



In action

Joining forces to shape a resilient,
sustainable, safe & healthy food system!

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FALL 2025 - WINTER 2026

In Foreword

**Dear WUWM Members,
Dear Partners and Friends,**

The Fall/Winter 2025-2026 edition of our newsletter reflects a year marked by strong international engagements, active operational exchanges and growing institutional recognition for wholesale markets within global food systems.

This issue opens with a retrospective on the WUWM Brussels Conference, hosted by Mabru – the Marché Matinal de Bruxelles, at the heart of Europe. The conference brought together members, partners, and public stakeholders to discuss the evolving role of wholesale markets in food security, logistics, sustainability and urban food policies. I would like to extend my warm thanks to Mabru, its Chairman Sevet Temis, its Director Laurent Nys and their teams for their excellent organisation and hospitality.

I would also like to warmly congratulate Eder Eduardo Bublitz, CEO of CEASA/PR and Chairman of FLAMA, who was named WUWM Manager of the Year 2025, in recognition of his outstanding leadership and long-standing commitment to the development of wholesale markets. I would like to commend Sello Michael Makhubela, CEO of Joburg Market, as well, who received a Special Jury Mention in the same category for his exemplary leadership and contribution to the resilience and transformation of wholesale markets.

This edition also highlights the human dimension of markets, notably through the WUWM Photography Competition, which captured the colourful everyday market life across continents.

WUWM's growing involvement in international and policy-driven initiatives is another strong theme of this newsletter. From our participation in Fruit Attraction in Madrid, to our contribution to the

Milan Urban Food Policy Pact Awards, and our role as co-chair of the European Commission Food Donation Subgroup, WUWM continues to ensure that the voice and expertise of wholesale markets are represented where decisions are shaped.

This newsletter also presents the outcomes of the WUWM Secretariat's study trip to the MENA region, offering valuable insights into wholesale market operational models, logistics and governance – particularly in the United Arab Emirates – and opening new perspectives for regional cooperation. Looking ahead, 2026 will be a key year for our network. The WUWM Tianjin Conference will be the largest gathering of WUWM members in the coming year and a major milestone for defining our shared priorities.

I invite you to explore this newsletter and remain actively engaged in WUWM's activities as we continue to strengthen the role of wholesale markets worldwide.

On behalf of the Board and the Secretariat, I wish all our members a very Happy New Year 2026 and look forward to meeting many of you in the months ahead.

With warm regards,

Stéphane Layani
WUWM Chairman



In Review

Highlights from the 2025 WUWM Brussels Conference



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The **Marché Matinal de Bruxelles - Mabru** ("Early Morning Market" in English) has existed for over a century and was relocated in 1973 from Brussels' Grand-Place to its current 15-hectare site beside the canal. Today, it remains positioned both geographically and economically at the heart of the capital's food system and is instrumental in supplying retailers, Horeca professionals, supermarkets, speciality stores, market vendors and institutional buyers from across Belgium and neighbouring countries.

Managed by an ASBL (non-profit organisation) established in 1992, Mabru's mission is to promote, develop and manage the commercial activities of Mabru, ensuring that professional buyer and seller relationships can thrive within an organised, competitive environment. Its central location near major transport links also supports efficient last-mile delivery to Brussels and beyond. Chaired by **Mr. Svekiet Temis**, and under the leadership of **Mr. Laurent Nys** as Director and his management team, Mabru continues to evolve with the market by modernising infrastructure, expanding service offerings and pursuing sustainability goals.

Mabru hosted the WUWM 2025 Brussels Conference, showcasing to the global WUWM network and to all attendees how well positioned Mabru is at

the capital of Europe, and how wholesale markets are indispensable to contemporary food systems.

Laurent Nys is now the European Director of the WUWM regional group and ambitions to advocate the importance of wholesale market structures for European countries, as well as the need for governments to continue modernising them and strengthening food distribution systems. ■

Mabru's scale:

- 40,000 m² of covered sales halls divided into five specialised zones.
- Over 100 independent merchants, including growers, wholesalers and specialised food traders covering fruits & vegetables, meat and poultry, fish and seafood, dairy and cheeses, flowers and plants, cash & carry and more.
- 8,000–10,000 tons of products traded weekly.
- More than 22,000 visitors each month.
- 900 workers on site.

These figures reflect Mabru's capacity to meet the needs of both small artisanal buyers and larger commercial operations.





In Recognition

Meet the Manager of the Year 2025: Mr. Eder Eduardo Bublitz

WUWM: Congratulations on being named Manager of the Year 2025. What does this recognition mean to you personally?

Eder Bublitz: Receiving the WUWM' Manager of the Year 2025 award is a great honor, especially as the first Brazilian to receive this distinction. This recognition is not just personal. It reflects the dedication of the entire Ceasa - Companhia de Entrepósitos e Armazéns Gerais de Paraná team, our permit holders, farmers, and partners. It's tangible proof that thoughtful management, grounded in sustainability, innovation, and healthy food supply, truly makes an impact not only locally, but globally.

Ceasa Paraná has undergone major modernisation and achieved ISO 14001 certification under your leadership. What were the key drivers behind this transformation?

The modernization of Ceasa Paraná grew out of the need to strengthen logistics efficiency, support local producers, and ensure our markets operate to high environmental management standards. We focused on integrating new technologies, improving processes, and elevating service quality. The most visible result of this commitment was achieving ISO 14001 certification, first at our Curitiba unit, making it the first in Brazil in this segment, and later, in 2025, extending it to our units in Maringá, Londrina, Cascavel, and Foz do Iguaçu across Paraná. This certification reflects our ongoing commitment to environmental responsibility and sustainable practices.

“ Promoting gender equity and strengthening workplace safety means creating an environment where diverse talents feel welcomed, respected, and motivated. This is not just an ethical issue – it’s strategic.”

Eder Eduardo Bublitz

Sustainability and social responsibility are central to your work, notably through the “Good Food Bank”. How do you see the role of wholesale markets evolving in addressing food waste and improving access to food?

Wholesale markets play a vital role in reducing food waste and strengthening food security. Initiatives like the Food Bank – Good Food were created specifically to transform surplus food into social impact, cutting losses while expanding access to quality food for vulnerable communities. This work not only addresses an urgent social challenge but also demonstrates that the wholesale sector can – and should – serve as a bridge between production, distribution, and social responsibility.



“ In Brazil and around the world, wholesale markets must continue to evolve with a strong focus on technology, sustainability, transparency, and collaboration. WUWM can serve as a catalyst for this transformation.”

Eder Eduardo Bublitz

You have also advanced gender equity and workplace safety. Why is inclusive leadership essential for resilient, future-ready markets?

A resilient, future-ready market can only exist when it values everyone who is part of it. Promoting gender equity and strengthening workplace safety means creating an environment where diverse talents feel welcomed, respected, and motivated. This is not just an ethical issue – it’s strategic. Inclusive organizations are more innovative, more adaptable to change, and better equipped to respond to the real needs of the markets and communities they serve.

What is your vision for the future of wholesale markets in Brazil and globally, and how can WUWM support this transformation?

I see wholesale markets as vital hubs for sustainable, integrated, and resilient food systems. In Brazil and around the world, they must continue to evolve with a strong focus on technology, sustainability, transparency, and collaboration. WUWM can serve as a catalyst for this transformation by promoting the exchange of best practices, fostering partnerships, and encouraging standards that balance economic efficiency with positive social and environmental impact. This global network strengthens each market’s ability to tackle shared challenges through innovative solutions.

After this international recognition, what’s next for you personally, and what ambitions do you have for wholesale markets in Brazil?

Personally, this award renews my motivation to deepen the projects already underway and to seek new partnerships that further amplify the positive impact of Ceasa Paraná and other Ceasas across Brazil. My ambition is to help position Brazilian wholesale markets as a global benchmark for sustainable management, social inclusion, and operational excellence, while continuing to build strong bridges between producers, consumers, traders, and institutions that share these values. ■

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In Celebration

WUWM Photography Competition: Capturing the awesome Life of Markets!



The WUWM Photography Competition 2025, organised alongside the WUWM Brussels Conference, captured the Life of Markets. Open to all photographers worldwide, the competition invited participants to capture everyday market life. From early morning trading scenes to expressive portraits of merchants at work, the photographs submitted offered powerful insights into the people, products and energy that define markets across continents.

This year’s competition featured two main categories: Retail Markets and Wholesale Markets, as well as a Special Jury Recognition. **The Retail Market category was won by a photograph taken at the Porto (Bolhão) Market in Portugal, titled “Funny Face” by Sérgio Bruno Brandão, a striking**

and lively portrait reflecting the human warmth, spontaneity and personality that characterise retail markets.

In the Wholesale Market category, the jury awarded first prize to Mabru – Brussels Wholesale Market (Belgium) for the photograph “The Master of Fruits” by Benjamin Brolet, a powerful image illustrating professionalism, abundance and beautiful products at the heart of wholesale market activity.



The Special Jury Recognition in the Wholesale Market category was awarded to the Sichuan Yurun International Agricultural Products Trading Center (China). The photograph “First-hand Freshness from Fields to Stalls”, by Hong Shibo, stood out for its strong visual narrative and its vivid depiction of the connection between production and market distribution.

A total of 202 photographs were received, including 80 from retail markets and 122 from wholesale markets. The submissions came from several regions around the world, Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America, illustrating the international dimension of the WUWM network. Together, they illustrated how markets, despite their local specificities, share common values of proximity, freshness, trust and human engagement. ■



In Interview

Cesare Ferrero, WUWM's board new member

With a career spanning executive leadership in infrastructure, real estate and strategic development, **Cesare Ferrero** has built a strong reputation in managing complex transformation projects and long-term investment programmes.

Since August 2016, he has served as President and CEO of Sogemi S.p.A., an infrastructure company owned by the City of Milan and operator of the Milan Agri-Food Market, one of Italy's most important fresh food wholesale hubs. The market generates an annual turnover of over €2 billion, handles around 1 million tonnes of agri-food products, and welcomes more than 30,000 professional visits every week, with approximately 2 million visitors

annually during public market activities. The site extends over 700,000 sqm and hosts more than 400 operators.

Previously, he held top management roles in major Italian and international real estate groups, including:

- Vice President and Executive Director at Prelios S.p.A. (2017-2018), with responsibility for Strategy, Business Development, Finance & Risk Management
- Country Manager and CEO Italy at BNP Paribas Real Estate (2009-2016)
- CEO of Investitori & Partner Immobiliari (2005-2009)
- Executive roles within the Fiat Group, as CEO and General Manager of IPI S.p.A. (2001-2004)
- President and CEO of Metropolis S.p.A. (now Ferservizi, Ferrovie dello Stato Group) (1998-2001).

Alongside his corporate experience, he served for over a decade as Professor of Finance and Real Estate at Bocconi University and SDA Bocconi School of Management, contributing to the academic development of future leaders.

WUWM: What strategic objectives and long-term ambitions guided your leadership from the outset, and how has this experience shaped your vision of modern wholesale markets?

Cesare Ferrero: From the outset, my ambition has been to make the Milan Market a central and strategic hub within the food industry – not only as a place of trade, but as a benchmark for innovation, quality and long-term vision across the entire supply chain.

You have managed large-scale infrastructure and investment programmes, including the Foody 2025 Urban Regeneration Project, recognised internationally for its sustainability impact. How can wholesale markets become key drivers of sustainable urban development and territorial resilience?

Wholesale markets can play a crucial role in sustainable urban development and territorial resilience by strengthening food quality control, adopting an active and transparent pricing policy, and optimising urban logistics to reduce inefficiencies and environmental impacts. In short: food sustainability, food affordability, and environmental responsibility.

How do you perceive the strategic role of WUWM at this moment for wholesale markets worldwide?

Wholesale markets can truly become key drivers of sustainable urban development and territorial resilience if WUWM assumes a strategic role similar to Airports Council International. Food markets and airports are both strategic infrastructures for a city and a region.

From a Board-level perspective, what priorities could WUWM focus on in the coming years to support investment, innovation, and best-practice sharing among its member markets worldwide?

WUWM could focus on developing coordinated pricing frameworks to ensure competitiveness, transparency, and value creation across member



markets; strengthening mechanisms to better balance production capacity with market demand; enhancing global distribution strategies, supporting innovation and the dissemination of best practices. This would reinforce WUWM's role as a true global enabler for its members.

Digital transformation and infrastructure modernisation are reshaping food supply chains. From your perspective, how can wholesale markets adapt and develop their physical assets and operating models to remain efficient and fully integrated within to the agri-food ecosystem?

Wholesale markets can respond to digital transformation by modernising both physical infrastructure and operating models to improve logistics efficiency. At the same time, leveraging technology to streamline operations can significantly reduce operating costs, strengthening competitiveness and ensuring wholesale markets remain fully integrated within the wider agri-food ecosystem.

Your work has been recognised through multiple awards for sustainability, governance, and professional excellence. In your view, what are the key success factors for long-term leadership in the wholesale market sector?

Long-term leadership in this sector is built on credibility and consistency. Authoritative leadership – grounded in deep sector knowledge and the ability to make informed, balanced decisions – is essential to guide markets through change. Equally important is the “say-do” factor: delivering on promises and building trust with stakeholders.

Finally, what personal contribution would you like to bring to the WUWM Board ?

My personal contribution would be to actively strengthen international synergies among member markets. By encouraging structured collaboration, knowledge exchange and alignment on strategic priorities, I would aim to help markets learn from each other and leverage their collective strengths. ■

“ From the outset, my ambition has been to make the Milan Market a central and strategic hub within the food industry – not only as a place of trade, but as a benchmark for innovation, quality and long-term vision across the entire supply chain.”

Cesare Ferrero



In Networking

WUWM-Mercasa Cocktail at Fruit Attraction 2025

WUWM was present at Fruit Attraction in Madrid, one of the world's leading international trade fairs for the fruit and vegetable sector. The 2025 edition once again confirmed the event's global reach, bringing together over 2,000 exhibitors from more than 50 countries and welcoming tens of thousands of professional visitors from across the fresh produce value chain. On this occasion, and at the joint invitation of **Stéphane Layani, Chairman of WUWM**, and **Jose Miñones, Chairman of Mercasa**, WUWM members and partners gathered for a WUWM-Mercasa cocktail at the Mercasa stand. The event brought together more than 90 participants, offering a convivial moment of exchange and networking in the heart of the fair. WUWM warmly thanks Mercasa for hosting this moment of dialogue and collaboration, which once again illustrated the value of international events such as Fruit Attraction in fostering cooperation and visibility for wholesale markets worldwide. ■

In Global Dialogue

WUWM at the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP) Awards 2025



The 7th edition of the **Milan Urban Food Policy Pact Awards**, a joint initiative promoted by the City of Milan and Fondazione Cariplo, with the support of the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), marked a record year in terms of participation and quality.

Every two years, mayors and officials from over 300 member cities gather at the MUFPP Global Forum to exchange knowledge and best practices on urban food policies, take part in technical workshops, network, and build strategic partnerships. In 2025, the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact celebrated its first decade of activity and, to mark the occasion, organised a new edition of its Global Forum in Milan – the city where it all began during EXPO 2015.

This edition gathered 347 practices from 173 cities, making it the most highly participated edition of the MUFPP Awards to date. Since their launch, the Milan Pact Awards have collected a total of 968 practices from signatory cities, showcasing some of the most innovative and impactful urban food policies worldwide.

Submissions in 2025 reflected truly global engagement, with 50 practices from Africa, 52 from Asia Pacific, 35 from Eurasia & South West Asia, 119 from Europe, 33 from North & Central America, and 58 from South America. WUWM was actively involved in this year's awards, with the WUWM Secretary

General serving as a member of the international Evaluation Committee of experts, specifically for the Food Supply & Distribution category. WUWM warmly congratulates **Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso)**, winner of the Food Supply & Distribution category for its project "Relaunch Urban Food Markets." This award recognises Ouagadougou's commitment to strengthening urban food distribution systems through the revitalisation of markets an approach fully aligned with WUWM's mission to promote efficient wholesale and retail market infrastructures.

WUWM also extends its warm congratulations to several of its members who were recognised among the winners and special mentions in other categories:

- **Grenoble (France)**, WUWM member, received a Special Mention in the Governance category, acknowledging its strong commitment to integrated urban food policies.

- **Mercabarna (Spain)**, closely associated with the city of Barcelona, was part of a city awarded a Special Mention in the Food Waste category, highlighting innovative approaches to food waste reduction and redistribution with their Foodback project.

These recognitions further demonstrate the leadership role played by WUWM members in advancing sustainable, equitable and resilient food systems at city level. ■





In Perspective

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Member Spotlight: Dan Carmody's insights from the PPS Conference

Last June, more than 250 people, representing 102 cities from 9 countries, descended on Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA for the **12th International Public Markets Conference** presented by **Project for Public Spaces (PPS)**. The Milwaukee Public Market served as the host of the conference. Over the course of its 20-year history it has leveraged an inspirational regeneration of the adjacent Historic Third Ward neighborhood. A great case study in how public market can be transformative.

The PPS approach to public markets is informed by its innovative work in place making. For fifty years PPS has helped bring public spaces to life by planning and designing them with the people who use them. Whether it's a public square or a public market, places where people gather and enjoy each other are critical to thwarting the rising tide of civic discord. Sixty different presenters provided great examples of the roles of retail public markets as 1) community gathering spaces, 2) supportive ecosystems for small business development, and 3) laboratories for strengthening local food systems.

The role of market is enhancing community well-being – both physical and mental health – has become a newer role that markets play as we in

modern times contend with the side effects of highly processed industrial foods. **Princess Titus**, co-founder of Appetite for Change highlighted how her organization meets the community it serves where they are. This approach might mean if the goal is to improve the diet of lower income city youth you might need to include Doritos to encourage young people to take a chance on locally grown vegetables.

Public market's role since the dawn of civilization has been as the beating heart of our cities. In historic terms there is no better example about this important aspect of markets than the miraculous work in restoring the ancient bazaars of Aleppo, Syria by the Aga Khan Cultural Trust. **Ail Esmaiel**, who is CEO of the Aga Kahn Development Network works in Aleppo, has joined a session via Zoom to describe efforts to recover from the destruction of the civil war in Syria. No small task but the resilience of the Syrian people is clear as this market, thousands of years old, surges back to life.

This conference provided wonderful opportunities for public market leaders to share best practices and remind themselves that nurturing great public markets requires building trust among stakeholders. ■

In Mission

WUWM Secretariat in the MENA region: an operational study trip

From 22 to 26 September 2025, the WUWM Secretariat conducted a study trip across the MENA region, visiting wholesale markets in Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and Oman. The mission was carried out by **Valérie Vion, WUWM Secretary General**, and **Hermine de Nantois, WUWM Policy Advisor**, with the objective of strengthening relationships with WUWM members, engaging new ones and analysing wholesale market models in a region characterised by high import dependency and strong export logistics.

Mission at a glance

- ▶ **Countries visited:** Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Oman
- ▶ **Dates:** 22–26 September 2025
- ▶ **Participants:**
 - Valérie Vion, WUWM Secretary General
 - Hermine de Nantois, WUWM Policy Advisor
- ▶ **Objectives:**
 - Reconnect with long-standing members and support new ones
 - Analyse operational, logistical and governance models of wholesale markets
 - Promote WUWM's expertise in food supply and distribution
 - Identify opportunities for regional cooperation
- ▶ **Markets visited:**
 - Alwafir Wholesale Market (Kuwait)
 - Dubai Wholesale Market (DP World)
 - Silal Wholesale Market, Muscat





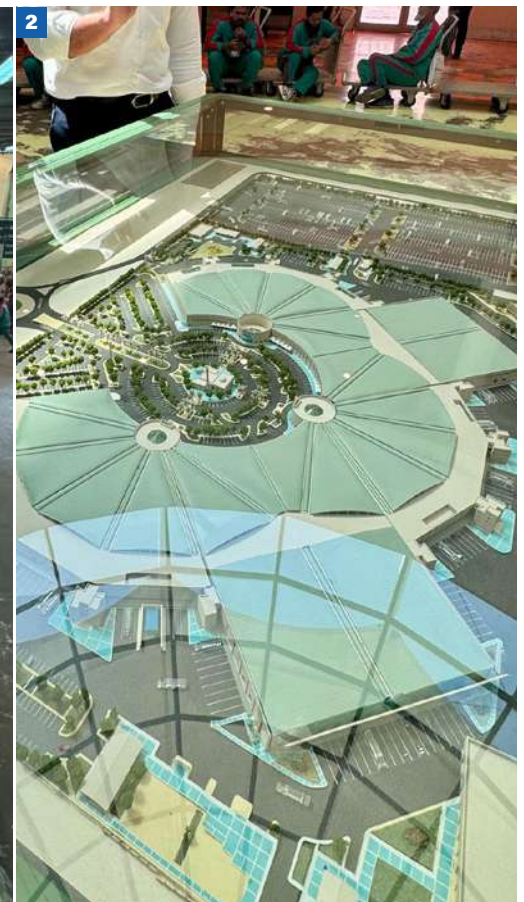
STEP 1 - Kuwait Alwafir Wholesale Market: Import-Driven Operations

The delegation met with the **President of Alwafir, Mr. Ali Alroqoba**, manager of Kuwait's wholesale market and a WUWM member for over 15 years. The visit allowed WUWM to re-establish operational dialogue after several years of limited interaction and to confirm Alwafir's interest in re-engaging in WUWM activities. A site visit and discussions with market teams highlighted a highly import-oriented model with strong night-time operations.

Key operational figures

- 250 wholesalers operating 600 shops
- 15,000 visitors per day
- 120-150 import trucks (+ 750 small ones)/day
- 300,000 m² site, including 100,000 m² of covered sales halls
- Integrated services: customs, cold storage, auction area, banking services
- Government incentives for farmers selling through the market.

1. Section 11 of the Alwafir Wholesale Market, Kuwait.
2. Model of the Alwafir Wholesale Market. 3. A fresh egg wholesaler at the Alwafir Wholesale Market.





1. Bertrand Ambroise, Director, International Business Unit Semmaris, Moderator; Chaitanya GRK Regional Director at Farrelly & Mitchell; Valérie Vion, WUWM General Secretary; Jens Michel, CEO of Abu Dhabi Food Hub. **2.** Local section of the Dubai Fruits and Vegetables Wholesale Market. **3.** Its General Manager, Ramzi Kuhail, presenting the market operations.



STEP 2 - United Arab Emirates Wholesale Markets and Policy Dialogue

In Dubai, **Valérie Vion** spoke at the **Future Food Forum 2025**, contributing a perspective on wholesale markets within global food systems. Her intervention focused on:

- The role of wholesale markets in food security and loss reduction
- Digital tools and traceability improving market efficiency
- WUWM's work on logistics, innovation and policy positioning.

The mission also included a bilateral meeting with the newly appointed **CEO of the Abu Dhabi Food Hub**, who expressed interest in WUWM expertise and future collaboration.



STEP 3 - United Arab Emirates Dubai Wholesale Market: logistics-led governance model

The Secretariat met with the **Director of the Dubai Wholesale Market**, operated by DP World, a global logistics leader. This market represents a logistics-driven governance model, where revenues are primarily generated through leases and concessions. DP World, a recent WUWM member, confirmed continued engagement within the network.

Key operational figures

- 2.3 million tonnes of fruit & vegetables per year
- 1,000 companies operating on site
- Open 24/7, with peak activity windows
- 35% of volumes exported to GCC countries
- Current size 100 ha, with expansion planned to 250 ha
- Ongoing projects to improve traffic management and logistics efficiency.



STEP 4 - Oman

Silal Market: a new generation wholesale platform

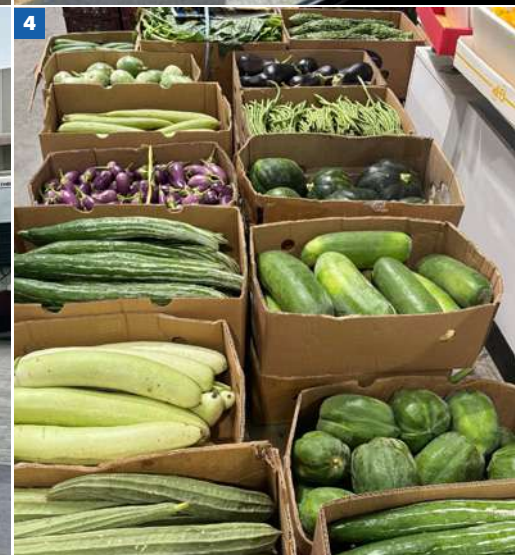
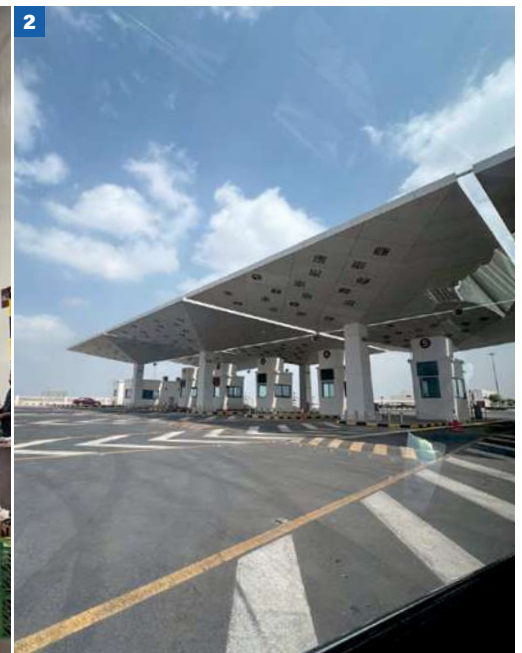
In Muscat, the delegation visited the Silal Wholesale Market, inaugurated one year ago and developed through a public-private partnership. The market positions itself as a modern, service-oriented platform with strong ambitions in digital management.

This mission confirmed that Gulf wholesale markets operate at scale, with strong logistics capabilities and a growing focus on efficiency, traceability and export. Through this operational mission, WUWM continues to strengthen its role as a platform for market professionals, supporting concrete solutions for food supply and distribution worldwide. ■

Key operational figures

- 50,000 m², stretching over 1 km
- 270 companies – 800 operational units
- Capacity of 2,500 tonnes/day (approx. 1 million tonnes/year)
- 1,000 trucks/day, with parking for 600 vehicles
- Integrated cold storage, inspection labs, service facilities
- Weekly sanitation operations and early opening from 4:00 am
- Planned deployment of a digital management and traceability platform.

1. Pavilion inside the Silal Market – Oman. 2. Toll – Entrance gate of the Silal Market 3. Logistics operator. 4. Fresh produce.



In Attendance

The WUWM Vice-Chairman at the IFPA Global Conference



The 2025 International Fresh Produce Association (IFPA) Global Produce & Floral Show took place from October 16-18, 2025, at the Anaheim Convention Center in California. The event featured nearly 1,100 exhibitors and 3,500 buyers and representatives from over 50 countries. The WUWM was represented by the **Vice Chairman, Mr. Ioannis Triantafyllis**. Below are its reflections on our strategic alignment with IFPA:



Mr Ioannis Triantafyllis: As urban populations grow – projected to reach 75% of the world by 2050 – efficient wholesale markets are vital for maintaining the "backbone" of global food security, since they are the institutions feeding the cities. On the other hand, the members of IFPA are directly involved in our markets. By aligning these entities, we can create a more stable and transparent marketplace where producers gain better prices and consumers receive fresher, safer, and more affordable products.

There are multiple synergies that can be achieved in many fields of the agri-food supply chain. That first things coming to mind are the fields of Sustainability and Supply Chain Resilience. Both organizations are committed to a carbon-neutral food sector. Joint efforts can help establish global sustainability standards and manage climate risks that threaten the entire value chain, while collaborative initiatives like the IFPA Supply Chain of the Future address vulnerabilities revealed by recent global disruptions, using technology to strengthen food systems.

WUWM is a member in lots of international fora, participating energetically. I can just mention the recent event that we co-chaired with the EU Commission's Sub-Group on Food Donation and was held on the 16th of December 2025. It is obvious that combining forces will surely allow stronger lobbying for fair international trade, science-based regulations, shared best practices and standardized data formats and public investment in market infrastructure.

In closing, it is reaffirmed that the Union remains committed to standing at the forefront of championing its members and enhancing the visibility of markets as a crucial link in the food supply chain. ■

“ As urban populations grow, efficient wholesale markets are vital for maintaining the "backbone" of global food security, since they are the institutions feeding the cities.”

Ioannis Triantafyllis





In Partnership

WUWM was a sponsor of the BDF gala dinner - Fructinale 2026

WUWM is pleased to announce its sponsorship of the 9th GFI Fructinale 2026, the gala dinner organised by BDF – the German Association of Wholesale Markets, held alongside Fruit Logistica 2026 in Berlin. BDF (former GFI) is a member of WUWM, and today 10 German wholesale markets are active members of the WUWM network. This close cooperation reflects the strong links between WUWM and the German wholesale market sector and underlines the importance of Fructinale as a key meeting point for the profession.

Fructinale is an event which bring together around 250 participants from wholesale markets, retail, production, logistics, services and public institutions.



The event offers a concrete opportunity for exchange and networking in an informal and convivial setting after a full day at the trade fair.

The 9th edition of Fructinale will take place on Thursday 5 February 2026 and will coincide with GFI's 25th anniversary. This special edition will be hosted at DEEP, a new venue located beneath the historic Böttzow Brewery in Berlin.

By sponsoring Fructinale 2026, WUWM reaffirms its commitment to supporting concrete platforms that strengthen cooperation, visibility and dialogue among wholesale markets at both European and international level. ■

In Policy Action

WUWM co-chairs the EU Commission Food Donation Subgroup: from policy to practice

WUWM continues to strengthen its role at European level by co-chairing the Food Donation Subgroup of the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste, under the European Commission (DG SANTE). The subgroup meeting held on 16 December 2025 in Brussels confirmed the importance of wholesale markets as operational hubs for food donation, connecting traders, cities and food banks. The meeting was co-chaired by **Valérie Vion, WUWM Secretary General**, alongside DG SANTE, underlining the recognition of WUWM's expertise and field experience in food supply and redistribution.

A dedicated session focused on food donation from wholesale markets, with a panel discussion and exchanges between WUWM members and stakeholders. WUWM introduced its network (202 members across 48 countries and more than 300 wholesale markets worldwide) and highlighted its role in facilitating the sharing of practical solutions between markets. Several concrete examples illustrated how wholesale markets act as key operational platforms for food recovery:

► **Mercabarna (Barcelona)** presented its integrated food donation system, co-managed with the Food Bank Foundation of Barcelona. The model combines surplus recovery, quality sorting and redistribution to NGOs, while also supporting social and labour inclusion programmes. A technical guide helps classify fruit and vegetables according to their suitability for donation.

► **Portugal (SIMAB, Lisbon)** shared how wholesale markets provide logistics, storage and infrastructure to support food banks, enabling regular redistribution of fresh produce to families across the metropolitan area.

► **Hamburg Wholesale Market** demonstrated how efficient turnover, storage and logistics keep food waste below 1%, with only non-edible products sent to composting or biogas, and edible surplus redirected to food banks or processing.

► **San Francisco Wholesale Market** showed how a shift from merchant-led to market-managed food recovery significantly increased donations and reduced waste, while lowering disposal costs and strengthening community engagement.

Discussions highlighted key operational challenges faced by markets: limited space for food bank facilities, timing of surplus delivery, logistics coordination and

engagement of traders. These exchanges confirmed that organisation, infrastructure and governance are decisive factors for successful food donation. A second key session focused on collaboration between cities and food banks, with a presentation by the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact. MUFPP underlined the strategic role of wholesale markets in implementing urban food policies, particularly in food waste reduction and food recovery. Concrete examples showed that effective collaboration depends on:

- The governance model of the wholesale market (municipal, public-private or mixed)
- The presence of dedicated coordination actors linking cities, market managers and NGOs
- Shared infrastructure and clearly defined operational responsibilities.

Since COVID-19, Milan has established a permanent food recovery hub within its wholesale market, operated by several NGOs under shared governance and supported by the municipality, illustrating how cities and markets can work together at scale.

WUWM also highlighted differences beyond Europe, notably in Asia, where wholesale markets are often managed by Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMCs) rather than municipalities, relying on close cooperation with traders' associations and NGOs. These comparisons reinforced the need for greater policy recognition of wholesale markets and their contribution to food security and donation. Through its role as co-chair, WUWM acts as a bridge between EU institutions, cities, food banks and wholesale market operators, ensuring that policy discussions are grounded in operational reality. ■

Key messages emerging from the meeting:

- Wholesale markets are efficient, structured and scalable platforms for food donation
- Better recognition by governments can improve coordination, funding and legislation
- Sharing operational models helps markets overcome common barriers.

For further informations on this subject, scan the QR code! →





19

In Cooperation

Centroabastos S.A. strengthens its leadership in South America's Agri-Food sector following a technical mission to Europe

The company Central de Abastos Bucaramanga S.A - Centroabastos (Colombia), widely recognized in South America for its sustainability model, operational innovation, and participatory governance, has consolidated its regional leadership following a technical, operational, and exploratory mission to Europe conducted during October 2025.

The delegation, led by **Chief Executive Officer Carlos Eduardo Quiroga Álvarez** and composed of members of the Board of Directors, traders, and tenant users, visited Germany, Belgium, France, Italy, and Spain with the objective of identifying advanced models of agri-food commercialization, logistics, governance, and waste valorization, in alignment with the principles promoted by the WUWM.

In Germany, the mission began on October 4, with a visit to the ANUGA Food Fair in the city of Cologne, where global trends in food innovation, sustainable packaging, and new commercialization formats were analyzed. Subsequently, on October 7, the delegation traveled to the Rhein-Hunsrück district, where an organic waste biofermentation plant specialized in electricity generation from food waste was visited. This model demonstrated how organic residues can be integrated into an energy value chain, reducing emissions and strengthening territorial energy self-sufficiency, an experience that is highly relevant to the strategic circular economy projects currently under evaluation by Centroabastos. The German schedule also included

1. Biogas unit. **2.** The delegation inside the meat pavilion of the Rungis Market, Rungis, France. **3.** Chief Executive Officer Carlos Eduardo Quiroga Alvarez, Board Members and WUWM Secretariat, Rungis, France. **4.** The delegation at ANUGA Food Fair, Cologne, Germany.

a meeting with Trier university experts, focused on exploring technical and academic cooperation for the development of initiatives related to sustainability, waste management, and knowledge transfer applied to wholesale markets.

On October 9, in Belgium, visits to local markets in Brussels helped identify best practices in product presentation, traceability, and customer experience, highlighting the value of well-organized, accessible, and customer-oriented markets.

In France, on October 12, the tour of the Rungis International Market, the world's largest wholesale market, underscored the importance of robust governance, efficient logistical planning, and effective public-private coordination to ensure urban food security.

5. The delegation visiting local markets in Brussels, Belgium.



In Italy, on October 15, the Centro Agroalimentare di Roma stood out as a benchmark for efficient logistics and distribution systems, while three days later, in Spain, the Mercado de San Miguel illustrated how traditional markets can evolve into models that integrate commerce, culture, and gastronomic experience.

These international learnings are articulated through the institutional outreach strategy of Don Abasto, a brand character conceived by Centroabastos as a platform for cultural, commercial, and innovation-driven exploration. Aligned with WUWM principles and inspired by the "Love Your Local Market" movement, Don Abasto seeks to foster a sense of belonging among market stakeholders, expand the reach of institutional messaging, strengthen the connection between traders, users, and the wider community, and communicate market modernization, sustainability, and transformation processes in an accessible manner.

As a result of this mission, Centroabastos is advancing a strategic roadmap focused on clean energy generation from organic waste, logistical modernization, and strengthened governance. The European experience reaffirms that the markets of the future not only supply food, but also integrate sustainability, innovation, and culture as core pillars of regional development. ■



In Innovation

WUWM Mission to India: Bio-methanation as a game changer for Wholesale Markets

From 19 to 24 January, the WUWM Secretariat and Dr. Yadav, WUWM board member, carried out a mission to India, with visits to Mumbai, Surat and Jaipur, in partnership with FAO and COSAMB. The mission focused on food loss and waste reduction and circular economy solutions for wholesale markets. Indian wholesale markets (APMCs) play a central role in urban food supply and generate large, concentrated volumes of organic waste. This makes them particularly suitable for on-site waste valorisation, turning an environmental challenge into an opportunity for energy production and climate mitigation.

Surat Wholesale Market: a reference model

A key highlight of the mission was the visit to the bio-methanation and Bio-CNG unit integrated within the Surat Wholesale Vegetable Market. This facility represents one of the most advanced and operational examples of circular waste management applied directly at market level. Fully integrated within the market, the plant eliminates waste transport, improves hygiene conditions and creates economic value from organic waste. It clearly demonstrates that bio-methanation can be a scalable, replicable solution for wholesale markets worldwide.

This case now serves as the basis for a WUWM technical paper aimed at supporting replication in other Indian markets and internationally, particularly in regions facing similar urban and logistical challenges. The mission confirmed that wholesale markets can act as key infrastructures for the energy transition, combining food security, waste reduction and renewable energy production in a single operational model. ■

The Surat system:

- Processes 40-50 tonnes per day of organic waste generated on site.
- Produces around 4,500 m³ of biogas per day, upgraded into Bio-CNG.
- Generates approx. 2 tonnes of Bio-CNG per day, replacing fossil natural gas.
- Achieves a reduction of over 16,000 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent per year (estimated).
- Operates on a viable economic model, with a payback period of 5-6 years, without tipping fees.

For further informations on this subject, scan the QR code! →





Inside WUWM's world

→ Two major events in
2026: save the dates!

April

→ 29-30 April 2026 | Paris - Rungis - Asnières-sur-Seine, France

WUWM members will gather in Paris and Rungis for a sequence linked to the Love Your Local Market campaign, including visits to the Rungis International Market and retail markets in Asnières, highlighting the link between wholesale and local markets.

November

→ 4-6 November 2026 | Tianjin, China

WUWM members will gather in Tianjin for the **WUWM Conference**, including the General Assembly and meetings of the regional groups, providing an opportunity for exchanges on global wholesale market developments.



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About WUWM: We aim to facilitate access to healthy diets for everyone in the world by delivering more sustainable, inclusive, and high-quality fresh food supply systems. We exchange ideas, share best practices and cooperate with our partners in international organizations, governments, businesses, and the public.

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