

# Turkish Flour Industrialists Federation Meeting

## – Şanlıurfa, Göbeklitepe

by Mehmet Ugur Gürkaynak, Milling & Grain

**T**he Turkish Flour Industrialists Federation Meeting, organised by Turkey's Industrialists Federation in Şanlıurfa, Göbeklitepe between the dates 8 – 10th February 2019 with the heading “The Place Where Civilizations Began – Blessing in Wheat - Göbeklitepe” proved to be of great interest and intrigue. The meeting, supported by the representatives of different associations and institutions, held the purpose of sharing important ideas and information about the sector.

The Turkish Flour Industrialists Federation President, Eren Günhan Ulusoy, started the affair with his opening speech at the Göbeklitepe Lecture Room. In the area central to the crucial excavation, Mr Ulusoy expressed the importance of the meeting with these words: “This visit showcases TUSAF’s moral debt to wheat, pacta sunt servanda”.

TUSAF President Eren Günhan Ulusoy’s words continued as follows: “Turkey is one of the rare sectors which are in the world league championships. Our industrialists are now exporting to more than 160 countries and 90 percent of the world consumes Turkish flour.

“Our industrialists, who performed one-third of the world flour trade alone and made it the world’s exporting champion for six years, signed a new world record in 2018 as well by performing exports of 3.5 million tonnes in 2018. In 2019, our target is to generate 3.6 million tonnes of flour and achieve 1.25 million dollars of revenue.

Ulusoy continues, “The Turkey seasonal average of 20 - 21 million tonnes of wheat production proves that Turkey is a country that boasts self-sufficiency and remains independent on the outside.”

Mr Selahattin Dönmez, President of the Nutrition Education and Research Foundation (BESVAK), who helped organise the meeting, expressed in his speech: “If we can stand, walk and carry out our daily activities in a comfortable way, we should not forget that we owe this to wheat and we must continue to respect it and ensure it flourishes.”

The Association of Milling and Sector Machinery Manufacturers (DESMÜD) President Zeki Demirtaşoğlu, who has been participating with some members to support the

organisation, emphasised the success of the Turkish milling sector for six years as an export champion and stated that they exported to many countries of the world as machinery sector.

Participants had the opportunity to see Göbeklitepe, the exhibits in the museum and the historical sites in the city also benefited from the important information shared in the conferences and sessions held for two days.

### The zero point in history: “Göbeklitepe”

Located 20km away from Şanlıurfa, this temple near the village of Orencik, was discovered when the villager Şavak Yıldız wanted to plow his field and found a piece of stone and brought it to the officials at Şanlıurfa Museum.

In 1995, the excavations were initiated for the first time, in cooperation with the German Archaeological Institute and Şanlıurfa Museum Directorate. Göbeklitepe is one of the oldest known religious buildings in the world, dating from the Neolithic



Stone Age, and has architectural remains belonging to ceremonial sites for worship.

In order to make excavations in Nevalı Çori in Hilvan, the German archaeologist Dr Klaus Schmidt, who came to Şanlıurfa and saw the parts found in the museum in Göbeklitepe, realised that the findings were very important and requested to do a detailed research.

The oldest temple ruins were found in the excavations of this temple, dating back 12,000 years. Göbeklitepe received the Temporary List of World Heritage in 2012 by UNESCO and was accepted into the World Heritage List at the 42nd World Heritage Committee Meeting, organised in Bahrain in 2018.





What makes Göbeklitepe important is the fact that the first ever history of human wheat cultivation and farming in the history of mankind was discovered here, as highlighted in BBC TV's "How Art Made the World 2."

The site is 7,500 years older than the temple in Malta, 7,000 years older from Stonehenge in England and 7,500 years older than the Egyptian pyramids. Considering that animals were not considered to be domesticated at that time it would have been very difficult to bring the heavy stones from the rocky areas to the two-to-three kilometre distance to Göbeklitepe temple, using solely manpower.

### **Şanlıurfa- A magnificent city on historical tissue**

The history of the city dates back 9,000 years. The province is surrounded by the provinces Mardin from the east, Diyarbakır from the North-east, Adıyaman from the north, Gaziantep from the east and the Syrian border from the south. The surface area is 18,765 km<sup>2</sup>.

The city's economy is based on agriculture and 10 percent of Turkey's irrigable area belongs to Şanlıurfa. Currently, 30 percent of these lands in Şanlıurfa are irrigable. When Turkey's largest dam project in the Southeastern Anatolia Project- GAP 's- will be completed, 50 percent of the land in this area will belong to the Şanlıurfa province which will be irrigated by this dam.

The city, which has a traditional culture, is very common in many places. The city, which has been kneaded by the architectural and cultural structure of the West and the East, has historical monuments dating back thousands of years and

the cultural accumulations and food culture of different societies ruled here.

Turkish Government announced 2019 as "The Year of Göbeklitepe". With this important announcement, after the decision of TUSAF to do the meeting here, and Göbeklitepe's effect, Şanlıurfa reached one million tourists in eight months which was normally their target for the end of 2018. Şanlıurfa set the target for 2019 as a two million tourists' footfall.