

PRESS RELEASE

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DISCOVERS THE TASTE OF EUROPEAN MINERAL WATERS

DATE OF RELEASE: FEBRUARY 10, 2011

PLACE: BRUSSELS

MEPs highlight role of glass as the packaging material of the future during first ever water-tasting event in EP

Over 100 European policy makers, members of the European Container Glass Federation (FEVE), consumers and other stakeholders attended on Wednesday night, 9 February 2011, the first ever water-tasting event in the European Parliament. The event, entitled 'Discover the Natural Mineral Waters of Europe', was hosted by Rovana Plumb, Filip Kaczmarek and Theodoros Skylakakis, Members of the European Parliament. Andreas Larsson, Best Sommelier of the World 2007, invited the guests to experience the diversity and differences in taste of the mineral waters.

In her opening remarks MEP Dr Rovana Plumb – Member of the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D) - highlighted the fact that the event was co-hosted by her colleagues MEPs Dr Filip Kaczmarek and Dr Theodoros Skylakakis from the Group of the European People's Party (EPP) in the European Parliament. *"Water stands for diversity and a unique European heritage that we should preserve. Not only is this natural product fundamental to our health and our life but also to our economy, our social and environmental standards."*

For MEP Dr Theodoros Skylakakis the event was not only a celebration of the mineral waters but also of the glass containers in which they have been packaged for many centuries. *"These two traditional products make a great combination. Glass is a resource efficient and sustainable material, but is also safe from a health*

perspective. This makes it the packaging material for the future, since it also has innovation potential.”

Andreas Larsson, named the world’s best sommelier in 2007 by the Association de la Sommellerie Internationale (ASI), agreed with the MEPs that glass bottles and mineral waters are a match made in heaven. *“Only glass protects the purity and delicacy of mineral waters. Water is so clean that every other packaging would affect the taste of it.”*

Guests at the event who thought water is just water, were quickly convinced of the contrary by the sommelier. *“Just like coffee or wine, water is a complex beverage. Mineral waters can be lively and energizing, others are soft and elegant on the palate. The nature of the source, the mineral composition and the pH level all influence the taste of the water. Mineral waters are a ‘terroir’ product, just like wine”,* explained Mr Andreas Larsson.

MEP Dr Filip Kaczmarek experienced the tasting as a revelation. *“It was a discovery to analyze the taste of water after listening to the sommelier. Andreas Larsson also pointed out to us that mineral waters are local products, with a strong link to the local communities. The same can be said of the glass container producers. In my home region of Poznan (Poland) for instance the glass container industry is strongly represented. It is part of our community, our heritage and our future.”*

Photos of the event can be downloaded on www.feve.org .

For more information, contact : **Michael Delle Selve**

Email: m.delleselve@feve.org

Direct line: **+32 2 536 00 82** - Mobile line: **+32 475 52 24 58**

Web address: www.feve.org

ENDS

About Member of the European Parliament Dr Rovana Plumb

Member of the European Parliament Dr Rovana PLUMB is Romanian and is a member of the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament. She is a Member of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs and Member of the Delegation to the EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee. She is further a substitute to the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI), the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, the Delegation to the EU-Moldova Parliamentary Cooperation Committee, and the Delegation to the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly. In October 2010 Dr Plumb was re-elected as the president of the Romanian Social-Democrat Party (PSD)'s Women's Organization.

About Member of the European Parliament Dr Filip Kaczmarek

Member of the European Parliament Dr Filip KACZMAREK is from the Poznan region in Poland. He is a Member of the Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats) (Member of the Bureau), a Member of the EP Committee on Development, Delegation for relations with the Pan-African Parliament, Delegation to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly. Further he is a substitute to the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development and the Delegation for relations with Israel.

About Member of Parliament Dr Theodoros Skylakakis

Dr Theodoros SKYLAKAKIS is a Member of the European Parliament from Greece. He is a Member of the Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats). Dr Skylakakis is a Member of the EP Committee on Budgetary Control, the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety and the Delegation for relations with the People's Republic of China. He is also a Substitute Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, Special Committee on the Financial, Economic and Social Crisis, Delegation for relations with Iran.

About Mr Andreas Larsson

Water and Wine Sommelier Andreas Larsson is one of only 4 persons in the world to have become both best sommelier of Europe and best sommelier of the world.

He's frequently travelling the world as a lecturer, speaker, educator and wine taster. Well known for his tasting abilities as well as his modern approach to food, wine and tasting. He's been hired as a consultant for wine competitions, airlines, magazines, restaurants, hotels and private clients.

About FEVE

FEVE is the association of European manufacturers of glass packaging containers and machine-made glass tableware. The members of FEVE produce over 20 million tonnes of glass per year. The association has some 60 corporate members belonging to approximately 20 independent corporate groups.

The Container Glass industry accounts for 60% of the total glass production in Europe spread throughout about 160 plants, including Switzerland and Turkey. The EU is the world's largest producer of container glass. The glass container industry in Europe employs 46,000 people.

FEVE members are spread across 23 European States and include global blue chip and major companies like Ardagh Packaging Europe, Owen-Illinois (O-I), Saint-Gobain Packaging - recently rebranded as Verallia working for the world's biggest consumer brands. Container glass is one of Europe's best recycled products. In 2008 the average glass recycling rate was 65% for the EU27 countries, including Norway, Switzerland and Turkey.

Some Water Brands

Some of the water brands participating in the 1st Water Tasting Event in the European Parliament on 9 February 2011 were (in alphabetical order by country): **Austria:** Gasteiner, Urleiten, Vösslauer; **Belgium:** Spa; **Bulgaria:** Bankia; **Denmark:** Iskilde; **Finland:** VEEN; **France:** Abbetille, Evian, Perrier, Vittel; **Germany:** Black Forrest, Gerolsteiner, Peterstaler; **Greece:** AYP, Ioli, Loutraki, Vikos; **Romania:** Dorna; **Italy:** Aqua Panna, Fonte Sole, Fonte Smeraldina, Galvanina, Lurisia, Norda, San Pellegrino, Valcimoliana Dolomia; **Poland:** Goldfrucht, Kinga Pieniska, Ustronianska, Wosana; **Spain:** Agua Peñaclara, Bezoya Premium, Font D'or, Fuensanta, Malavella, Montepinos, Solán de Cabras, Vichy Catalan; **Turkey:** Sorgente Uludag; **United Kingdom:** Strathmore Springs Water.

About Glass

As packaging, glass containers assure the preservation, safe delivery and attractive presentation of a vast array of consumer products, supplied to European and world markets. Whether used for drinks, food, cosmetics, perfumes or pharmaceuticals, glass plays a vital role in supporting European trade and commerce. Glass is 100 percent recyclable, virtually inert and preserves the original taste of the products it contains. Natural Mineral Waters need the protection of its container to preserve its purity and its natural aspects. A container is not just a commodity. Because health is not only in the ingredients but also in the packaging that preserves these ingredients. Glass does NOTHING to the food or drinks it contains, it alters NOTHING to the taste or minerals and salts it preserves. A glass bottle of water contains NOTHING but water!