Show-Me Missouri Agriculture

17.4% of Missouri children, or 1 in 5 kids in Missouri, are food insecure. Read about how Nutra Blend is stepping up to serve.

Marketing Tips

Six Keys to International Marketing Success

- Meet with your customers
- Adapt your social media strategy
- Research your competition
- Know your target market’s customs
- Ensure your message translates
- Test your tactics for market entry

Talk of the Trade

Summer Event Highlights

It was a summer full of successful events for the Domestic & International Marketing Program. We hosted a Mexico Buyers’ Mission to Missouri and attended the Midwest Buyers’ Mission.
In today’s uncertain trade environment, the importance of identifying and accessing new and emerging markets for our agricultural products has never been more significant. Developing Missouri’s agricultural footprint abroad is a key priority for the Department, and the Domestic & International Marketing team works for you to sustain and enhance the trade landscape for the agribusiness community.

This dedicated unit facilitates a variety of buyers’ missions, trade shows and trade missions each year, focused on creating opportunities for new business partners and, ultimately, sales. You will read about some of these activities in the “Summer Event Highlights” section to provide insight into activities we manage and the results the businesses are experiencing.

By pursuing avenues for international export promotion, our marketing specialists are working to know your needs, and open doors on your behalf on a global scale.

To ensure we are organizing activities that align with your business goals and objectives, please reach out to let us know what impact you have experienced as a result of international trade barriers and how we can help find alternate markets to pursue. Agriculture is Missouri’s number one industry, and we are committed to supporting the interests of our farmers, ranchers and business leaders.

Our team is always ready to hear from you so please do not hesitate to reach out to us. As the end of this year comes closer, let our team know if there are any topics you would like to see covered for 2019. Our team is always seeking avenues to inform Missouri agribusinesses. We look forward to working with you to find new and continued export success!

Brenda Verslues
September.
A month rife with transition, as kids and parents alike are switching gears—trading pool bags for backpacks, morning cartoons for morning announcements, and homerooms for homeroom. For many families, this shift in mindset—from the splendors of solstice, to the rigors of routine—is a difficult one, as schedules and extracurriculars suppress the spontaneity of the season. For other students and families, however, this change is long-awaited, as the start of school means the return of something else—regular meals.

17.4 percent of Missouri children, or 1 in 5 kids across the state, are food insecure. On its face, this means that they do not know where, or if, they will get their next meal, apart from those provided in the school cafeteria. This means hungry bellies manifest themselves in a cruel correlation of low test scores and high tempers. A lack of self-esteem and pervasive stress, lost focus and despondence are far too familiar. Devastatingly, hunger to this degree touches our urban centers, rural back roads and most places in between. In the land of the plenty, we are still struck with a huge need.

But one Missouri company is stepping up to the plate. Nutra Blend, headquartered in the southwestern corner of the state and the nation’s largest distributor of animal feed ingredients, is reaching outside its corporate mission to serve a necessity beyond the bottom line. With a Drive to Feed Kids that is both literal and emblematic of their impassioned employees, there is no doubt Nutra Blend is doing their part to end hunger. With a robust assistance initiative to support backpack programs throughout the nation, Nutra Blend works with customers to help financially back meal supplement platforms through organized fundraisers. Customers participating in the program see the proceeds going toward food put into backpacks of kids in their community that are in need.

Additionally, Nutra Blend contributes directly to these funds through a point program, wherein a portion of every dollar participating customers spend at Nutra Blend is given to the drive. Driven indeed, Nutra Blend raised enough money to fill more than 20 million empty stomachs in its first three years alone.

Their reach doesn’t end at the borders of our homeland. Nutra Blend, its customers, and suppliers in the feed industry, have furthered the national initiative to feed kids by taking the program into developing nations like Haiti, where the problem of childhood hunger is overwhelmingly clear. As seven percent of Haitian children die of starvation before they reach kindergarten, Nutra Blend is working hard to shrink this alarming statistic. Realizing that the answer to world hunger is found in sustainability and sound agricultural practices, Nutra Blend is working to support Meds & Food for Kids (MFK), a nonprofit that has taught hundreds of local farmers how to grow peanuts on their land. The peanuts are then sold back to MFK for use in a peanut-based product made of sugar, oil, milk powder and a vitamin/mineral blend. This product, and the producer system it is founded upon, is providing a livelihood for farmers and saving thousands of Haitian lives.

If that wasn’t enough, Nutra Blend has a third pillar to support the global modern agriculture industry as a whole. Drive the Message is an educational mission to dispel myths and misconceptions around today’s farming industry by supporting a partner nonprofit called Farming to Fight Hunger. Committed to telling the truth about modern food production, Farming to Fight Hunger works to spread the message of the good work American farmers and ranchers are doing to provide safe, affordable and sustainable food while raising awareness of the realities of domestic and global hunger.

If you ask Nutra Blend’s leadership what compels them to go the extra mile when up against the hardship of global hunger, Randy Shanks, vice president of North American Sales, puts it best: “How can we not?”
Vietnam is one of the fastest growing economies in Asia, maintaining about 6 percent annual GDP growth over the past 10 years.

41% of the workforce holds an occupation in agriculture; Vietnam being the world’s second largest supplier of Robusta coffee and rice.

TOP 5 MISSOURI EXPORTS TO VIETNAM IN 2017

1. Forest Products
2. Soybeans
3. Other Intermediate Products
4. Poultry Meat and Products
5. Distillers Grains

From 2016 to 2017, imports of agricultural products into Vietnam increased to $24 billion.
Due to the success of the May Mexico Buyers’ Mission, the Department hosted a second Mexico Buyers’ Mission Showcasing Missouri and Illinois Cattle Genetics in July. The focus was to promote Missouri and Illinois cattle genetics, build more relationships with Mexican buyers and expand the market potential for Missouri and Illinois producers.

The buyers were interested in Beefmaster, Red Angus, Hereford, Charolais and Brangus genetics. Missouri and Illinois staff worked together to plan farm visits in each state that met the criteria of the Mexican buyers. The mission kicked off on July 24 with three Missouri stops in Lockwood, Drexel and Lone Jack. The following day, the group drove east with three more stops across the central region of the state, gaining mileage and building valuable connections. Missouri producers opened their farms to show the buyers their way of life and presented an inside look at their best production practices.

By the middle of the week, the group hit the road for “the Prairie State” to visit with various Illinois producers in Griggsville, Manchester and Pleasant Plains. Bruce Cluver with Ag World International accompanied the group and provided information regarding the exporting process from the United States to Mexico.

As a result of the mission, Missouri cattle genetics sales totaled $12,050, and the success of the mission built valuable business relationships at each and every stop along the way. Our team looks forward to supporting Missouri producers with more opportunities for building working relationships with countries like Mexico in the future.

As one event came to a close for our team, another was just beginning. On July 30, food and beverage suppliers met one-on-one with various international buyers. Our team worked with the Food Export Association of the Midwest to host 17 international buyers and nine Missouri suppliers at the Midwest Buyers’ Mission in Kansas City, Mo. On the first day of the event, international buyers toured Missouri grocery stores to view the various product and packaging trends of the retail food and beverage industry.

In-Market Representatives from Canada, Costa Rica, Japan, the Middle East, Nicaragua and Panama also attended, and suppliers had the chance to ask questions about specific markets. Food Export Helpline Counselor Dennis Lynch and Export Advisor Gary Winget attended and offered advice to suppliers as well. These meetings provided an opportunity for Missouri suppliers to interact with verified buyers to discuss the prospect of future trade opportunities. In response to this event, Missouri companies gained international trade contacts and opportunities through one-on-one meetings with the buyers.

As a result of the Midwest Buyers’ Mission, sales from attendees totaled $794,000.
Six Keys to International Marketing Success

Marketing Tips

Meet with your customers
Building strong relationships with your customers and meeting them in person is key to completely understanding your audience.

Adapt your social media strategy
Recognizing social media platforms in each country and understanding what locals are using is vital to company exposure.

Research your competition
Knowing your competitors will help you identify opportunities where your company can stand out and develop a successful marketing campaign.

Know your target market’s customs
Understanding the local culture helps bridge the cultural gap and connects your company with its audience.

Ensure your message translates
Translating your marketing campaign should elicit a certain emotion from consumers and persuade them to change their perception of a product or service.

Test your tactics for market entry
Entering the market slowly allows your company to mitigate risk. This saves your company time and money on resources.

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