

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Post: Bucharest

American Fine Food and Spirits – Tasting event

Report Categories:

Export Accomplishments - Events

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Report Highlights:

Activity report for beef, distilled spirits, dried fruits and nuts tasting event organized in Bucharest in June 2012 under CSSF funds.

General Information

Event name: American Fine Food and Spirits – Tasting event

Beginning/Ending Dates: June 7, 2012

City/Country: Bucharest/Romania

Purpose of the activity

The purpose of the activity was to increase visibility of the U.S. products available to the local market by means of presentations directly to distributors and HRI sector end-users.

In 2011, after two years of decline, distilled spirits import trade grew by 13 percent, indicating a recovery in consumer demand. We forecast continued expansion of the sector in 2012. The United States is a significant supplier of whiskey's to the Romanian market, and is the leading provider of Bourbon whiskey.

In 2011, the Romanian snack food industry generated increased consumer interest for most dried fruits and nuts. The United States is the leading supplier of almonds on the market accounting for 57 percent of total imports. In 2011, U.S. walnuts also expanded their share in the market significantly, mainly driven by the retail (grocery) sector. Other U.S. origin products showing increased interest among consumers include dried plumes and pecans. These products, however, are imported via other EU Member States.

Activity Description

AgBucharest introduced over 120 participants to U.S. quality beef, distilled spirits, dried fruits and nuts in cooperation with the U.S. Distilled Spirits Council, U.S. Meat Export Federation, California Prune Board, Food Export Association of the Midwest through MK2 gmbh and Romanian importers of US origin goods.

The activity focused on educating retail and HRI related entities on effective promotional techniques for Bourbon and Tennessee Whiskey along with dried fruits and nuts through tastings and cooking demonstrations. Participants had the opportunity to experience a mixology lesson delivered by a famous Romanian bartender and learn from a well-known chef on how to use quality U.S. products through a cooking demonstration that highlighted the products positive attributes. The event provided attendees an overview of the numerous ways beef, distilled spirits, prunes, cranberries and tree nuts can be matched to create delicious dishes. In the end, guests had the opportunity to taste delicious U.S. dishes made with premium U.S. products. Participants in the promotional event included importers, distributors, processors, retailers, and representatives from several hotels, restaurants and bars. U.S. Ambassador Mark H. Gitenstein hosted the promotional event at his residence. Certificates of Appreciation signed by

the Ambassador and the AgAttaché were distributed to the exhibitors and guest speakers. AgBucharest worked with media, outlets and the food service sector to organize this event highlighting the attributes of U.S. quality products.

Demonstrations introducing American whiskey and sophisticated cocktails were offered by bartender Costin Gache/Upsiders, as well as steaks and American sweets prepared by Executive Chef Henrik Sebok. Romanian bartender Costin Gache made a demonstration in which he presented all sorts of quality bourbons and whiskeys that are currently on the Romanian market, emphasizing their unique method of production that is used in the process of maturing resulting in a unique flavor for each brand.

Executive Chef Henrik Sebok made a demonstration on preparing tender steaks using whiskey and bourbon as ingredients. He also made a pie with maple syrup, nuts, cranberries, and prunes. His presentation style entertained the audience and underlined the health benefits of cranberries, prunes and nuts (cranberries are an essential part of a diet for a healthy heart, while prunes are an important source of antioxidants and iron).



Ag Attaché Michael Henney delivering welcoming remarks



AMB M. Gitenstein awarding Mr. Benjamin Fabian, USMEF



Bartender Costin Gache delivering mixology lesson



Jim Beam and Cranberry juice cocktail recipe



Exec. Chef Henrik Sebok delivering cooking demonstration



Exec. Chef Henrik Sebok delivering cooking demonstration



Overview of the invitees



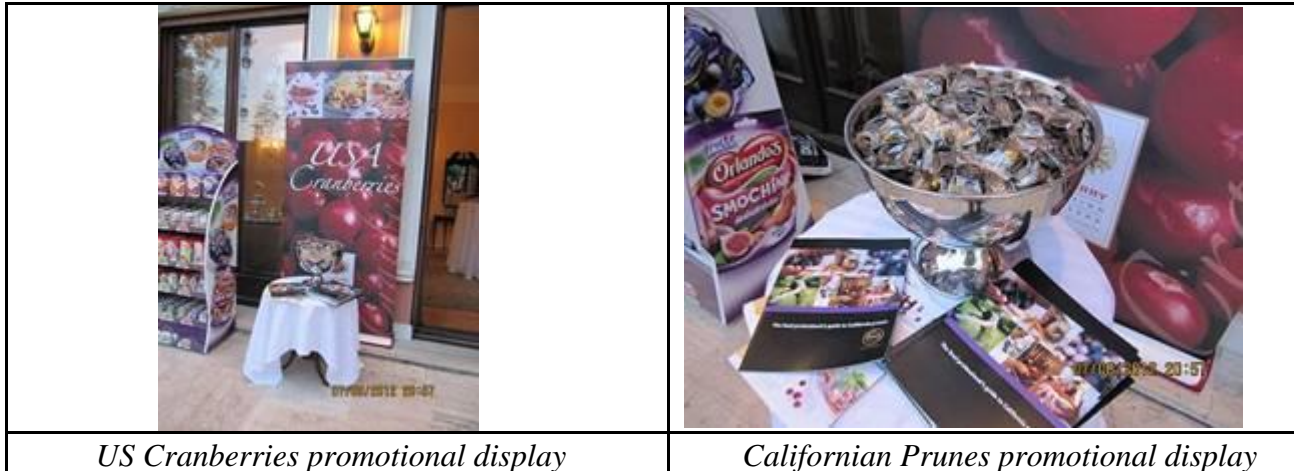
AMB M. Gitenstein in a conversation with invitees



Jack Daniel's promotional display



Jack Daniel's promotional display



Expected Results and Desired Outcomes:

The event was intended to increase visibility of U.S. products on the local market by directly reaching out to business owners and end-user operations. With this tasting event, we aimed to consolidate the positive results generated through the Beef and Wine promotional event organized in September 2011 and follow up on those marketing efforts. With the desire to offer participants a different format of event, this year we introduced distilled spirits, dried fruits and tree nuts tasting in addition to the beef tasting.

It is expected that conditions were created to develop the market for beef, distilled spirits, dried fruits (cranberries and prunes) and tree nuts by:

- Raising awareness of US product potential in this market
- Raising awareness of Romanian market opportunities
- Improving attractiveness of US products in the eyes of Romanian consumers and business owners

Actual Results and Outcomes

The event was considered successful as a number of quantitative indicators were reached:

- Number of participating US companies/local representatives – Three distilled spirits exhibitors participated in the event, show-casing four representative brands and one nuts importer exhibited its products. Furthermore, U.S. Meat Export Federation was represented by Mr. Benjamin Fabian, from EU/Brussels office. In addition, U.S. Distilled Spirits Council, California Prune Board and Food Export Association of the Midwest USA-MK2 sponsored the event with product samples, brochures and marketing funds.
- Number of event attendees - More than 120 participants were present at the tasting event including importers, distributors, processors, retailers, hotels and restaurants, government officials and media.

- Number of contacts made during the one-day of the event – Representatives of U.S. Meat Export Federation, distilled spirits and tree nuts sponsoring companies established a high number of quality contacts during the event. These contacts will help these importers of US products to expand their market share and to consolidate relationships with their customers.
- Number of media representatives attending the event – The event was attended by a large number of media representatives, among which seven were national TV channel reps, four national coverage newspapers reps and five news press agencies. In addition, four representatives of specialty food and spirits magazines and two bloggers attended the promotion.
- Media coverage of the event with influence in raising the awareness - The national public television channel “TVR 1” broadcasted twice the tasting event during prime-time news editions the following day. Broadcasting is expected by the specialty television channel “The Money Channel” during its specialized agricultural and food show. The event was widely described by written press in addition to the specialized press representatives who published the news on their own web-sites. Specialized bloggers presented the event and delivered excellent feed-back on their blogs. There were 19 press articles and 2 TV web-casting (please see Appendix 1 for a full list of web-links).

Some other results with long terms effects, more difficult to quantify immediately:

- Sales volumes generated as result of event participation - AgBucharest projects a boost in exports of U.S. beef, distilled spirits, dried fruits (cranberries and prunes) and tree nuts, to Romania either directly or through other EU suppliers, of approximately \$420,000 during the next 12 months.

Recommendations/Follow-up Evaluations

FAS Bucharest recommends that future similar activities should be conducted with the purpose to consolidate the past efforts while gradually introducing additional products into the promotional mix. Other means of presentations will be developed in order to attract broader audiences.

With the intention of attracting new to market US companies, it is important that the approved activity proposed by Post is advertised in advance through the communication channels of U.S. cooperators.

Combination of distilled spirits, dried fruits and tree nuts together with beef tasting in one single event proven to be a very successful one, which could be used as a model for other Posts activities.

FAS Bucharest will follow up with cooperators supporting the event and provide contact list with potential importers for respective products. In addition, sponsoring companies received from Post a short descriptive report on the promotional event, the event photos and press summary.

Costs/Revenue

Activity was organized by FAS Bucharest under CSSF funds.

Post was supported by Distilled Spirits Council of the U.S. which provided “American Whiskey Trail” brochures. In addition they provided DVD “Mount Vernon Distillery Video.”

Post was supported by three distilled spirits companies, namely: Brown-Forman (representative office promoted Jack Daniel’s brand), Cristalex (Romanian importer of Jim Beam and Marker’s Mark brands) and Heaven Hill Distilleries (through their European representative, currently operating without a local distributor). The three companies supported this activity by providing the needed quantities of bourbon and whiskey for the tasting. In addition they assisted our event by partially covering the mixology lesson expenses and providing miniature bottle samples for the guests.

Post was supported by U.S. Meat Export Federation which provided the necessary quantity of beef for the cooking demonstration and tasting for 120 persons. In addition they supported our activity by providing brochures and flyers about U.S. Beef. Mr. Benjamin Fabian, USMEF representative, was able to attend the event and confirmed that this event was a great success considering the number and the quality of the attendees.

Post was also supported by MK2 Company, representative of Food Export Association of the Midwest USA. They supported our activity by providing dried cranberries samples, cranberry juice for the mixology demonstration, U.S.A. cranberries flyers and one roll-up. In addition they assisted in providing financial support for the mixology lesson.

California Prune Board was another US organization which supported AgBucharest by providing the necessary quantity of prune samples, individually packed, and brochures.

Post was supported by Orlando’s, local importer of dried fruits and nuts, which provided the quantity and types of nuts requested to prepare the menu for the event. In addition, they provided a wide variety of U.S. tree nuts to be tasted during the promotion as well as give-away samples for guests (roasted almonds, pistachios, pecans, hazelnuts, walnuts and peanuts).

Appendix 1 - LIST OF PUBLISHED ARTICLES AND TV BROADCASTS

MEDIAFAX: <http://www.mediafax.ro/life-inedit/acasa-la-ambasadorul-gitenstein-degustare-cu-whiskey-american-friptura-de-vita-in-sange-si-dulciuri-cu-fructe-uscate-9723290/>

ROMANIA LIBERA: <http://www.romanialibera.ro/stil-de-viata/gourmet/acasa-la-ambasadorul-gitenstein-degustare-cu-whiskey-american-friptura-de-vita-in-sange-si-dulciuri-cu-fructe-uscate-266636.html>

CRONICA ROMANA: <http://cronicaromana.ro/2012/06/08/degustare-de-bauturi-spirtoase-la-ambasada-sua/>

AGERPRES: <http://foto.agerpres.ro/index.php?d=-1&q=DEGUSTARE - AMBASADA SUA>

ROMANIA LIBERA <http://www.discard.ro/stiri/acasa-la-ambasadorul-gitenstein-degustare-cu-whiskey-american-friptura-de-vita-in-sange>

NEWS20: http://www.news20.ro/articol_Acasa-la-ambasadorul-Gitenstein_-Degustare-cu-whiskey-american_-friptura-de-vita-in-sange-____33216.html

ZIARE-PE-NET: <http://www.ziare-pe-net.ro/stiri/acasa-la-ambasadorul-gitenstein-degustare-cu-whiskey-american-friptura-de-vita-in-sange-si-dulciuri-cu-fructe-uscate-1986354.html>

CHERRY.COM.RO: <http://cherry.com.ro/2012/06/09/acasa-la-ambasadorul-gitenstein-degustare-cu-whiskey-american-friptura-de-vita-in-sange/>

REVISTA TANGO: <http://www.revistatango.ro/body-soul/reportaj/degustare-cu-whiskey-american-si-friptura-de-vita-in-sange-acasa-la-ambasadorul-gitenstein-4387-p1.html>

ZIARE LIVE: <http://www.ziarelive.ro/stiri/acasa-la-ambasadorul-gitenstein-degustare-cu-whiskey-american-friptura-de-vita-in-sange.html>

MONDEN.FIRESSE.RO: <http://monden.firesse.ro/Acasa-la-ambasadorul-Gitenstein-Degustare-cu-whiskey-american-friptura-de-vita-in-sange>

STIRI9.COM: <http://stiri9.com/2012/06/08/acasa-la-ambasadorul-gitenstein-degustare-cu-whiskey-american-friptura-de-vita-in-sange/>

PRESAONLINE.COM: <http://www.presaonline.com/stiri/showbiz-monden/acasa-la-ambasadorul-gitenstein-degustare-cu-whiskey-american-friptura-de-vita-in-sange-si-dulciuri-cu-fructe-uscate-1766270.html>

ALLBLOGS.RO: <http://www.allblogs.ro/allblogs/articol-blog/48811/acasa-la-ambasadorul-gitenstein-degustare-cu-whiskey-american-friptura-de-vita-in-sange->

INFOZIARE.RO:

<http://www.infoziare.ro/stire/1800565/Acas%C4%83+la+ambasadorul+Gitenstein:+Degustare+cu+whiskey+american+friptur%C4%83+de+vit%C4%83+%C3%AEn+s%C3%A2nge+>

NUIZER.RO: <http://www.niuzer.ro/Societate/Acasa-la-ambasadorul-Gitenstein-Degustare-cu-whiskey-american-friptura-de-vita-in-sange--4225786.html>

ZIARE.REALITATEA.NET: http://ziare.realitatea.net/acasa-la-ambasadorul-gitenstein-degustare-cu-whiskey-american-friptura-de-vita-in-sange-si-dulciuri-cu-fructe-uscate_583760.html

REVISTA-PRESEI.COM: <http://www.revista-presei.com/stire-Acasa-la-ambasadorul-Gitenstein--Degustare-cu-whiskey-american--friptura-de-vita-in-sange-si-dulciuri-cu-fructe-uscate-254616427.html>

STIRI.ASTAZI.RO: <http://stiri.astazi.ro/stire-acasa-la-ambasadorul-gitenstein-degustare-cu-whiskey-american-friptura-de-vita-in-sange--254616677.html>

TV BROADCAST / VIDEO:

TELEVIZIUNEA ROMANA: <http://www.tvrinfo.ro/jurnale> - June 8 - News Journal 14:00

TELEVIZIUNEA ROMANA: <http://www.tvrinfo.ro/jurnale> - June 8 - News Journal 21:00