

GERMANY: Buying alliances key to competitiveness - Rewe

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International co-operation is becoming a vital way for food retailers to compete with their larger rivals, the CEO of German grocer Rewe said today (19 June).

Speaking at the CIES World Food Business Summit in Munich, Alain Caparros said retailers like Rewe could more effectively "take on the bigger players as equals" by teaming up in fields including buying, marketing and sales.



Rewe CEO Alain Caparros

Rewe is a member of pan-European alliance Coopernic, which also includes French retailer E. [Leclerc](#), Belgium's [Colruyt](#), Italy's Conad and Coop of Switzerland.

Caparros said the alliance had allowed Rewe to drive down costs and increase the number of products it sells in its stores.

"It has helped us in cutting costs in order to be able to offer consumers lower prices. It has helped us expand our individual product lines and it has enabled us to exchange know-how and expertise with others. Successful companies must learn from one other," Caparros said.

Caparros, who will take on the role of president of Coopernic next month, hinted that the alliance could grow further through the acquisition of stakes in other retailers.

Late last year, Coopernic bought an 80% stake in Baltic retail chain Iki. "I hope there will be further similar steps made on our long common journey," Caparros said.

The Coopernic alliance is just one of a number of such groupings in Europe. Other similar-sized retailers are teaming up in key areas in a bid to compete with the likes of [Tesco](#) and [Carrefour](#).

Earlier this week, Belgium-based retailer [Delhaize](#) and France's Systeme-U announced plans to join AMS, which counts [Ahold](#), UK grocer [Morrisons](#), Finland-based group [Kesko](#) and Spanish retailer Caprabo among its members