

Perrier Vittel announces a new acquisition in Saudi Arabia and reinforces its leadership in the Middle East

Paris, July 30, 2001 - The Perrier Vittel Group announced today the acquisition of 51% of the capital of the Saudi Arabian company AL MANHAL and is taking over its management.

With a turnover of 45 million Euros, a production of 400 million litres in 2000, AL MANHAL has a total of 1000 employees and is the leader on the local bottled water market in large formats.

AL MANHAL is a spring water bottled in Riyadh, capital of Saudi Arabia. It is distributed in Saudi Arabia and in the United Arab Emirates.

The Perrier Vittel Group is already the first international operator in the Middle East region via the bottling and/or distribution of its international brands: *Nestlé Pure Life*, *Perrier*, *Vittel* and *S.Pellegrino* as well as the production and distribution of some of the major local brands (*Sohat* in Lebanon, *Ghadeer* in Jordan, *Baraka* in Egypt, and *Sansu* in Turkey).

With the acquisition of AL MANHAL, the Group thus reinforces its position in the region and is now the leader on the Middle East bottled water market with a turnover of 100 million Euros.

With an average annual growth of 10% of bottled water consumption, the Middle East region represents a strategic market for Perrier Vittel.

This new acquisition fits with the Perrier Vittel strategy concerning the development of the Home & Office sector, announced by Mr Frits van Dijk – CEO Perrier Vittel S.A. – during the press conference held in London March 29th.

Well developed in the US where it has existed for over a century, the Home & Office sector provides a client service with the packaging of large formats (5 gallons, approx. 19 litres). In the U.S., this activity represents almost 40% of the bottled water market. With a 30% market share in the US and Canada, Perrier Vittel, via its subsidiary PGA, is the leader on the North American market.

Recently the Home & Office sector has also witnessed an enormous growth throughout the world as it answers the new water consumption needs. In developing countries, it gives practical access to high quality and safe water.

In other countries, it satisfies new water consumption habits and requirements, based on easy product accessibility and increased individual water consumption.

The Perrier Vittel Group is the Water Division of Nestlé S.A. With a turnover of nearly 4 billion Euros in 2000, 75 brands and a presence in 140 countries, Perrier Vittel S.A. is the worldwide leader in the bottled water market.

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