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**“Tea is becoming a young people’s drink”  
Interview with tea expert Thomas M. Groemer on trends and developments**

**COTECA Hamburg, International Trade Show for the Coffee, Tea & Cocoa Business  
At the Hamburg Fair site from 4 to 6 June**

CO3, 30 March 2010

Current developments, new trends and future solutions in the markets for coffee, tea and cocoa – those are the subjects at the new COTECA Hamburg, International Trade Show for Coffee, Tea & Cocoa, to be held at the Hamburg Fair site for the first time from 4 to 6 June. Though coffee continues to dominate the German market, experts see a long-term change in the position and market presence of tea. Tea is increasingly regarded as “cool” by younger customers. The reasons for that are explained in the run-up to COTECA by Thomas M. Groemer, Managing Director of Aiya Europe, the European subsidiary of Japan’s number one organic tea producer.

*What trends and developments can be observed at the present time in the tea sector?*

Thomas M. Groemer: Internationally, there is a very clear trend on the way – tea is modern. The new impulses are coming from countries like Japan, Singapore and the US, where tea is now considered absolutely “cool”. Tea is becoming a young people’s drink.

*How is this trend expressed in the major trend cities?*

Thomas M. Groemer: In Germany, when people are out and about they are regular customers for “Coffee To Go” – whereas most tea consumption is in the home, that is 60% or 70%. In the US, there are now thousands of outlets selling Matcha Latte To Go or Matcha Frappé. Matcha is a finely milled green tea in powder form, extremely easy to prepare, so it is very suitable for restaurants and cafés. Originally, matcha was created more than 800 years ago, by Buddhist monks who used it for meditation.

*And what about Germany? Are there new developments in and around tea consumption?*

Thomas M. Groemer: Yes, definitely. People in Germany used to drink only black tea. But now green tea has become established, with a market share of about 25%. At the same time, there is a strong move towards herbal teas – closely linked with the Wellness trend. And there are also exciting developments at the top end of the market, with various companies offering special premium teas – that is becoming a key issue.

*Do men and women have the same preferences in tea?*

Thomas M. Groemer: On the whole, men and women differ in their tea preferences. Men tend to go for black tea, while women prefer green teas and herbal teas. Young women in particular are always keen to try new products. The manufacturers respond to that with new developments. That includes products such as juicy cranberry-pomegranate tea, and olive-leaf tea – a very refreshing, youthful concept.

*Does that mean tea is now a subject of fashion movements and trends in Germany, too?*

Thomas M. Groemer: Well, we certainly get individual movements coming along, with long-term and short-term trends. A long-term trend is the general striving for health and wellness, so people look for a tea that gives them additional benefits in this direction. The shorter-lived trends include the individual flavours – in the last two years those included products such as lime tea, and now cranberry.

*What are the main differences at present in the use of coffee and tea?*

Thomas M. Groemer: The tea world in Germany is comparable to the coffee world in the late 50s and 60s. At that time, people used to grind their own coffee beans and prepare their own coffee in a time-consuming process. Today you can get Coffee To Go just about anywhere, and every company has coffee vending machines or coffee makers for the staff. But changes are happening fast with tea, as well. In Frisia, for example, people used to get together for afternoon tea. Today, many people simply don't have the time for that, and there are many other ways of making tea quickly and easily – for example using teabags, or there are so many different types of tea strainer for loose tea.

*Finally, can you give us a tip on how to make the perfect cup of tea?*

Thomas M. Groemer: I can give you a really good tip for making tea from loose leaves. Use two teapots – the first pot is for the tea leaves and for the tea to brew. The tea has enough space in the pot – a tea leaf swells to a multiple of its original volume when brewing. A strainer to hold the leaves is normally not big enough for that. After brewing, pour the tea through a strainer into the second pot, and serve it from the second pot.

Thomas M. Groemer will be one of the speakers at the specialist conference at COTECA Hamburg, on the subject of "Consumer trends in the tea market". Other presentations by tea experts at the conference on Friday 4 June include "Climate change and its impact on tea growing" and "Certified tea – niche or future trend?" The international conference at COTECA Hamburg also has a section on cocoa on the same day. On Saturday 5 June, the conference subject is coffee. The trade show and conference are aimed at producers, traders and importers, and also at manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers, food companies and the operators of coffee shops and tea boutiques.

COTECA Hamburg, the International Trade Show for the Coffee, Tea & Cocoa Business, is the first trade fair in Europe to cover the entire process chains of all three hot beverage segments, coffee, tea and cocoa from the raw product through to the ready-to-drink beverage. It celebrates its premiere at the Hamburg Fair site from 4 to 6 June, and is to be held every two years. For further information, please visit the website [www.coteca-hamburg.com](http://www.coteca-hamburg.com)

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A photo of Thomas M. Groemer is available for download at [www.coteca-hamburg.com](http://www.coteca-hamburg.com) under Press