

Kansas Food Companies Participate in USDA Trade Mission to Russia

Three Kansas food companies and the Kansas Department of Agriculture joined the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) on a trade mission to Russia in early December.

USDA Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services Michael Scuse led the mission, which focused on markets in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Twenty-three companies from across the United States and representatives from five state departments of agriculture traveled with Scuse on the mission.

“Russia’s recent accession to the World Trade Organization made the trade mission to Moscow and St. Petersburg very timely,” said Greg Dennis, vice president of sales at Original Juan Specialty Foods in Kansas City, Kan. “The combination of economic growth, expanded access and high demand for U.S. food products makes Russia the most exciting new market we have explored in the last five years.”

Kansas agricultural exports to all countries in 2011 amounted to \$5.3 billion and supported more than 41,000 jobs on and off the farm. These exports from Kansas contributed to the Kansas farm economy, which had total cash receipts of \$15.9 billion in 2011.

“We returned from the trip with an appreciation of the opportunities available in Russia as well as the knowledge and connections to achieve results,” Dennis said.

The Kansas Department of Agriculture has made Russia a priority market for future agricultural exports. This was the first trade mission Kansas participated in that focused on specialty food products.

Participating companies were [Pantry Shelf](#) of Hutchinson, [Original Juan Specialty Foods](#) of Kansas City, Kan., and [Rabbit Creek Products](#) of Louisburg.

Participating companies were able to learn valuable information regarding retail, foodservice and general consumer demands in the Russian marketplace. Participants began the trade mission in Moscow and concluded with a port and logistical overview in St. Petersburg.

To learn more about international agricultural marketing efforts in Kansas, [contact the Agricultural Marketing team](#) at the Kansas Department of Agriculture. To view pictures from the trade mission, visit the department’s [Facebook page](#).