

## **Marketing of the health food industry.**

### **A unique master's program with a big potential : health food**

**FRANCE, November 29th (Everything dietetic!)** – Today, marketing in the food industry is looking more and more to offer healthier choices. But, to reach this goal, it will need to adopt some of the processes of the pharmaceutical industry. Hence the emergence of a hybrid marketer who is familiar with both scientific methods and the most up-to-date marketing techniques.

In anticipation of the demand, Valérie Philippon created the first master's program specialized in the marketing of health foods at ESC Dijon Bourgogne, an experiment that several other business schools are watching attentively. Trained in medical school and with experience in the pharmaceutical industry, this dynamic woman is already planning for the 2007-2008 school year. She hopes, in particular, to open this program to more foreign students. Interview with Valérie Philippon conducted by Jean-François Desessard (BE France).

### **What is the profile of this first group of master's students in this program which began on October 8th of this year?**

This group, whom Jean-Philippe Girard, the CEO of Eurogerm, has accepted to mentor, is made up of 12 students. These are mostly engineers specialized in agriculture from schools in Dijon, Lyon, Montpellier, Nantes and Toulouse. They are also second year master's students in nutrition and biology – two of these students left their work in research at INSERM to be able to work more closely with businesses. We also find two individuals with backgrounds that we can consider less typical. The first student has graduated with a two year degree in psychology, a master's degree in business communication and has three years of professional experience in communication. The second individual is a student from China who, after obtaining a degree from a Chinese business school specialising in finance, moved to France to learn the language and finished by joining our newest master's program.

### **What kind of program do you offer your students?**

The students who choose this master's program are more interested by a project carried out in a company, and they therefore require two kinds of training. Les étudiants qui optent pour ce mastère sont intéressés davantage par un projet en entreprise qui requiert une double formation. They also hope to obtain both technical and managerial skills. In this context, we have built a program which brings them not only the necessary general management skills, but also the most specific knowledge related to the health food industry. Today, about thirty professors give classes in our program, with the objective of creating, little by little, a kind of 'team'. This team would be specialized in the health food industry, and would regroup all its individual parts, from eating habits to marketing while passing through communication. At the end of these six months of classes, each student would complete a project in partnership with a business in order to validate his or her knowledge and write a thesis that would be defended in front of a jury.

**You are already preparing the 2008-2009 school year. What improvements would you like to make for the second group of students who will be selected in April?**

We hope to welcome about 20 students with more foreign students this time. At present, 20% of our classes are taught in English. However, we will do whatever is necessary to ensure that this figure reaches 50% as quickly as possible. That's why, with help from Vitagora, the taste-nutrition-health competitive cluster, along whose lines our program is based, we have decided to track down experienced professors, for the most part American and Asian, who would accept to come and give classes. I'll also add that we will soon be signing an agreement with the University of Burgundy in order to make our partnership with the engineering school ENSBANA (Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Biologie Appliquée à la Nutrition et à l'Alimentation) official. This is, let me point out, a kind of 'first' in post-secondary education in terms of a partnership between the public and private sectors.

**To find out more :**

- **ESC Dijon Bourgogne - Mastère Marketing Alimentation Santé**

(This information is an extract from edition 201 of BE France from November 11, 2007. The 'Bulletins Electroniques (BE) are a service from ADIT and are available for free at <http://www.bulletins-electroniques.com>)