

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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**GAIN Report Number:**

## Colombia

**Post:** Bogota

### Colombian Buyers Delegation to PMA

**Report Categories:**

CSSF Activity Report

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**Report Highlights:**

FAS/Bogotá organized a Colombian delegation to attend the Produce Marketing Association (PMA) Trade Show made up of twelve fruit importers from Bogotá and Cali. The delegation made purchases, made new exporter contacts, learned about new U.S. products and learned about new trends in the retail of perishable products. This activity continues to be a good tool to maintain good relations with the fruit importers and to expand sales of U.S. fruit in Colombia.

## **General Information:**

### **Name of Mission:**

Colombian Buyers Mission to the Produce Marketing Association Trade Show (PMA)

Dates: October 15-18, 2010

City/Country: Bogotá, Colombia

### **I. Statistical Summary:**

Post budget for this activity 404003: \$10,000

Number of companies on mission: 7

Number of Participants: 12

Number of trade appointments/contacts: 61

Estimated sales during mission: \$1,414,000

Projected sales during the next 12 months as a result of mission: \$18,700,000

### **II. FAS Field Evaluation:**

#### **A. Mission Objectives:**

Promote Produce Marketing Association (PMA) Trade show among Colombian fruit importers. Assist in making contacts and to have importers make purchases.

In order to promote the trade show, FAS/Bogotá worked with the fruit importers association (ASIFRUT) to identify companies interested in being part of the Colombian delegation, who would benefit from the show on making new contacts and renewing their already established relationships with traders and producers. In order to complete the delegation, FAS/Bogotá contacted some of the largest fruit importers directly and invited them to be part of the group. FAS/Bogotá, using CSSF funds for 2011, paid for the entrance of the invitees. The Marketing Specialist, who accompanied the delegation, got a complementary entrance. The entrance fee cost \$430 each, which covered educational sessions, a three day visit to the exhibition and invitations to the different social events related to PMA.

#### **B. Colombian Delegation:**

##### **Importfenix**

Maria Fernanda Escobar, Foreign Commerce Director

Mónica Garnica, Commercial Director

Harold Garnica, Commercial Vice- President

Fruit trader located in Cali, with branches in Bogotá, Medellín, Bucaramanga and Barranquilla. Annual sales are estimated at \$30 million. Their main customers are retailer chains, mini markets and mom and pops.

Importfenix is one of the largest fruit importers in Colombia, importing apples, kiwis, pears, peaches, nectarines, grapes, prunes, plums, and cherries from Chile, France, Italy and the United States depending on price and availability.

##### **Frutícola de Colombia**

Jackson Melo, Presidente

Zalvania Olivares, Public Relations Manager

Fruit trader located in Cali with branches in Bogota, Medellin and Barranquilla. Annual sales are approximately \$19 million. The main customers of this company are wholesale markets, food service and retailers. Frutícola de Colombia imports from the United States apples, pears, prunes, nectarines, kiwis, cherries and grapes.

**Importadora Becerra Gallego Ltda.**

Luis Heriberto Becerra, General Manager

This company is a Fruit and vegetables importer/distributor. The Annual sales are of approximately \$3.1 million. Importadora Becerra Gallego imports 80 percent of the fruit from Chile and 20 percent from the United States. This company imports mostly apples, pears, kiwis, prunes and grapes. Their main customers are the large supermarket chains.

**Nieto & Milevcic Ltda.**

Adriana Barrera, Purchase Director

This company is a large producer of mushrooms and a fruit importer and processor. This company cuts and packs fruit for final consumer and food service. They cut and pack fruit and vegetables for the main supermarket chains and for casinos in mines. Nieto & Milevcic Ltda. annual sales are \$12 million. This company imports apples, grapes, nectarines, citric fruits, kiwis and cherries.

**Stone Fruit de Colombia**

Rubiela Castillo, General Manager

Stone Fruit de Colombia is a fruit trader with annual sales of \$4 million. Principal imports are: apples, pears, peaches, nectarines, cherries and kiwis. Main customers of Stone Fruit de Colombia are supermarket chains, and wet markets.

**Surtifruver de la Sabana**

Freddy Orjuela, General Manager

Marta Moreno, Logistics Coordinator

Javier Hernandez, F&B Group

Surtifruver de la Sabana is a Colombian hypermarket specialized in produce trade, with annual sales of approximately \$69 million. This company opened the first store in 1997 and as of 2010 has 15 stores throughout the country. Surtifruver has 2,000 employees and buys around 500 metric tons of produce daily. This company buys most of the products from the Colombian farms. Surtifruver practices corporate social responsibility and contributes to bettering the situation of around one thousand Colombian farmers providing training and guidance. The farmers that participate in the Surtifruver program learn how to comply with the store requirements regarding production and good harvesting practices in order to meet required standards. Surtifruver de la Sabana is considered the largest hypermarket specialized in produce in South America. More than 9 million customers visit the 15 stores every year.

Surtifruver de la Sabana imports apples, pears, grapes, kiwi, nectarines, peaches, mostly from Chile, but when the season is over in Chile they buy from the United States for about a three month window. If the CTPA is ratified then the United States will be competitive year-round.

**Green and Fresh**

Astrid Suarez

Green and Fresh is a fruit trader with annual sales of \$0.5 million. Principal imports are: apples, pears, peaches, nectarines, cherries and kiwis. Main customers of Green and Fresh are supermarket chains and wet markets in Bogotá and Medellín.

**C. Observations:**

After reviewing the buyers' evaluation sheets and talking with members of the delegation, we conclude that the

companies are happy and grateful to the Foreign Agricultural Service Office in Bogotá for the support provided and they hope to continue receiving more, or at least the same support provided in recent years.

The delegation confirmed that their expectations about the show were satisfied. They made new contacts, identified new trends as how to present produce in shelves, found interesting equipment to use in cutting and packing fruits and vegetables, and found new packing products and systems.

#### D. Public Relations:

On Friday, October 15, 2010, the welcoming reception was hosted by the President of PMA in the Hilton Hotel. Most of the Colombian delegation attended and this was an excellent opportunity to meet with buyers from other countries and U.S. exhibitors.

On Sunday, October 17, the California Tree Fruit Agreement hosted a reception for the international buyers. The Colombian delegation had the opportunity to meet with suppliers, buyers and contacts related to the fruit trade.

#### E. Conclusions and Recommendations:

1. PMA continues to be a good marketing activity and a great opportunity to maintain Colombian fruit importers interested in U.S. product. The show will be even more effective once the CTPA between the United States and Colombia is implemented, as the United States will gain greater access to Colombia's fruit market.
2. As an incentive to motivate participants, Post should continue offering assistance and work with cooperators to promote future PMA shows and create trade servicing activities outside the office, such as free entrance to the show and the conferences, provide logistic support to importers, such as guidance and translation. The managers and representatives of the small and medium size fruit business, who regularly attend the show are seriously interested in doing business, but many times the language is a barrier therefore the translation provided by FAS delegate is important.

#### F. New Contacts

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