

Vermont Food Export Program Overview

Updated June 4, 2013

Over the past two years, the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (VAAFAM) has partnered with the Vermont Global Trade Partnership (VGTP, housed at the Agency of Commerce and Community Development), the Vermont Specialty Foods Association (VSFA), and Food Export-Northeast to re-launch the Vermont Food Export Program. This is a growing program, and we are working closely with our partners within and outside of Vermont to ensure that we offer streamlined services to our clients.

➤ Program Highlights

- We officially kicked off the partnership with a **Food Export Seminar on December 6th, 2011** at Capitol Plaza in Montpelier. The event was attended by representatives of 23 food companies and 5 support organizations. Food Export consultant Dennis Lynch educated participants on the business case for exporting, the harmonized system, quoting, terms of sale, and other important topics.
- A second seminar on **Becoming Export Ready and Tapping into the Caribbean Market was held on November 30, 2012**, at Vermont Technical College in Randolph, presented by Pamela Wells-Russell, In-Market Representative (IMR) for the Caribbean. Nine company representatives were in attendance, representing the maple and specialty foods industries. Each company received an individualized market report and a one-on-one consultation with Ms. Wells-Russell. Staff members from the VGTP, the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), and the VSFA were also on hand to provide technical assistance.
- VGTP secured STEP funding from the U.S. Small Business Administration for VAAFAM to organize a **Vermont Pavilion at SIAL Canada in 2012 and 2013**. This is one of the premier food trade shows in North America. Six companies participated in the pavilion in Montreal in 2012, and eight participated at the 2013 show, from April 30-May 2 in Toronto. Five out of the 6 companies that participated in 2012 returned for 2013.

➤ Program Resources

See www.foodexport.org for more information on any of these programs.

Education

- **The Food Export Helpline:** This one-on-one service helps both the novice and experienced exporter by answering export-related questions, and identifying the top export markets. Free.
- **Educational Seminars and Webinars:** Staff and IMRs from Food Export–Northeast share their insight in seminars held throughout the year in various locations. Webinars are designed to help companies learn about the export process and the resources available to assist. Webinars: free. Seminars: \$25-50.

Market Entry

- **Market Builder:** This service provides customized, in-market research to help companies determine if a market is right for their product, without requiring them to travel. Industry insights about the distribution process; the import regulations and restrictions; and potential importers/distributors are provided. Optional add-ons include meetings with targeted buyers, interpreters, and meeting assistance. \$350-\$700.
- **Buyers Missions:** International buyers come to the U.S. to meet with companies during Buyers Missions, often arranged during domestic trade shows that many of these companies are already attending. Companies can learn more about their products' export potential and build relationships with key industry buyers without the time and expense of overseas travel. \$100-150.

- **Food Show PLUS!**: This tradeshow enhancement service prepares companies for and maximizes their international tradeshow experience. Services may include pre-show feedback on competitive products, translation of companies' marketing material, on-site food industry interpreters, scheduled meetings with potential buyers, site visits to local retailers, in-market seminars, and follow-up assistance. \$200-300.
- **Focused Trade Missions**: Trade Missions bring small companies to a country to meet with foreign buyers and learn about the market. Service includes a market analysis of products prior to the visit, an in-market briefing, tours of supermarkets and food service providers, buyer meetings, product showcases, assistance with lead follow-up, and a networking reception. \$250-600.
- **Online Product Catalog**: This web-based catalog can help promote products to international buyers. Buyers search by product, company name, or other criteria. Free.

Market Promotion

- **The Branded Program** provides 50% cost reimbursement for a wide variety of international marketing activities including: Package and label modifications; Advertising; In-store promotions and product demonstrations; Fees for exhibiting at some overseas tradeshows and selected tradeshows held in the U.S.; Public relations; Marketing and point-of-sale materials; and Freight cost for samples.
- **In-Store Promotions**: displays and product demonstrations in international supermarkets, restaurants, and hotels that feature Vermont-made processed foods and agricultural products.

➤ Market Data

Current Exports

The table below shows the value of agricultural exports to our top 10 trading partners in thousands of dollars.

| Country | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | Top Products |
|--------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--|
| Canada | 68,100 | 67,108 | 71,065 | 96,584 | 112,281 | Infant food, Food Preps., Coffee, Chocolate, Dairy, Eggs, Pet food |
| Mexico | 7,374 | 3,419 | 5,542 | 9,607 | 26,074 | Infant food, Food Preps., Chocolate, Dairy |
| China | 9,517 | 6,487 | 8,029 | 13,427 | 14,432 | Dairy, Infant food |
| Indonesia | 621 | 292 | 2,082 | 3,248 | 5,819 | Dairy |
| Sweden | 289 | 1,862 | 709 | 2,004 | 4,727 | Mixes and doughs, Dairy |
| Vietnam | 15 | 475 | 1,522 | 3,073 | 3,838 | Infant food, Dairy |
| Chile | 2,280 | 3,337 | 4,774 | 6,142 | 3,598 | Frozen sweet corn, Dairy |
| Finland | 1,210 | 5 | 0 | 1,497 | 2,227 | Dairy |
| Saudi Arabia | 0 | 146 | 990 | 1,097 | 1,957 | Infant food |
| Korea, South | 781 | 1,221 | 736 | 1,907 | 1,695 | Dairy |

(Data Source: Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Statistics, U.S. State Export Data).

Target Markets

We see the largest growth in the following countries: **Columbia, Australia, Vietnam, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea**. The emerging Middle Eastern market could also be promising for Vermont products.

➤ Contact

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