



# Mycological Gastronomy

## Revolutionary way of cultivating mushrooms

*Made in Transit* is a supply chain concept working towards the development of packaging that operates on the paradigm of enabling growth rather than preserving freshness – a shift from “best before” to “ready by” for fresh perishable goods.

The aim is to enable growth throughout the entire supply chain so that consumers harvest the product when they are ready to consume it, resulting in a higher quality fresh good.

Agata Jaworska’s *Made in Transit* hypothesis becomes a system of mushroom cultivation that can supply the world with the most perishable mushrooms by growing them on the way to the supermarket, eliminating harvesting costs.

“Distributors are no longer upholding traditional boundaries of their discipline. If we take this trend to its extreme we can

The *Made in Transit* hypothesis is a projection of observed developments within the field of distribution. Current trends



imagine that a distributor could become the manufacturer of the goods it delivers.”

show that the *Made in Transit* hypothesis is not that far-fetched.

### Wild / Gourmet mushroom enthusiasts



Join the Edible Fungi Association, which focuses on the dynamic industry of gourmet mushroom businesses, distributors and retailers.

Not to mention the most important: our top class chefs and culinary

schools.

Membership includes a subscription to the Mycological Gastronomy newsletter, published four times a year.

Visit [www.mushroomacademy.com](http://www.mushroomacademy.com) and click on “Edible Fungi Association.”

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#### Of special interest:

- *Congratulations: 2007 Eat In Earth Award to Cape Gourmet Mushrooms*
- *Front-runner: Pick 'n Pay for taking the lead in introducing gourmet mushroom species by means of full-page advertisements and displays of king oyster, enoki, shimeji, and shiitake mushrooms*
- *Futuristic: Woolworths May/June 2008 Taste for publishing the 'Fruits of the Forest' story. Not to mention those mouth-watering photographs featuring slick exotic mushrooms, illustrating cuisine with a minimal edge*
- *Advertise your mushroom-related services. Contact the editor at [info@mushroomacademy.com](mailto:info@mushroomacademy.com)*

Chase your dreams but live in the real world ...

Sir Richard Branson

# AltX-listed mushroom company makes history

**Country Foods** listed on the AltX, the alternative South African stock exchange, on 3 October 2007 after a private placement of R30 million.

AltX-listed Country Foods, which operates in the **niche, high quality, value-added food and beverage product markets**, announced its audited annual results for the previous year ended 30 September 2007, reporting a 327% annual increase in revenue to R171 million. Net tangible asset value per share increased by 63% to 57,9 cents. Headline earnings increased by 256% from the previous year to R11,4 million, and headline earnings per share increased by 176% to 12,4 cents.

The group specialises in the cultivation, processing and packaging of mushrooms as well as the manufacturing and packaging of beverages. It also distrib-

utes various deli products.

“The results of our subsidiaries, **Edulis**, **Country Mushrooms** and Fruitime Fruit Juices, are substantially in line with group forecasts, as set out in the prelisting prospectus. Demand for the group’s products was positive in the South African market but exports were exceptionally strong. We did see a slight drop in earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation margins, from 20,5% to 18,6%, due to the consolidation of Country Mushrooms and Fruitime Fruit Juices, operations that produce traditionally lower margins than Edulis,” says CEO Robi Casaletti.

Casaletti says the continued acquisition of exclusive distribution and licensing rights of international and local brands and the ownership and management of such rights is an ongoing process and

forms an important part of the growth strategy of Country Foods.

“Our US subsidiary, **Forest Products International LLC**, makes progress in market penetration and will begin with the distribution of additional products on the East Coast of the USA.”

Casaletti predicts future benefits from alternative production in the **Midlands mushroom processing facility** and increased product and brand offerings across all divisions.

Initially all earnings generated by the group will be utilised to fund future growth and acquisitions. The company will periodically reconsider its cash position with the intension of distributing dividends to shareholders.

For more information visit [www.altx.co.za](http://www.altx.co.za)

## Star stinkhorn

A vividly pink-reddish coloured fruiting body with a remarkable shape! Add radiating arms that fork towards the ends, and a strong putrid odour. These are all characteristics of the stunning mushroom species, *Aseroë rubra*. The dark slimy spore mass in the centre is dispersed by flies. The fruiting bodies are fragile and watery, seldom lasting more than a few hours. They play an important role in the decomposition of plant remains.



*There is beauty and goodness right*

*where we are ...*

*Henri J.M. Nouwen*

## Shiitake and the slow food movement



*Shiitake mushrooms at different stages of development*

A well-known medicinal and choice edible mushroom, fresh shiitake (*Lentinula edodes*), is sought after by many a chef. Cultivated organically on indigenous honeybush tea waste, it displays **anti-tumour** and **anti-viral** therapeutic effects. A healthy alternative to meat, shiitake contains 32 g **protein** per 100 g serving and no cholesterol. Superb when fresh and locally produced, shiitake can be en-

joyed in a wide variety of dishes.

Shoppers like the shelf stability of fresh shiitake, which is up to three weeks at 4° C, making this mushroom less susceptible to spoilage than most other mushrooms. Shiitake mushrooms are selling at R250/kg at the Stellenbosch Fresh Goods Market, if you are lucky enough to get some.

For information visit [www.slowmarket.co.za](http://www.slowmarket.co.za)

## Bagie deserves a medal

**USAID** is supporting the Natural Resources College (NRC) in Malawi by equipping the institution with new laboratory equipment to establish a modern **mushroom spawn production unit**. This will enable NRC to offer consis-

source and increased poverty. With the unlocking of this constraint, **USAID** will enable the industry to expand production and increase smallholder prosperity.

knowledgeable **Ms Bagie Sherchand** (far right) provide momentum to the successful operation and functioning of the gourmet mushroom industry in Malawi.



tently high quality and greater varieties of mushroom spawn. Without access to quality spawn, a large proportion of mushroom producers, who tend to be smallholders, have been left to languish. This has resulted in loss of an income

**Dr. W. Adriaan Smit** (third from right), managing director and lecturer of the **South African Gourmet Mushroom Academy**, conducted the spawn production course at NRC. The planning, support and contagious enthusiasm of the

The development and support are funded by **USAID**. Activities are implemented and coordinated by **Agribusiness in Sustainable Natural African Plant Products** and supported by **Total Landcare** and **COMPASS II**.

## Tom Cruise, mushrooms, and Telluride

Mad about mushrooms? Book yourself a ticket to the most awesome mushroom festival ever – the one held in Telluride, USA, in August.

The flight to Telluride in a small plane sets the standard for this unforgettable experience. Hold your breath while landing at what must be the most beautiful setting, high up the San Juan Mountains. Look down, admire the view and pinch yourself. What

you see, deep down among snow-covered peaks and waterfalls, is the historic mining town of Telluride.

Throughout the years, the awe-inspiring magnificence of the natural beauty in this area has provided creative and spiritual inspiration for artists, writers and photographers. Telluride is famous for its festivals,

*28th Telluride Mushroom Festival, Telluride, Colorado, USA 21-24 August 2008*

the edible, psychoactive and poisonous mushrooms, and ... Telluride home owner, Tom Cruise!

At sunset, take a gondola ride to the Mountain Village and Ski Resort high above the town. If there is one thing you should do before you die, it is to go to Telluride.

[www.mushroomfestival.com](http://www.mushroomfestival.com)

## Pine rings

Not everybody considers *Lactarius deliciosus*, also known as the Saffron Milk Cap, to be delicious. Despite its Latin epithet, many find its reputation to be exaggerated. But many restaurateurs appreciate its herby, spicy flavour which can be incorporated in a large range of dishes!

Mycorrhizal with pine trees, this brownish orange species has a depressed cap with faint concentric



zones and an inrolled margin. The short stem becomes hollow and is covered with fine orange depressions. When cut, the stem displays a darker, orange outer ring. It has a thick, crum-

bly, pale yellow to orange flesh, **yielding carrot-orange milk**, that does not change colour (not to be confused with poisonous look-alikes, which exude white milk). The species eventually turns green, which accounts for the green patches on the gills and elsewhere, especially if the mushroom is damaged. It has the harmless, if slightly alarming, effect of making one's urine turn red!

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***Bringing mushrooms to life!***

[www.mushroomacademy.com](http://www.mushroomacademy.com)

***Academy goes culinary***

**Mycogastronomy Information  
Session**

Aimed at professional chefs and  
culinary schools; two hours.



A favourite of royalty and presidents alike, gourmet mushrooms are often reserved for special occasions and for state banquets. It is therefore not surprising that bamboo shoot mushroom was served to Queen Elizabeth II during an official state visit to China. Or that Russian president Vladimir Putin, *Time Magazine* Person of the Year for 2007, celebrated this award with shiitake mushroom hors d'oeuvres.

Enquiries: [info@mushroomacademy.com](mailto:info@mushroomacademy.com)

## Sexy Duck and Josi Bling Pie

Know anyone so exceptionally gifted as to transform the traditionally uninspiring pie into a culinary masterpiece? Look no further than innovative Melrose Arch executive chef Wicus Prinsloo.

Unashamedly opulent, the aptly called Sexy Duck and Josi Bling Pie will be the centre of attention at **The Jo-burg Wine Show**. Featuring an exquisite filling of organic **morel mushrooms**, topped with sublimely opulent gold leaf pastry casing and served with shavings of fresh **Périgord truffle**, it will be the most expensive gourmet serving in the country.

Ten opulent pies will be auctioned at [www.bidorbuy.co.za](http://www.bidorbuy.co.za) for at least R15 000 apiece. Bidding opens on 5 May, and will run for three weeks.

Proceeds will go to the *Give me a Chance* trust fund, which renders financial support to needy children from the Kylemore community in Stellenbosch.

Ingredients	Cost (Rand)
Morel mushrooms	5 000/kg
Périgord truffles	8 000/kg
23-carat edible gold leaf	200 000/kg
Confit duck	800/kg
Smoked duck Magret	950/kg
Rougie duck foie gras	1 000/kg
Free-range organic duck	300/kg
French butter	75/kg
Châteaux d'Yquem Sauternes	1 250/375 ml
'98 Rupert & Rothschild Baron Edmond	500/bottle
'98 Billecart-Salmon Millésime Cuvée Elisabeth Salmon	1 400/bottle



***A mouth-watering morel mushroom: One of the main ingredients of the Sexy Duck and Josi Bling Pie***

Photographer: Zane Godwin