

Trade Notes...

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Mexico Loves U.S. Almonds

Mexico's booming economy and strong consumer appetite for almonds have sparked a surge in U.S. imports. U.S. almond sales to Mexico for marketing year 1999/2000 jumped 30 percent in volume to 7,758 metric tons, and increased in value almost \$7 million.

Credit for this increase can also be given to the 1999/2000 U.S. almond crop, which was 38 percent larger than the previous year's crop.

Brazilian Reverse Trade Mission to Atlanta

Fifty Brazilian wholesalers and distributors visited Atlanta in a reverse trade mission organized by the Brazilian Wholesalers and Distributors Association (ABAD) and the Independent Grocers Alliance (IGA). The event was supported by the Emerging Markets Program and operates under the same premise as the Cochran Fellowship Program for cold chain development. As a result, two Brazilian companies invested \$1 million each in refrigerated systems and logistics, while three others are currently negotiating with U.S. firms.

Third Farmers' Market Opens in the Dominican Republic

A new farmers' market opened in San Juan de la Maguana under USDA's program to establish new farmers' markets in the Dominican Republic, to promote free-market concepts. The first market the program helped initiate, in San Francisco de Macoris, has been operating for a year, and another in Bani is now up and running. In addition to increasing household incomes, the opportunity to sell produce directly to consumers helps local farmers develop better marketing practices such as quality control and customer service.

U.S. Poultry Exports to the Philippines Take Flight

Since the initiation of the Philippines tariff rate quota for meat and poultry, imports of U.S. poultry have taken off. U.S. poultry exports to the Philippines in 1999 posted a 600-percent increase to \$20.5 million, with a slight drop expected for 2000. However, for turkey meats, the Philippines posted a 70-percent increase in 2000 valued at \$1.2 million. This made the Philippines the 13th largest U.S. market in 2000 for turkey meat.

Miami Americas Show Reaping Results

Evaluations from close to 300 U.S. exhibitors at the Americas Food and Beverage Show of Miami were completed recently. Participants expect about \$64 million worth of sales in the next 12 months added to on-site sales of \$15.6 million. The show had a total of 393 exhibitors from 24 countries, with 222 from the United States. Over 7,500 visitors attended. Plans for the next Americas Food and Beverage show in December 2001 are underway.

USDA Provides Aid to Montenegro

USDA will donate approximately 20,000 metric tons of corn and 15,000 tons of wheat flour for monetization to support development projects in Montenegro under Section 416(b).

The proceeds will be used to purchase medicines, improve access to medical care and disease prevention and support private farming and production methods. Montenegro's Veterinary Medicine and Control Service will be enlisted to improve the technical skills of public sector veterinarians working in the countryside. Local farmer associations will work to improve the efficiency of farmers and their access to technical knowledge.