



Customers
and consumers

8. Customers and consumers

Customers and consumers are two of the driving forces for development, evolution and growth of the company. The Ebro Group uses a wide variety of tools to:

1. Offer them a broad portfolio of healthy, differentiated products.
2. Anticipate and meet their needs for consumption.
3. Guarantee top quality in its products and services, meeting not only the quality standards and requirements stipulated in law, but also any stricter standards to guarantee that top quality.
4. Watch out for their health and safety, meeting the strictest food safety standards.

OUR MAIN TOOLS

1. R&D AND INNOVATION

This is what distinguishes us from our rivals, enabling us to develop unique products and technologies to meet the needs of our customers and consumers and provide them with a differentiated range of products delivering value added.

2. QUALITY CONTROL AND FOOD SAFETY SYSTEMS

- i. **Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP):** contemplating good practices for the handling, packaging, storage and carriage of fresh products.
- ii. **Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP):** a system for identification and control of any problems that may come to light during the design and production processes.
- iii. **Quality Assurance Standards**, such as:
 - * The standards established by the International Organisation for Standardization (ISO 9001:2000, ISO 9001:2008 and ISO 22000).
 - * The International Food Standards (IFS), which, structured in line with ISO 9001:2000, are among the highest distinctions in Food Safety in all distribution sectors in Europe.
 - * The BRC (British Retail Consortium) certification, one of the internationally most widespread models for distributors and large retail outlets to rate their brand product suppliers.
 - * The standards FSSC22000, which provides a reference framework for the food safety requirements, incorporating good practices in the agricultural, manufacturing and distribution systems for HACCP.

In this context, all the Ebro Group plants have been certified for quality and food safety, having a total of 196 certifications (Annex 2).

During 2023, Arrozeiras Mundiarroz, Bertagni, Ebro Foods Netherlands, Pastificio Lucio Garofalo, Lustucru Frais, Riviana Foods and Riviana Foods Canada made regular assessments of their products with a view to reinforcing safety and improving them.

COMMITMENT TO THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF CUSTOMERS AND CONSUMERS

VALUE CREATION: R&D+I

The Ebro Foods Group has always been a pioneer in new consumer trends and an international benchmark in the research and development of products applied to the food sector. Our commitment to health and nutrition is reflected in constant R&D and innovation to forge a portfolio of products that meets the nutritional needs and requirements of society.

In this context, the Group has built its R&D+I structure around several research centres we have in France, United States, the Netherlands, Italy and Spain. These centres and the principal projects they have been working on during the year are:

1. **R&D centre in Lyon (France).** This centre focuses its research on the development of fresh pasta, gnocchi, rice, pulses and other grains. This year it expanded its work on: (i) patented technologies for pan-cooked gnocchi, (ii) improvements in the productivity and production processes of fresh pasta, (iii) additions to the product range of microwave and pan-cooked products and (iv) renovation of the range of filled fresh pasta products.
2. **R&D centre in Arcugnano (Italy).** This centre has continued its work on: (i) extending the range built on the double-filling technology patented by Bertagni, (ii) developing new dosing processes and (iii) improving productivity and control in key processes.
3. **United States.** Centre focusing on the development of new products, processes and technologies, and adapting them to the peculiarities of the US market. It has been working on: (i) a broad range of microwave products, (ii) the development and adaptation of thermal processes, (iii) studies on the shelf-life and expiry of products and (iv) testing of products and evaluation of rice varieties adapted to new production processes.
4. **Bruno (Italy). R&D centre** engaged in creating new products based on cereals and pulses.
5. **Moncada (Valencia, Spain).** This centre researches new and/or improved processes, methods and technologies in rice.
6. **San José de la Rinconada (Seville, Spain).** This centre works on two main lines: (i) technical assistance in aspects of technology for rice varieties and other cereals and (ii) development of ready-to-serve meals based on rice, pasta and pulses.
7. **Wormer (Netherlands).** This centre develops cereal- and pulse-based ingredients.

Overall, the most important projects being developed are: (i) study of parboiling processes in new rice varieties, (ii) development and implementation of industrial processes to eliminate nematodes in rice seeds, (iii) research and development of new packaging materials to replace plastics and extend the shelf-life of products and (iv) work on aromatic varieties and volatiles associated with their sensory properties.

The Group's expenditure in R&D and innovation over the year totalled EUR 4.3 million, between internal (EUR 2.5 million) and external resources (EUR 1.8 million).

R&D and innovation investments during the year totalled EUR 37.6 million, mostly corresponding to: (i) expansion of the microwave product plant in the United States, (ii) completion of complex processes at the San José de la Rinconada plant and (ii) new filled fresh pasta and gnocchi processes in France, Italy and Canada.

PRODUCT IMPROVEMENTS

In order to maintain and boost the sensory properties of our products and guarantee their optimum quality and nutritional composition, all the Group companies regularly assess the health and safety of their product portfolios, covering all stages of production, from the strict quality controls made on the raw material when it reaches our plants to how we develop, manufacture and design the products to be offered to consumers at sales outlets.

These assessments can lead to product improvements, or not, if the product has already reached excellence in the process.

In this context, the companies that made improvements to their portfolios in 2023 after their respective assessments are reflected in the following table.

COMPANY	CATEGORIES/PRODUCTS	% IMPROVED PRODUCTS
Arrozeiras Mundiarroz	Noodles	100%
Bertagni	Filled Pasta	100%
Ebro Foods Netherlands	Organic	41.18%
Lustucru Frais	Simple Pasta	4.76%
Pastificio Lucio Garofalo	Dry Pasta	8.08%
	Gluten free pasta	100%
Riviana Foods	Carolina Ready to Serve Pouches	20%
	Mahatma Ready to Serve Pouches	10%
	Minute Ready to Serve Cups	14.29%
	Success Boil in Bag	81.82%
Riviana Foods Canada	Instant Rice	20%
	Ready to Heat Pouches	14.29%
	Ready to Serve Cups	28.57%

INNOVATION

Every year the Group launches new products and concepts that anticipate and satisfy the needs of our customers and consumers, while at the same time boosting the categories in which they operate.

No. of product innovations per company during 2023

COMPANY	COUNTRY	NEW LAUNCHES
Arrozeiras Mundiarroz	Portugal	1
Ebro India	India	10
Herba Ricemills	Spain	3
Ebro Foods Netherlands	Netherlands	13
Lustucru Premium Groupe	France	18
Pastificio Lucio Garofalo	Italy	6
Riso Scotti	Italy	13
Riviana Foods Canada Corporation	Canada	3
Riviana Foods	USA	11
Tilda	UK	11
Total new launches		89

Evolution of product innovations 2021-2023

During the period 2021-2023, the Group launched 221 new products on the market.

COMPANY	COUNTRY	NEW LAUNCHES
Arrozeiras Mundiarroz	Portugal	5
Ebro Foods Belgium	Belgium	13
Ebro India	India	13
Herba Ricemills	Spain	10
Ebro Foods Netherlands	Netherlands	18
Lustucru Premium Groupe	France	41
Pastificio Lucio Garofalo	Italy	10
Riceland	Hungary	11
Riso Scotti	Italy	41
Riviana Foods Canada Corporation	Canada	6
Riviana Foods USA	USA	25
Tilda	UK	28
Total new launches		221

Weight of innovations in the business

COMPANY	% SALES NEW LAUNCHES / TOTAL SALES OF EACH COMPANY
Arrozeiras Mundiarroz	7.76%
Ebro Foods Belgium	15.34%
Ebro India	2.57%
Herba Ricemills	7.12%
Ebro Foods Netherlands	7.74%
Lustucru Premium Groupe	11.57%
Pastificio Lucio Garofalo	1.08%
Riceland	4.08%
Riso Scotti	12.39%
Riviana Foods Canada Corporation	4.58%
Riviana Foods	2.19%
Tilda	11.76%

PROMOTION OF HEALTHY DIET AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

According to the classification established by the World Health Organisation (WHO), our core businesses -rice and pasta- are on the bottom level of the food pyramid, which determines the position and frequency of consumption of foods recommended for daily consumption, which form the basis of the Mediterranean diet.

In this regard, practically all of our products are rice and pasta, which are natural foods, free from cholesterol and saturated fats, with no added sugar or additives. A small portion of our portfolio is made up of fresh pastas and sauces ready to serve, which, as mentioned earlier, undergo constant assessment with a view to improving their nutritional composition.

Within our undertaking to encourage and promote healthy eating, all the brands of the Ebro Group include product categories targeting health, such as ancient grains (quinoa, bulgur, etc.), gluten free, organic, whole grain, etc., focusing increasingly on everything to do with healthy, organic and natural foods.

This is reinforced through the Ebro Group's blog Sentirsebiensenota.com (.es) [lit.: 'when you feel good, it shows'], an informative space in which nutritionists, researchers and professionals of the sector post articles, recipes and advice promoting healthy eating habits and maintaining an active lifestyle. Our Instagram channel follows the same line. The **number of publications** in both networks during 2023 was **226**.

PRODUCT AND SERVICE LABELLING

All Group companies comply with the national laws and regulations applicable in each country. Some of them also volunteer the following information:

Contents, especially regarding substances that could have an environmental or social impact

COMPANY	% PRODUCTS
Ebro Frost Germany	100%
Ebro Frost UK	100%
Ebro India	100%
Herba Bangkok	50%
Herba Cambodia	50%

Elimination/recycling of the product

COMPANY	% PRODUCTS
Bertagni	100%
Ebro India	100%
Euryza	100%
Geovita	100%
Herba Bangkok	50%
Herba Cambodia	50%
Herba Ricemills	100%
Lustucru Frais	100%
Pastificio Lucio Garofalo	100%
Riviana Foods	100%
Tilda	100%

Source of components in the product

COMPANY	% PRODUCTS
Arrozeiras Mundiarroz	100%
Bertagni	55%
Ebro Frost Germany	100%
Ebro Frost UK	100%
Ebro India	100%
Geovita	25%
Harinas Santa Rita	10%
Herba Bangkok	100%
Herba Cambodia	100%
Herba Ricemills	36.39%
Indo European	100%
La Loma Alimentos	100%
Lustucru Frais	70%
Mundi Riz	100%
Neofarms	100%
Pastificio Lucio Garofalo	50%
Riviana Foods	100%
S&B Herba Foods	100%
Tilda	100%

% PRODUCTION OUTSOURCED

The following table shows the percentage of production volume manufactured at certified sites by an independent third party according to internationally recognised food safety standards:

COMPANY	PRODUCT MANUFACTURED	COUNTRY	% OF MANUFACTURING
Arrozeiras Mundiarroz	Noodles	Hungary	100%
	Ready to Serve	Spain	100%
Bertagni	Filled Gnocchi	Italy	0.07%
	Filled pasta	Italy	0.4%
	Gluten-free pasta	Italy	0.17%
	Gnocchi	Italy	2.48%
	Lasagne sheets	Italy	0.77%
	Sauces	Italy	0.04%
	Short flat pasta	Italy	0.31%
Ebro Foods Belgium	Trading Boss Canned Rice Pudding	Belgium	0.21%
	Trading Bosto Grains	Netherlands	0.8%
	Trading Bosto Minute Rice	Spain	0.17%
	Trading Bosto Sauce	Belgium	0.06%
	Trading Bosto Toast	Czech Republic	0.05%
	Trading Bosto Toast	Belgium	0.09%
	Trading Malva	Italy	0.01%
	Trading Tilda Doypack	Spain	0.02%
	Trading Tilda rice	UK	0.37%
	Trading Tilda Sauce	India	0.01%
Ebro Foods Netherlands	Rice and herb mix	Netherlands	0.02%
Ebro India	Basmati rice	India	3%
Ebro Ingredients	OryzaMIX RSS	Netherlands	100%
	PisumTEX YP (BIO)	Germany	100%
Geovita	Shinode 10 kg	Italy	35%
	Shinode 20 kg	Italy	85%
Herba Ricemills	Lassie doypack toverrijst 6 x 250 g	France	100%
	Lassie doypack zilervlies 6 x 250 g	France	100%
	Reis fit express basmati 6x250 gr.	France	88.44%
	Reis fit express parboiled 6x250 gr.	France	87.6%
	Reis fit natur reis 6x250 gr	France	80.41%
	Tilda pure basmati 6x250 gr.155 cj-ue	France	18.17%
La Loma Alimentos	Parboiled rice	France	100%
Lustucru Frais	Luigi & Fratelli filled and plain fresh pasta	Italy	100%
	Luigi & Fratelli gnocchi	Italy	100%
	Luigi & Fratelli lasagne	Italy	100%
	Luigi & Fratelli sauces	Italy	100%
	Lustucru chips	Netherlands	100%
	Lustucru lasagne	Italy	100%
	Lustucru organic tagliatelle	Italy	100%

COMPANY	PRODUCT MANUFACTURED	COUNTRY	% OF MANUFACTURING
Mundi Riso	Black rice	Italy	0.03%
	Black rice	Italy	0.2%
	Broken rice	Belgium	0.8%
	White rice	Spain	2.31%
	White rice	Belgium	0.54%
	Parboiled rice	Italy	2.8%
	Parboiled rice	Italy	0.23%
	Parboiled rice	Italy	9.92%
Neofarms	Parboiled rice	Argentina	100%
Pastificio Lucio Garofalo	Preserved tomato	Italy	100%
	Cous cous	Italy	100%
	Dry pasta	Italy	100%
	Dry pasta	Italy	100%
	Dry pasta	Italy	100%
	Extra virgin olive oil	Italy	100%
	Fresh pasta	Italy	100%
	Gluten-free pasta	Italy	100%
	Gluten-free pasta	Italy	100%
	Potato balls	Italy	100%
	Filled pasta	Italy	100%
	Filled pasta	Italy	100%
	Filled pasta	Italy	100%
Riviana Foods	Basmati instant	USA	0.03%
	Basmati rice (Mahatma, Carolina and Tilda)	India	0.61%
	Calrose rice	USA	0.77%
	Cups, Pouches, Basmati, bulk items...	Spain	3.21%
	Flour	USA	0.29%
	Jasmine Rice	Thailand	8.51%
	Mahatma 20 LG in Florida	USA	0.57%
	Mahatma organics	Argentina	0.16%
	RTS pouches (Tilda basmati)	UK	0.02%
SUP Mixes	USA	0.63%	
S&B Herba Foods	Indian Pusa	UK	0.05%
	Indian Pusa Basmati	UK	1.14%
	Long Grain Rice	UK	0.09%
	Parboiled Basmati	UK	0.05%
	Parboiled Long Grain	UK	5.24%
	Parboiled Long Grain rice	UK	0.05%
	Phoenix Sushi Rice	UK	0.06%
Tilda	Frozen Rice	UK	4.24%
	Ready to heat, pre-cooked ambient rice	UK	2.18%
	Ready-to-Heat, Pre-cooked Ambient Rice	Spain	0.49%
	Rice Milk	Italy	0.18%
	Risotto Rice	Italy	0.15%

CUSTOMER AND CONSUMER SERVICES

Information on the nutritional properties of all Ebro Group products is provided on the packaging, along with the physical address of the company and, where appropriate, its website, e-mail and contact telephone number.

The different customer services departments collect information and, in turn, generate information for the quality system. Grievances are answered by telephone or e-mail, according to the details given by the customer. A case file is opened for each incident and reported internally to the Quality Department, which carries out internal checks and monitoring of the relevant quality system in case there is a fault and, if so, takes the necessary measures to offer a solution.

As a rule, the companies follow up all grievances by telephone to check consumer satisfaction.

Statistical monitoring is regularly conducted of all incidents and proposals for improvement made by consumers, which are discussed at the different Management Committee meetings held every month within each company.

The communication channels used with consumers in the different companies are indicated below:

COMPANY	COUNTRY	CANAL DE COMUNICACIÓN CON CLIENTES
Arrozeiras Mundiarroz	Portugal	E-mail, post, website and social media
Bertagni 1882	Italy	E-mail, website and social media
Ebro Foods Belgium	Belgium	E-mail, website and social media
Ebro Foods Netherlands	Netherlands	Telephone, e-mail, website and social media
Ebro India	India	Telephone, e-mail and social media
Euryza	Germany	Telephone, e-mail and social media
Herba Ricemills	Spain	Telephone and e-mail
Lustucru Frais	France	Telephone and post
Lustucru Riz	France	Telephone, post, e-mail and social media
Pastificio Lucio Garofalo	Italy	Telephone, e-mail, website and social media
Riceland Magyarorszag	Hungary	Telephone, e-mail and website
Risella	Finland	Telephone
Riviana Foods Canada	Canada	Telephone, e-mail, website and social media
Riviana Foods	USA	Telephone, e-mail, website and social media
Tilda	UK	Telephone, e-mail, post and social media

INCIDENTS DURING THE YEAR**Incidents registered with customers**

Overall, 10 incidents were registered in 2023, in health and safety and in information and labelling, as indicated below:

	INCIDENTS	
	2023	2022
Health and safety	8	2
Ebro Foods Netherlands	1	0
Ebro Ingredients	3	2
Herba Ricemills	4	0
Information and labelling	2	3
Lustucru Frais	1	0
Herba Ricemills	1	0
Arrozeiras Mundiarroz	0	1
Bertagni	0	2


Claims from end consumers

The following table shows the number of claims for packaging defects, sensory properties, etc. handled by company.

COMPANY	NO. INCIDENTS 2023	NO. INCIDENTS 2022
Arrozeiras Mundiarroz	157	243
Bertagni 1882	329	348
Ebro Foods Belgium	277	236
Ebro Foods Netherlands	482	181
Ebro India	40	48
Euryza	886	726
Herba Ricemills	237	250
Lustucru Frais	1,248	1,344
Lustucru Riz	1,914	1,509
Pastificio Lucio Garofalo	1,004	506
Riceland Magyarorszag	45	35
Risella	129	151
Riviana Foods	13,466	15,489
Riviana Foods Canada	1,968	1,501
Tilda	1,252	1,122

No claims were received in 2023 in any Group company related with privacy and customers' personal data leaks. Nor were any incidents registered in the previous year.

Alignment with SDG in Customers and consumers

12  **12.** Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns