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FOOD EXPORT-MIDWEST ANNOUNCES LAUNCH OF 2024 PROGRAM YEAR

Exporter Education, Market Entry, Branded Program Excited to Serve Suppliers

CHICAGO, Ill., Aug. 22, 2023: [Food Export Association of the Midwest USA](#) (Food Export–Midwest) is now welcoming participants for the 2024 program year. Food Export updated its website (foodexport.org) to offer an enhanced experience for suppliers. Food Export-Midwest provides export education, market intelligence, assistance, tools, and financial support for novice to seasoned U.S. food and agricultural companies that help them find growth opportunities and build dynamic export strategy programs to achieve international success.

These marketing opportunities help U.S. companies remain competitive in the exporting industry and gain exposure for their brands in countries around the globe. In 2022, Food Export–Midwest helped 587 companies explore new markets that supported more than 10,200 jobs and 320 new sales opportunities across food and agricultural businesses.

Food Export-Midwest’s programs enable new and established suppliers to pursue international market opportunities and fuel long-term growth. They connect international buyers with qualified and knowledgeable U.S. companies that are committed to growing with partners in major food markets around the globe.

“We are seeing an uptick in interest in specific areas. The UAE, China, Mexico, Japan, Colombia and Canada remain immensely popular with buyers and suppliers,” said Food Export-Midwest Executive Director/CEO Brendan Wilson. “We love facilitation connections between American producers and international buyers. It is a highlight of our work.”

Export Essentials Online provides a comprehensive, flexible approach to learning the fundamentals and logistics of exporting. Suppliers can learn at their own pace. Food Export-Midwest connects partners to its vast supplier network across the Midwest to spread awareness of partner programs and services.

“Participating in our educational programs gives our suppliers an advantage in the international market. We utilize the latest technology available to help suppliers gain the knowledge they need to succeed,” said Food Export-Midwest Liaison Manager Paul Weiss.

In addition to its education programs, Food Export–Midwest offers several services, such as trade leads and virtual consultations, that help suppliers decide which foreign markets are best suited for their company. International market connections also are made through Buyers Missions, Focused Trade Missions and Food Show PLUS!™, a trade show service program.

“By signing up for Food Show Plus!™, suppliers will be given a competitive advantage over other suppliers. You will be able to stand out ahead of the show, receive exclusive introductions, valuable logistical help and more,” said Food Export-Midwest International Marketing Program Manager Femke Bosch. “These shows offer excellent facetime with international buyers. They are vital for suppliers looking to expand internationally.”

There are still a few openings for the remaining 2023 events, including booth space at the Seoul International Café Show, a Private Label Buyers Mission at the 2023 PLMA Show, and the Focused Trade Mission to the UAE for Retail and Foodservice. Check the Food Export–Midwest [website](#) for more details, as well as a listing of the 2024 events.

For Branded Program participants, once approved, participants receive 50% cost reimbursement on eligible marketing and promotional activities such as exhibiting at international and select U.S. trade shows, advertising, public relations, in-store promotions and merchandising, marketing and point-of-sale materials, freight costs for samples, foreign market-compliant packaging and labeling, international website development, online marketing and more. Projects may range in size from a few thousand dollars to several hundred thousand in scope.

Made possible through the [Market Access Program](#) (MAP) from the USDA’s Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), this cost-share funding program assists small- and medium-sized U.S. suppliers as defined by U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to promote their U.S. origin food and agricultural products in foreign markets.

“If you’re looking to grow your business in an affordable way, now is the perfect time. The 2024 Branded year is opening, and all small- and medium-sized suppliers are welcome to apply for this 50 percent cost share program,” said Food Export-Midwest Branded Program Manager Molly Burns. “Your business can save half the cost on freight costs for product samples, foreign market-compliant packaging and labels, in-store promotions and product demonstrations and more. Take advantage of all the services we have to offer at a cost that fits your company’s budget.”

Suppliers can submit applications starting Aug. 16 until all dollars are distributed. Questions about the [Branded Program](#) and the application process can be directed to Food Export–Midwest at 312.334.9200. Additional information is available at www.foodexport.org/branded-program. The 2024 Branded Program runs from Jan. 1 through Dec. 31, 2024.

[Food Export–Midwest](#) works with suppliers headquartered in its 13-state Midwest region: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

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Food Export Association of the Midwest USA is a private, non-profit organization that promotes the export of food and agricultural products from the Midwest region of the United States.