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Global leaders gather at INC Congress to shape the future of Nuts and Dried Fruit industry

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The International Nut and Dried Fruit Council welcomed 1,520+ professionals from 73 countries to its flagship event, mid May, 2025 in Mallorca, Spain. The congress served as a global platform for sharing insights, innovation, and addressing the future of the nut and dried fruit industry.

Preliminary data discussed during the round tables indicates that global tree nut production for the 2025/26 season will remain stable at approximately 6 million metric tons (kernel basis, except pistachios in-shell), matching last season's volume. Macadamias, walnuts, and almonds are projected to grow by 9%, 6%, and 2%, respectively. Global peanut production is forecasted to rise by 2% year-on-year to approximately 51.5 million MT (in-shell basis). Global dried fruit production is projected to decline slightly to 2% to around 3.2 million MT.

Key challenges include unpredictable weather impacting crop yields, price pressures, uncertainty, and tariffs. Trends included rising consumer demand for healthy, sustainable, and affordable foods. Demand is also growing for clean labels, traceability, and eco-conscious packaging.

A milestone of the congress was the launch of the INC Sustainability Certification, presented by INC Executive Director Goretti Guasch. Designed for INC members, the certification reinforces verified sustainability efforts and enhances supply chain transparency, key factors in meeting rising consumer and retailer expectations.

Other key moments included Toni Nadal, long-time coach of tennis legend Rafa Nadal, who delivered a keynote, "Building a Champion's Mindset," focusing on resilience and growth through adversity. The Nutrition Research Seminar shared scientific evidence supporting the health benefits of nuts and dried fruits, while a panel on Contracts and Consequences addressed

legal topics for the industry.

The INC also honored excellence. Mercadona received the Corporate Golden Nut Award, Restaurant, Disfrutar was recognized for Excellence in Gastronomy, and Dr. David Baer of the USDA was awarded for Excellence in Research.

During the congress, the INC saw a transition in leadership from Mr. Michael Waring, MWT Foods, Australia to new Chairman, Mr. Ashok Krishen, ofi, Singapore. Mr. Krishen outlined his key priorities for the future, emphasizing:

"It's a privilege to be the new Chairman of the INC. Looking forward, our three key priorities are to continuously increase consumption, promote the health benefits of nuts and dried fruits and to pioneer sustainability in the sector!"

The congress concluded with a shared commitment to the growth of the industry.