

Press release

**Euler Hermes and BFM BUSINESS present
the 2015 BFM export performance award to Fermob**

PARIS – 3 NOVEMBER 2015 - At the **BFM AWARDS**¹ ceremony in Paris on November 2, 2015, the export performance award was presented to Fermob, a manufacturer of colorful and creative garden furniture. Euler Hermes, the worldwide leader in trade credit insurance and BFM BUSINESS, France's leading business and economics media, teamed up for the third consecutive year to present this award designed to recognize the boldness and performance of French companies abroad.

New export opportunities have appeared, but increased vigilance is nonetheless essential

Most of France's major trading partners are enjoying renewed momentum this year: imports are expected to grow in Germany (by €4.4 billion) and Spain (by €1.9 billion) offering genuine opportunities for the industrial equipment, chemicals and agrifood sectors. French businesses have also regained some of their optimism:

"83% of French exporters say they will seek to increase their export sales in 2015²," says Eric Lenoir, CEO of Euler Hermes France. "This determination reflects the renewed vigor generated by a weaker euro and lower raw materials prices, which have freed up a few points of margin. However, defaults are currently still at twice their pre-crisis levels in France's main export markets. Despite a changeable economic environment, French businesses, such as Fermob, show real performance both in terms of winning new markets and of controlling their growth and profitability."

A success story driven by the 'French Touch'

Close to 100 exporting firms from a broad range of sectors, and each generating more than €10 million in sales, competed for the award. After examining the cases presented, according to growth and strength criteria, the BFM Awards jury decided to present the award to Fermob, a business specialized in designing, manufacturing and marketing creative and colorful value-added metal garden furniture.

Taken over by its present CEO, Bernard Reybier, in 1989, Fermob has since acquired a new dimension. The former metalwork shop has become an international metal furniture manufacturer and joined the mid-size business segment in 2014 when it took over Roland Vlaemyneck, another business in the same sector. The company's present success is largely attributable to its positioning.

"We are very lucky in that we are a French company that conveys the image of a French lifestyle, of French culture - a 'French Touch', which is irreplaceable," explains Bernard Reybier. A French appeal that is very much appreciated abroad: export sales now account for nearly 48% of the company's turnover. "When Harvard University buys our chairs, it doesn't just buy Fermob chairs, it buys a little bit of the Latin Quarter, of the Sorbonne, of Diderot and of the Encyclopedia. This is our approach," added Reybier.

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¹ Each year for the past 10 years, the BFM Awards event has been attended by more than 1,000 business decision makers and heads of companies, who come together to recognize the success of French companies contributing to the appeal and dynamism of France

² Euler Hermes' 2014 Barometer survey of 800 French export businesses.

Euler Hermes France

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