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Date: 12/4/2012

GAIN Report Number: JA2536

Japan

Post: Tokyo ATO

Trade Show Evaluation Report - FOODMESSE in Niigata 2012

Report Categories:

CSSF Activity Report

Trade Show Evaluation

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Report Highlights:

FoodMesse Niigata is the largest food trade show in northeastern Japan, attracting over 7,200 local visitors. ATO Japan managed a pavilion for the second straight year which included the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute, and the U.S. Dairy Export Council (USDEC) as well as three importers representing snack foods, confectionery, and craft beer. In addition, the USDEC held a seminar attended by about 30 local buyers. USA Pavilion exhibitors reported projected sales of over \$450,000.

General Information:

Name of Show:	FOODMESSE in Niigata 2012
Dates:	
City/Country:	Toki Messe (Niigata Convention Center), Niigata, Japan

A. STATISTICAL SUMMARY

()=2011

1) Profile of Visitors:

Total Number of FOODMESSE in Niigata Visitors	7,209(5,941)
Estimated Number of Trade Visitors	5,100 (3,500)
Estimated Number of Visitors to the U.S. booths	1,000 (400)

2) Profile of U.S. Pavilion:

Size	
Booths	6 booths (5 booths)
Companies/organizations exhibited (including ATO)	6 (5)
ATO Information Booth & Lounge	9 sq. m. (9 sq. m.)

3) Number of Country Pavilions (booths) at the show:

2 countries:	Australia and USA
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4) Show Expenses*:

Upgrade Design/Construction of U.S. Pavilion	\$4,000.00 (FY12 CSSF)
Public Relations	\$0.00
Catalog	
Receptions/Seminars	
Customs Clearance	n/a
ATO booth attendants	None

ATO Travel	\$894.00 (FY13 GA)
Other (mineral water, booth cleaning)	\$0
Total ATO Expenses	\$4,894.00

5) Exhibitor Expenses*:

1. Participation fees/direct payments	
a. Average cost per firm	\$385.00 \$1,925.00
b. Total for all firms	
2. Other expenses	
a. Average cost per firm	\$2,000.00 \$10,000.00
b. Total for all firms	
Total exhibitor expenses (aggregate of items 1b + 2b)	\$11,925.00

*Rate: ¥78=US\$1.00

6) Product/Sales Information

Number of products test marketed	24
Number of serious new contacts	29
Products that generated the most buyer interest	Chocolate, Jerky, Candy, Snack, Sauce, Cake Mix, Cheese, Smoked Salmon, Craft beer
On-site sales at the show	\$0
Total projected 12-month sales resulting from show	Y35,100,000 (\$450,000)

B. FAS FIELD EVALUATION

1) Show Objectives: FOODMESSE in Niigata, organized by Niigata City, provides an excellent venue for ATO Cooperator, U.S. food companies and their Japanese agents interested in promoting their products to the retail sector buyers in Niigata and other North-Eastern Japan areas (Hokuriku and Tohoku Regions). The show is particularly well suited for introducing consumer oriented products to the local supermarket buyers.

2) Show's Success in Achieving the Objectives: The projected 12-month sales resulting from the show are \$50,000.

3) Show Highlights:

Show Exhibitors:

Niigata is an agricultural production state as well as a gourmet center that has branded itself as the epicenter of Koshihikari rice, rice crackers, sake, seafood, sweets & confectioneries. There are a cluster of culinary schools, such as Apron, Niigata Cooking Technical School and International Culinary and Patisserie educate young future chefs and patisseries. All the schools included a visit to the show as part of their curriculum.

Some of the products exhibited by Japanese companies are listed below.

Pork, chicken, fish cakes, rice flour products, seasonings, soy sauce, fruits, vegetables, miso, juices, sake, beer, wine and confectionery.

International exhibitors included countries such as Australia, China, and the United States. Our pavilion exhibited four importers and their products. Their products and brands includes SwissMiss, Hersey's, Planter's, Seattle Chocolate, Tillamook Country Smoker's, Tabasco, Skippy, Best Foods, Bell Tree, Smucker's, a variety of natural cheeses and craft beers. ASMI displayed Alaskan salmon and spoke to guests about ASMI programs.

Visitors:

The first two days were open to the agricultural trade industry that included supermarkets, hotels, restaurants and culinary schools. Suzukiya Market (supermarket), Isetan Niigata, (department store), Harashin (supermarket), AEON Retail (supermarket), APRON (culinary school), Smoke Co., Ltd. (restaurant), Niigata Beer, Niigata Union Agricultural (regional agricultural coop), Uoroku (supermarket), Bandai Silver Hotel to name a few.

The final day was open to the public. Industry partners also visited but of course families and passer-byers visited as well.

Buyer Matching Program:

This year the Buyer Matching Program system worked well. Prior registration was easy and the schedule was well organized. ATO proposed meetings with Mitsukoshi-Isetan (department store) and Hokuriku AEON Retail (supermarket) to introduce ATO pavilion exhibitors, which was extremely appreciated by the exhibitors.

Special Characteristic:

Two leading Niigata companies congregated with long term business partners and created their own pavilion. Suzuki Coffee featured coffee, teas, and confectioneries. ATO partner Japan Green Tea was one of their partners. Another renowned company that was established in 1855 was Watamori who gathered some 20 business partners to create their well attended pavilion.

Location:

The ATO pavilion was strategically positioned in the center of the entire show and on the main aisle of the floor. The exhibition management aligned two legendary large scale Niigata companies, Suzuki Coffee and Watari, who distribute various food and beverage products. This created a flow into the main aisle leading visitors to the ATO pavilion where they were entertained with a variety of American products.

Exhibitors from the earthquake struck areas of Tohoku participated again this year. Niigata's leading food companies, Kameda Seika (rice crackers) <http://www.kamedaseika.co.jp/en/enIndex.html>, Bourbon (sweet confectionery) <http://www.bourbon.co.jp/english/index.html>, Sato Shokuhin (rice) <http://www.satosyokuhin.co.jp/> (Japanese language only) exhibited as well.

Niigata Toki Messe was built in 1999 to facilitate cultural and business events to attract consumers and businesses to Niigata and northern regions. It is located on the development land close to Niigata port, and linked with Japan Airline's Nikko Hotel. Accessibility could be better but it is a 10 minute taxi ride or 15 minute hotel shuttle ride from Niigata Train station. Parking spaces are ample for visitors from neighboring prefectures (states).

Niigata is located approximately 350 km north of Tokyo. Access is simple. Niigata is about a two hour Shinkansen ride from Tokyo. Taxi is the most efficient mode of transportation in downtown Niigata city.

4) Suggestions for Improving Future Shows:

It was the second year for the U.S. Pavilion. We seriously evaluated last year's show and discussed with the USA Pavilion exhibitors our future participation to this show. All of this year's USA Pavilion exhibitors including two new exhibitors found the show very useful to expand their business opportunities in Niigata prefecture and would like to participate in the show again next year. We have discussed with the show organizer since last year on how to invite more retail and food service buyers from other areas from the Hokuriku and Tohoku Regions. We found some improvement in the increased number of visitors (up by 21%) but need further effort to promote the future event.

Suzuki Coffee and Watari are success models for management to consider increasing. Each booth space for Suzuki Coffee participants was small but efficient. Visitors could easily see all the exhibitors and move through the pavilion with little movement and stress.

ATO should also consider partnering with a local company such as Smoke Co., Ltd. who might be able to supplement logistical support and who is well connected in Niigata.

5) Public Relations: Local TVs, local radio, local newspapers, foreign newspapers and food industry newspapers, with the media value of approximately \$40,000.