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Ohio Hosts International Food Buyers Mission

Columbus – Ohio food and agricultural companies met with international buyers at this year's Midwest Buyers Mission at the Embassy Suites Airport hotel in Columbus. The Midwest Buyers Mission is part of an initiative to help Ohio's small and medium sized businesses grow through export sales. This year's event was hosted by the Export Association of the Midwest USA and the Ohio Department of Development's Global Markets Division.

The Midwest Buyers Mission provides Ohio companies the opportunity to make international contacts and facilitate export sales. Potential exporters met directly with buyers from 20 countries including Algeria, Belgium, Canada, China, Colombia, India, Indonesia, Israel, Jamaica, Japan, Korea, Lebanon, Mexico, Nicaragua, Palestine, Philippines, Singapore, Trinidad & Tobago, UAE, and Vietnam. Through networking and business meetings, Ohio companies are able to build their exports, show products, and gain international business feedback.

"Events like the Midwest Buyers Mission allow small companies to make international sales with low starting costs, removing some of the biggest roadblocks to exporting," said Scott Kuehn, Director of the Global Markets Division. "Ohio benefits from being able to offer food companies access to the customized programs and services Ohio has to offer as a Food Export Association member state."

Ohio has the opportunity to host international food buyer missions on a biannual basis. In 2009, Ohio companies reported nearly \$500,000 in actual sales made at the buyer mission. Food companies also have access to a variety of other Food Export Association events, like export education seminars and focused trade missions.

For more information on export assistance opportunities available to food and agricultural companies please e-mail Global Agriculture Program Manager Tim Sword at Tim.Sword@development.ohio.gov.

***Food Export Association of the Midwest USA** is a private, nonprofit association of the Midwestern state agricultural promotion agencies that use federal, state and industry resources to promote the export of Midwestern food and agricultural products. For more information on the Food export Association and their services visit www.foodexport.org.*

*The **Global Markets Division** of the **Ohio Department of Development** helps Ohio companies explore global trade opportunities and expand into new international trade markets. The **Global Markets Division** manages a network of international offices in Asia, Australia, the Eastern Mediterranean, Europe, India, North and South America, and Southern Africa.*

*Working with our partners across business, state and local governments, academia, and the nonprofit sector, the **Ohio Department of Development** works to attract, create, grow, and retain businesses through competitive incentives and targeted investments. Engaged every day in marketing, innovating, investing, and collaborating, the **Ohio Department of Development** works at the speed of business to accelerate and support the teamwork that is necessary for success by providing financial, informational, and technical assistance to those making an investment in Ohio's future.*

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