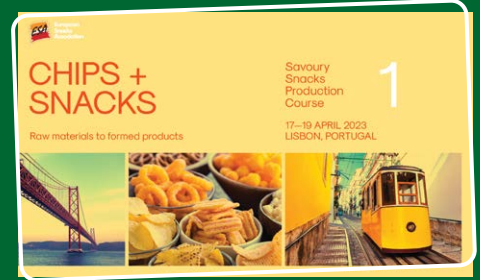
A document of reference demonstrating the savoury snacks sector's commitment to support the transition to sustainable food systems #MakingSnackingMoreSustainable



March

ESA position on the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation

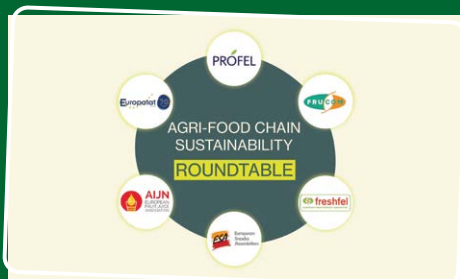
Publication of a comprehensive position including the sector's main concerns and proposals for a truly circular economy for packaging



April

Snack Production Course in Lisbon!

Part I "Chips & Snacks: Raw materials to formed products" took place in Lisbon, Portugal



April

Webinar on Sustainability labelling in retail

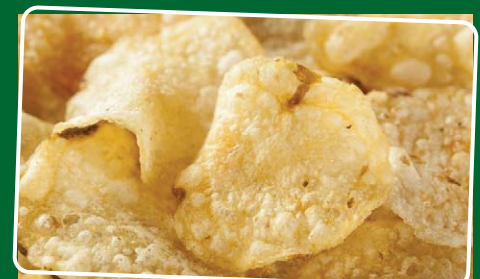
Event organised by the Agri-food chain sustainability roundtable (ESA is a founding member) to better understand retailers' approaches to sustainability labelling



May

ESA monitoring report to the EU Code of Conduct for Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices

Publication of the second ESA monitoring report highlighting the sector's contribution to building a more sustainable food system



June

Continuous monitoring of acrylamide levels in potato crisps

ESA formatted and submitted over 27,500 results for acrylamide in sliced potato crisps to the European Food Safety Agency (EFSA) as part of its annual call for data



June

8th edition of Share a Snack in Brussels

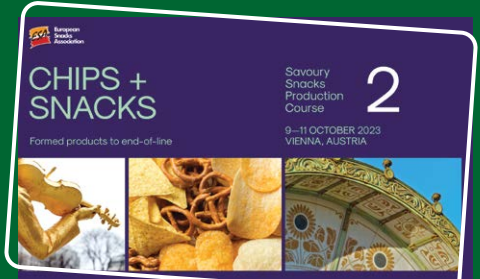
ESA's flagship event returned in Place Luxembourg with an interactive event and plenty of tasty savoury snacks for visitors to enjoy



September

ESA meeting with the European Commission on food safety

ESA organised a meeting with the European Commission to discuss the latest developments on the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF)



October

Snack Production Course in Vienna!

Part II "Chips & Snacks: Formed products to end-of-line" took place in Vienna, Austria

Working groups in a nutshell

Our dedicated committees are at the forefront of the issues to keep members abreast of regulatory and legal developments.

ECR

EC Regulatory Working Group

The EC Regulatory Working Group's (ECR) mission is to protect and promote the interests of the sector, by providing technical expertise and input to the EU policy process and communicating positions to key decision-makers.

Engaging with EU Officials remained a key priority for the ECR in 2023, particularly on the issue of food contaminants. Food safety is, and will always remain, the number one priority of the food industry. For this reason, ECR also provided space for exchanging research on food safety, best practices, and other initiatives, in a non-competitive environment.

On acrylamide whilst there were limited developments from the Commission, ESA still managed to collect and submit industry data to EFSA in preparation for regulatory discussions in 2024 (over 27,000 observations in total). Work also started in earnest on glycoalkaloids, nickel, and furan.

Lastly, ECR actively contributed to the Commission's 'Targeted stakeholder consultation' on the re-evaluation of tartaric acid-tartrates E334-337 354, and has also started engagement on food additives in gaseous form.

PAC

Public Affairs & Communications Working Group

The main task of the Public Affairs and Communications Working Group (PAC) is to shape the reputation of the industry as a responsible, credible and committed partner in the public and political debate.

In 2023, the PAC group continued its work to further highlight the sector's contribution to building more sustainable food systems. With the second monitoring report prepared for the European Commission in the context of the EU Code of Conduct for Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices, ESA demonstrated again the significant achievements of the recent years.

The successful publication and sustained promotion on ESA's communications channels of the first ESA sustainability report was an important milestone in the association's communications activities in 2023.

PAC members also continued to address the latest developments on nutrition and health issues with a focus on responsible advertising and marketing as well as on the controversial ultra-processed foods discussion.

The group also started a strategic reflection on the association's key messages and communications assets in view of the new political cycle in Brussels following the European Parliament elections and a new European Commission settling in the second half of 2024.



NPWG

Nut Processors Working Group

The Nut Processors Working Group (NPWG) brings together professionals from across the global supply chain for snack nuts and plays a key role in addressing the sector's concerns and interests.

In 2023, the NPWG continued to monitor the progress on the application of the new Regulation (EU) 2017/625 on Official Controls, exchanging experiences with the European Commission and relevant stakeholder to ensure consistent implementation along the entire agri-food chain.

Amongst the NPWG's priorities, discussion on aflatoxins at EU and Codex level remain an important activity with a high number of RASFF alerts issued during the year. NPWG continues to lobby to ensure that appropriate standards are applied, dependent on the commodity and its origins.

Lastly, NPWG has closely monitored developments on the EU-US trade dispute, asking the Commission to reach an agreement with US administration on a Global Arrangement on Sustainable Steel and Aluminium, that would avoid the automatic re-instatement of Section 232 duties and EU rebalancing measures on 1 January 2024.

SUST

Sustainability Working Group

The Sustainability Working Group's (SUST) main role is to discuss the sector's approach to environmental and sustainability issues impacting the savoury snacks sector.

Building on the work done in 2022, the SUST group continued to closely monitor developments around the proposal for a Regulation on Packaging and Packaging Waste in the European Parliament and the Council, with a view to ensure it delivers a circular economy for packaging, especially flexible plastic packaging. ESA's efforts focused on recyclability and recycled content provisions as well as advocating for the exemption of reuse targets for transport packaging in contact with food.

The group also took stock of the progress made on several files of importance to the sector, such as the proposal for a Directive on Green Claims and other proposals aiming at fostering sustainable and responsible corporate behaviour throughout global value chains. Hence, members discussed the sector's approach and likely impacts of the Directive on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence, the Regulation on deforestation-free products or the Regulation to ban products made with forced labour.



Focus on events

A programme of capacity building activities which offer outreach, education, business opportunities and networking.

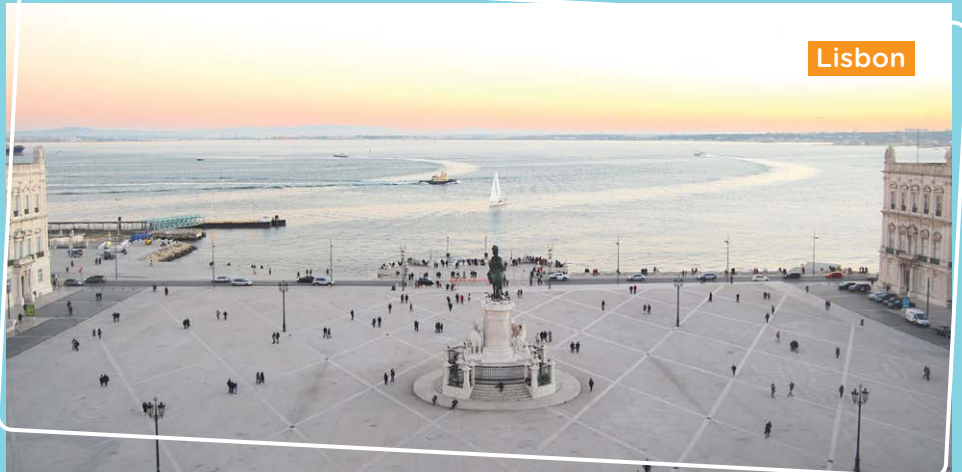
Snack Production Courses

ESA's programme of snack and nut production education courses are designed to provide delegates with a thorough, well-rounded and interactive grounding on industry best practice and the latest applications of new technology delivered from acknowledged experts.

Snack production courses are a great opportunity for all production and marketing-oriented personnel to meet, network, exchange good practices and to share their own experiences and challenges with peers and expert industry speakers.

2023 has been a particularly busy year with two courses taking place in Spring and Autumn!

In April, ESA gathered participants in Lisbon (Portugal) for a 3-days course focusing on chips and snacks (Part I) working through all the steps, from raw materials to formed products. The course successfully combined classroom lectures from leading experts in the savoury snacks industry with fun networking activities which enabled delegates to also experience the beautiful and exciting city of Lisbon as well as the Portuguese culture and lifestyle.



Lisbon

In October, delegates met in Vienna (Austria) for the second part of the course, this time focusing on formed products to end-of-line. Participants learned, amongst others, about the latest practical applications of new technology for the production of potato chips, extruded, pelleted, sheeted and baked snacks, including food safety aspects. The updated content also featured a new exciting hands-on flavour workshop where delegates got the chance to create their own delicious snacks and compete against their colleagues.



Vienna



Share a Snack

The ESA team was back in Place Luxembourg in front of the European Parliament in Brussels for the 8th edition of the iconic "Share a Snack" event.

Visitors were again invited to challenge their knowledge of the sector with a short quiz on Ipads which was taken more than 200 times during the evening, which is significant given the uncertain weather conditions! Thanks to the generosity of ESA members, they were also offered an amazing variety of savoury snacks to taste, including latest innovations in terms of new ingredients, shapes and flavours.

As in previous years, we used our Twitter channel to enhance our communications around the event with content posted in the run-up to the event, on-site activation with a new 3D hashtag "Share A Snack" to take pictures with and an aftermovie.

Who we are

Europe's only trade organisation dedicated to advancing the savoury snacks industry on behalf of member snack manufacturers and suppliers.



200

Companies
membership



40

Countries
represented



80%

European
branded savoury
snacks market

Headquartered in Brussels, we are recognised as the voice of the industry before the European decision-makers, and other key stakeholders since 1961.

ESA has a broad international membership of manufacturers and companies supplying equipment, ingredients, and services to the industry. ESA's membership groups some 200 companies of all sizes in 40 countries, and ESA members represent approximately 80% of the branded European savoury snacks market.

What we offer

A wide range of services and benefits for you and your business.



Advocacy support



Access to information



Networking opportunities



Education



Involvement in working groups



The voice of the industry in Europe

Board of Directors

Almond Board of California
Intersnack Group
Kellanova
Kerry
Importaco
Lorenz Snack-World
PepsiCo International
Rosenqvists Food Technologies
Unichips
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