

Mizuho Gulf Capital Partners Ltd

(Regulated by the DFSA)



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Country Hill International (a Gulf Japan Food Fund Portfolio Company) partners with La Maison Nordique, a leading distributor of premium fish, seafood and other dry food products based in France

Country Hill International ("Country Hill"), a UAE-based supplier of premium meat products has partnered with La Maison Nordique ("Company"), a leading distributor of premium fish, seafood and other dry food products based in France by obtaining a stake in the Company's UAE and KSA operations. Country Hill is a portfolio company of Gulf Japan Food Fund ("GJFF"), a private equity fund backed by Mizuho Bank and The Norinchukin Bank.

La Maison Nordique was established over 20 years ago in France and grew into a global producer and distributor of premium food products recommended by leading international chefs. In 2014, La Maison Nordique Foodstuff Trading LLC was established in the United Arab Emirates ("UAE") as a strategic extension of the group based in France. Since then, the UAE company developed distribution capabilities to 15+ countries and established operations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia ("KSA"). The Company sources high-end fish, seafood and dry food products from France, Japan, United States and other countries, focusing on providing tailor-made solutions to high-end HORECA customers.

Through this collaboration, GJFF and Mizuho Gulf Capital Partners ("MGCP"), GJFF's Investment Manager, will reinforce Country Hill's position as a leading supplier of premium protein products, and will increase the exports of high-quality Japanese fish, seafood and other products to the GCC.

Commenting on the transaction, Hitoshi Sugawara, CEO & Co-CIO of Mizuho Gulf Capital Partners said: "Country Hill and La Maison Nordique have a complementary product portfolio and will be able to offer customers a wide range of premium protein products. Management from both companies have identified significant collaboration and synergy opportunities to enhance and grow both businesses and we are excited to see these opportunities get realized."

Commenting on the transaction, Dariush Rakhshani, Partner and CEO of Country Hill International said: "La Maison Nordique is a company that resembles us, we share the same passion of providing customers with the highest quality food products and the best service. With our values and vision aligned, we can achieve bigger goals together."

Commenting on the transaction, Keyan Eslamdoust, Founder and Chairman of La Maison Nordique said: "I strongly believe that this partnership with Country Hill will drive La Maison Nordique into the next stage of its growth journey. La Maison Nordique strives to maintain its position as a leading seafood supplier throughout Europe and the Middle East."

GJFF is a private equity fund set up in March 2016 to invest in the food industry. Fund investors include Mizuho Bank, Ltd., The Norinchukin Bank, and the Cool Japan Fund, in addition to Middle Eastern sovereign wealth funds. These organizations have collectively committed USD 390 million.

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