

## SMEs EXPORT

### Argentine Technology and Innovation



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#### Exporting Potential

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## ALUN-CO BARILOCHE S.R.L., natural spring water from Patagonia



AlunCo is a company from the Argentine Patagonia that commercializes mineral water from a spring located in the outskirts of Bariloche, in the province of Río Negro. Its mineral qualities stand out for being the most sought-after in the world.

This water flow emerges naturally from a subway aquifer at an estimated depth of 200m, with a temperature between 4 °C (39 °F) and 6 °C (42 °F) and an average volume of 6.2 liters per second. This water is crystalline, with a neutral pH, is rich in calcium bicarbonate, and with zero sodium content.

Under HACCP certification, the company has an annual production capacity of ten million 600-ml bottles, but the power of the spring allows it to produce forty times more, which is why the company is currently working on expanding its production capacity.

AlunCo is its commercial brand, which in Mapuche language means “water reflection” and represents the essence of the Patagonian flavor.

Bottling is available in different presentations of sparkling and still water, among which three lines are identified:

600-ml and 1,500-ml PET line; and 6,500-ml container (still water)  
500-ml Glass line  
10-lt bag-in-box line (still water)

INTI provided technical assistance for the HACCP certification, which is essential for the company's quality assurance and a requirement for obtaining the **EQM (Emirates Quality Mark) certification to be able to reach the Middle East markets.**

“Our spring defines our essence. Hydration and nutrition are key principles of AlunCo's philosophy, which prioritizes the care of natural resources and the world population's health, providing quality, healthy, and nutritious water,” claims Franco D'Benedetto, the company's Commercial and New Product Development Manager.

And he adds, “AlunCo is a leading Patagonian exponent with a clear view towards exporting. This is thanks to the company's know-how on reaching new markets, its adaptability to different consumption types, and the possibility of obtaining certifications required in the destination countries.”

**Water is in demand in all five continents, but the company is currently working to enter the markets of Brazil, Chile, Australia, the United States, and the United Arab Emirates.**

**“We harmonize the water in our plant following the principles of Masaru Emoto's theory** (the Japanese author who states that ‘words, statements, sounds, and thoughts directed towards a volume of water influence the shape of the ice crystals obtained from it.’) **This process, which no other company carries out, consists in playing music to the water in the reservoirs so that it preserves the energy it has in its natural state.**

“In addition to having a premium product, AlunCo has a strong focus and philosophy on triple impact. Internationally, we are in the process of obtaining the B-Corporation certification, which signals not only an economic impact, but also a social and environmental one.

The consumption of pure water worldwide is growing exponentially. **It is important to point out that Patagonian water is not yet consumed worldwide. Ours is rich in carbonates, calcium, magnesium, potassium, fluorine, and selenium. It has neutral pH and no chlorine or sodium content (0%).** For this reason, food experts from all over the world agree that all these benefits make it an ideal complement to keep a healthy and balanced diet,” concludes Mr. D'Benedetto.

• **HS CODE (NCM):**

- 2201.10.00 / Water, including natural or artificial mineral waters and carbonated water, not containing added sugar or other flavoring, ice, and snow.

## ARTE DULCE S.A., gourmet alfajor for export



From the city of Lomas de Zamora, in the province of Buenos Aires, Arte Dulce specializes in an Argentine cultural product: the Premium Gourmet alfajor marketed under the brand name “Cielos Pampeanos.”

This traditional product has the *Alimentos Argentinos* and the *Marca País* seals, granted by the National Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Tourism, respectively. It also has the *Argentinas al Mundo* seal, granted by the Argentine Agency for Investment and International Trade (AAICI), which belongs to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship.

**It is worth noting that this product has been cataloged as a Premium Gourmet alfajor because of the quality of its raw materials and its certifications regarding the industrial process.**

The company’s production capacity of fifty thousand units per day is divided into the following four lines:

- Semi-sweet chocolate coated alfajores filled with dulce de leche
- White chocolate coated alfajores filled with dulce de leche
- Cornstarch alfajores filled with dulce de leche
- Chocolate coated and cornstarch mini-alfajores

The alfajores are sold in 50-gr packs and the mini-alfajores are sold in 25-gr flow packs, which is a tourism-oriented packaging. They come in boxes of 3, 6, 12, or 18 units, and master boxes of 100 or 200 units. The mini-alfajores come in boxes of 24 units or in bulk (200 units).

The cornstarch alfajor filled with dulce de leche is the star product, since it adapts to all seasons.

INTI assisted Arte Dulce with various tests and trials on the product performance when transported by air to ensure that it arrives in excellent conditions at the destination country. The Institute also verified whether its packaging complied with export standards, ensuring the product’s optimum quality and gaining access to several international markets.

Silvia Chus, the company's Director and Co-Founder, states, "We were the first company with a Premium alfajor project to reach out to the world. When people migrated and needed to remember the country they had lived in, they could taste our product. **We started exporting in 2009, when no one was exporting an alfajor of this quality. That is, we were the first to export Argentine gourmet alfajores to the world.**

**"Our middle management is in charge of women. By adopting a gender perspective, not only do we have good practice protocols but good coexistence protocols as well. We work in line with the 2030 Agenda, taking care of the environment. We also have charitable initiatives,** for example, every year in October, we launch the pink alfajor campaign (featuring pink chocolate coating instead of white), which is a one-of-a-kind product across the world. Revenues are donated to the Rosas del Plata foundation for the rehabilitation of breast cancer through rowing therapy.

"We adhere to the Women Empowerment Principles (#WEPS), a Win-Win Program initiative, carried out by UN Women, the European Union, the ILO, and the Global Compact."

**The company already exports to the European Union, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia, and it is seeking to enter the U.S. and Mexican markets.**

Arte Dulce has received the following awards: UN Women, for working with gender equity (2019); Exporting Women-Led Family Business, awarded by Instituto de la Empresa Pyme Familia (2021); and Palas Atenea for Business Leadership, awarded by the Commission of Women Entrepreneurs and Professionals of Argentina (2021).

Cielos Pampeanos alfajores are manufactured under the standards set forth by the food quality control program, prioritizing the pleasure for the senses and employing quality raw materials. They have no preservatives or additives. Featuring 70% dark chocolate with liquor notes, a refined aroma, and abundant lactose-free dulce de leche, they are wrapped by two soft lemon-flavored cookies. All this results in a perfect blend of Argentine tradition to enjoy and share.

"Consumers choose us because ours is a healthy product with noble components. Abroad they choose us because the alfajor is an emblematic cultural ambassador of Argentina, and there is a nostalgic tourism tradition of the many Argentines who wish to have easy access to this product," concludes Ms. Chus.

• **HS CODE (NCM):**

-1905.90: Other bakers' wares, whether or not containing cocoa.

## PARALELO 42 S.A., organic fruit jams with Patagonian flavors



**Eighty percent of its production is organic, consisting of 56% fruit and 44% sugar. At the same time, products from the low-calorie line contain 70% fruit and are sweetened with fructose and stevia. All products are gluten-free, since they have the LAPDI (Argentine Diabetic Protection League) seal.**

The company markets its products under the brand Dulces Masseurbe. The organic-line jams come in the following flavors: raspberry, blackcurrant, blackberry, strawberry, and rosehip. The natural line includes blueberry, calafate, black cherry, elderberry, and sour cherry jams. All these products are commercialized in 45-g, 212-g, 350-g, and 900-g packages.

The low-calorie line jams, which are LAPDI-approved, come in many flavors (blackberry, rosehip, blueberry, strawberry, raspberry, and berries) and are sold in 45-g and 260-g jars. The natural organic fruits (raspberry, blueberry, and berries) are preserved in glucose syrup. The production of natural preserved fruits consists mainly of black cherries, which come in 700-g jars.

INTI's Food and Beverages Department in Patagonia conducts internal audits of the company's quality and food safety management system.

With a production capacity of one hundred thousand units per month, Paralelo 42 works under the following standards: HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points), Organic with OIA (International Agricultural Organization) & IFOAM Organic International, GLUTEN-FREE; LAPDI (Diabetic friendly) and Ajdut Kosher.

**The company is currently registering its products in Panama and other Latin American countries, since this is a region with a potential demand for the low-calorie and organic lines, which are segments that are in constant growth.**

Entre sus principales clientes se encuentran los hoteles Sheraton, Plaza Hotel, Sofitel, Faena, Llao Llao y Correntoso, entre otros.

**Valle del Medio, the field where the fruits are grown, has been certified by the International Agricultural Organization for the production of organic-fine fruit**

since 1998. In addition, it made history in June 2014 when it became the first producer of raspberries, blackcurrants, and redcurrants worldwide to obtain the Fairtrade certification by the Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International.

Nicolás Lanusse, Commercial Manager at the company, explains “Our customers choose us mostly because of our quality and the exquisite taste of our products.

We are a leading company in the country in the elaboration of handmade products, but we also use advanced technology and have seals that endorse our commitment to the environment, quality, and differentiation.”

• **HS CODE (NCM):**

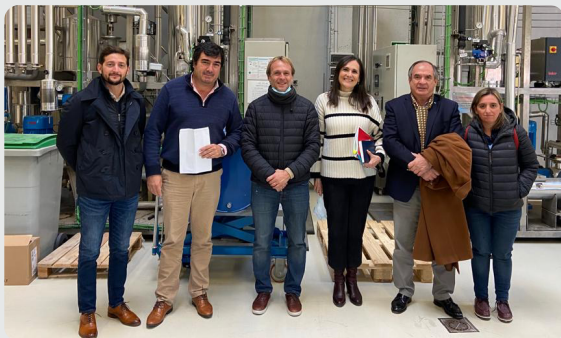
-2007.99.10 / Jams, jellies and marmalades, fruit or nut puree and fruit or nut pastes, obtained by cooking, whether or not containing added sugar or other sweeteners.



CONTACT: [institucionales@inti.gob.ar](mailto:institucionales@inti.gob.ar)



• **International Technical Cooperation**



Aware of world trends in food alternatives, INTI was part of a delegation that visited Spain—invited by the Ministry of Production and Sustainable Development of the Government of Salta—to support a technical mission on legume flour, to carry out technological monitoring for the processing of legumes and their transformation into high value-added products, within the framework of the Alimentar Barcelona Fair.

• **INTI’s Capacities for International Markets**



The innovative Instant Controlled Pressure Drop (DIC) technology consists of a high-temperature thermo-mechanical treatment in a short time, combined with a decompression instant vacuum method, which can induce a modification of the food structure without altering its natural properties.

This is a French technology in which INTI has been working on and for which it will set up a

The legumes group include several varieties that stand out for their high iron and quality proteins content, providing health benefits to consumers. Some studies evidence that a legume-and-cereal-based diet has the same nutritional values as an animal-based diet. Legumes also provide carbohydrates, fiber, calcium, potassium, magnesium, and B-group vitamins.

By virtue of the cooperation link with Spanish research centers (CNA, IRTA, Ainia, Eurecat, and DFactory) that are referents in the legume processing chain, the development of alternative proteins will be pursued. This will boost the definition of innovation lines for the sector and the development of functional ingredients and plant-based foods, i.e., from vegetable sources, associated with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

The different alternatives for developing products made with legume flours, such as pasta or baked goods, could be welcomed by the vegan and vegetarian population, and could even supply community kitchens for children in vulnerable situations.

pilot plant in Luján de Cuyo, province of Mendoza, to apply it to the food dehydration process, in collaboration with the firm Kapselmaker, a manufacturer of coffee capsules, one of the gourmet products par excellence. INTI will provide technical assistance for the development of production processes and will carry out tests in line with international standards.

The technology looks promising for food processing in all its applications, since it provides kinetic and energy improvements that have an impact on the economy of the process. Additionally, it is eco-friendly because it helps eliminate the use of solvents in the extraction process.

In principle, green coffee beans will be processed for dehydration, reducing their humidity so that their durability can be extended before roasting, which will have a positive impact on the price-quality ratio. Fruits and vegetables will also be dehydrated to develop healthy snacks in line with the current demands of consumers who search for high-quality, healthy, and safe products.

CONTACT: [cooperacion@inti.gob.ar](mailto:cooperacion@inti.gob.ar)

## INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATION

[comunicacion@inti.gob.ar](mailto:comunicacion@inti.gob.ar)

www.inti.gob.ar |     