

Marketing News

North Dakota Department of Agriculture

January 2004

Another Busy Year of Showcases Fly By

Another busy season of Holiday Showcases has come and gone! Although weather wasn't favorable in Grand Forks and Fargo, this year once again proved to be a good year for our holiday retail shows.

The Minot Showcase drew 4,800 people on November 8-9; the Grand Forks showcase brought in 3,900 customers on November 15-16; and the Fargo show drew 4,500 the following weekend. Bismarck was once again our largest show with 6,000 shoppers on December 6-7.

We had great company participation this year! Every showcase was sold out - and we made additional space available in Fargo.

We conducted a member survey last summer to see if there was enough interest in having a showcase in Dickinson or Williston. However, we did not get enough interested companies. We will continue to keep the western half of the state in mind and will look at those options again in a few years.

We will be setting the dates for next year's shows soon - so keep your eyes on the mail! And when you get your registration, make sure you send it in right away! We are looking forward to another successful season!

If you have any questions on the showcases, please contact Sara at 701-328-4766.



The aisles are packed at the Bismarck Showcase.



Rod Frey, of Candy, Cones & More, hands out samples of fudge at the holiday showcase.

Don't Miss the Pride of Dakota Wholesale Gift Show

Make your plans now to participate in the seventh annual Pride of Dakota Wholesale Gift Show! This year's show will take place Monday, February 23 at the Ramkota Hotel in Bismarck.

This show targets wholesale buyers from gift shops and tourist attractions in the region. We are getting ready to send the invitations to over 700 buyers from North Dakota and across the region. This is a great opportunity for companies who want to get their products into new stores or for those companies who are considering the wholesale market. If you would like more information on this show, contact Sara at 701-328-4766.

North Dakota Companies Head Back to the Pacific Rim

Due to the success of the 2003 Pacific Rim export shows, the North Dakota Department of Agriculture has secured funds to enable companies to participate in FOODEX Japan and Food & Hotel Korea, both in March.

Food & Hotel Korea takes place March 3-5, in Seoul, South Korea. Companies attending this show include Dakota Pride Cooperative, ND Mill, Dahlgrens, SB & B Foods and RDO.

The FOODEX Japan show is held March 9-12, in Makuhari Messe, Japan. Companies participating in this show are Dakota Pride Cooperative, ND Mill, Safflower Technologies and Earthwise Processors.

Each company that is participating is eligible for funds that will help to cover travel or booth costs. The companies will also benefit from Food Show Plus Services. These services provide companies with pre-arranged meetings with at least three buyers, translation of the company's information brochure, and an interpreter at the show. Please call Donna at 701-328-4763 if you have any questions on these shows.

Johnson Leads Trade Mission to Cuba

Commissioner Roger Johnson led a delegation of 13 North Dakotans to Cuba in December. The mission resulted in Cuba purchasing \$750,000 of North Dakota peas with many potential opportunities for future sales. Johnson was also one of the keynote speakers at the event; which included some 250 delegates from 29 states.

Johnson told the assembly that he looks forward to the day when trade and tourism relations between the U.S. and Cuba are normalized and when the financial restrictions that inhibit trade between the two countries are removed.

The mission coincided with the second anniversary of resumption of food shipment to Cuba in 40 years and was put together by the Cuban government after the Bush Administration forced the cancellation of a U. S. food exposition planned for January.

Cuba intended to purchase an additional 20,000 metric tons of peas from North Dakota, but that amount of product was not readily available to meet the request. It is expected that the Cuban government will be seeking an additional 8,000 – 10,000 metric tons for delivery in April. North Dakota processors of peas are hopeful that they can purchase that amount from North Dakota farmers to meet the request.

In addition to promoting peas, North Dakota companies promoted the sale of hard red spring wheat, edible beans, semolina, soybeans, onions and potatoes.



Commissioner Johnson with Cuban President Fidel Castro

Johnson, along with a group of nine other U.S. farm officials including NDDA Marketing Coordinator Chuck Fleming, met with President Fidel Castro to discuss a wide variety of farm issues. "He is very engaging and very well-informed," Johnson said. "He was especially interested in discussing nutrition and health care."

Johnson praised the North Dakota delegation's efforts. "Our companies did remarkably well," he said. "they didn't get very much advance notice and their own federal government put a lot of roadblocks in their way, but they all said the effort was worth it."

New NDDA Marketing Specialist Brings Experience to the Job



Donna Thronson, our new marketing specialist in the North Dakota Department of Agriculture, knew all about the Pride of Dakota program even before she took the job.

A Zeeland native, Donna was raised on a grain and livestock farm. “We were really diversified – chickens, sheep, you name it, we had it.” After graduating from Zeeland High School, Donna earned a degree in commercial art at North Dakota State College of Science-Wahpeton, and then went to work, first at The Finder in Mandan and then at United Printing in Bismarck. One of her clients was Cloverdale Foods in Mandan, who eventually lured her away to be their marketing manager. She subsequently earned marketing degrees at Bismarck State College and the University of Mary. Among Donna’s tasks at Cloverdale was taking charge of grilling the hotdogs for the Pride of Dakota lunch at the State Fair in Minot. So when the job at

NDDA opened up, she already knew about the program. “I had 15 years at Cloverdale and thought it was time for a new venture,” she says. “This looked just right.”

In her present position, Donna will use her marketing experience in a variety of marketing projects to help Pride of Dakota member companies grow. Husband Todd owns Appliance Express in Bismarck. They have a daughter, Chelsey, 15. Welcome, Donna!

Maple River Winery Ranks Top 10 Nationally

The 2004 Buying Guide from Food and Wine Magazine has announced that North Dakota’s own Maple River Winery has been honored with the rating of its very unique Apple Jalapeno wine as one of the top ten non-grape wines in the United States.

Maple River Winery, located in Casselton, produces wines from fruit native to North Dakota. Apple Jalapeno wine, as well as other Maple River favorites can be found at over 100 retailers across North Dakota. website reference: www.foodandwine.com/books/wineguide.cfm

For more information contact Greg Kempel, owner, at 701-347-5900 or visit www.mapleriverwinery.com.

Great Opportunities for Your Company in the Windy City

There are two great opportunities coming up for food companies in Chicago in May! The shows are FMI-Fancy Food-Organic, May 2-4 and National Restaurant Association Show, May 22-25. These shows are both considered international shows, so you are able to test the appeal of your product in the international arena.

The FMI-Fancy Food - All Things Organic Show is really three shows in one. Buyers can go from one pavilion to the next. International buyers from over 100 countries and all of the major US supermarket retailers and wholesalers attend this show.

The National Restaurant Association Show is similar in size and scope as the FMI Show. There are about 70,000 industry professionals who attend from international chains to the independent restaurants.

Both of these shows are MIATCO sponsored, so by getting your company qualified for the branded program, you can reduce your costs. Our Marketing Assistance Program (MAP) can also help defer travel costs. If you have questions on either of these shows, please call Sara at 701-328-4766 or Donna at 701-328-4763.

Farmers' Market Conference to be Held in Carrington

Organizing a state-wide farmers' market association is a goal of the 2004 Farmers' Market Conference, scheduled for Saturday, Jan. 24, in Carrington.

Sponsored by the North Dakota Department of Agriculture (NDDA) and the North Dakota State University Extension Service, the conference runs from 9:30 a.m. and closes at 3:30 p.m. at the Carrington Research Extension Center, 663 Highway 281 N.

"Farmers markets are an increasingly important part of North Dakota's rural economy," said Agriculture Commissioner Roger Johnson. "Forming a farmers market association would give both market operators and participating producers a stronger voice and establish a forum for education and development."

Johnson said farmers' markets provide producers with additional sources of income and benefit local communities by attracting people who spend money on food, fuel and other necessities.

Topics to be covered at this year's conference include vegetable production research, greenhouse production techniques, water management and entertainment agriculture.

Registration forms are available by contacting NDDA at (701) 328-2231 or ndda@state.nd.us and must be returned by Wednesday, Jan. 21. The forms are also available on NDDA's website, www.agdepartment.com. The registration fee is \$10 per person with lunch included.

For more information, interested persons should contact Donna Thronson at the North Dakota Department of Agriculture at (701) 328-4763.

Marketing Calendar

January 14-15	Marketplace of Ideas Grand Forks
January 24	Farmers' Market Conference Carrington
February 23	Pride of Dakota Wholesale Gift Show Bismarck
March 3-5	Food & Hotel South Korea Seoul, South Korea
March 6-9	Minneapolis Gift Show (UMAGA) Bloomington, MN
March 9-12	FOODEX Japan Makuhari Messe, Japan
March 23	Pride of Dakota School Lunch Day Statewide
May 2-4	FMI-Fancy Food-Organic Show Chicago
May 22-25	National Restaurant Show Chicago

Marketing Tibits

Complete Your Showcase Sales Evaluations!

Reminder to Pride of Dakota Holiday Showcase participants: Please return your sales evaluations ASAP! These figures are kept confidential, but are very beneficial to our program!

2004 Pride of Dakota Directories Complete!

The 2004 Pride of Dakota directories are done! Watch the mail for your copy! If you would like additional copies, please notify our office.

For more information on BSE, visit our web site at www.agdepartment.com.

Welcome New Pride of Dakota Members

Aquatic Technologies, Inc. Newburg	If Houses Could Talk Bottineau	GASS GAL'S Production Beulah
Awesome 2 Productions Mandan	J & J Corporation Fargo	Buffalo Trading Company Nekoma
Abstracts West Fargo	K & S Embroidery Valley City	Country Sun Mandan
JH Miniatures Jamestown	Logos N Sports Bismarck	Shirley Nitschke Jamestown
Soy Boyz Inc. Drayton	Safflower Tech. International Williston	Cavendish Farms Operations Jamestown
Tenderfoot Sock Co. St. Michael	The Incredible Machine Belcourt	Coyote Creek Metal Works Linton
Barta Wooden Crafts Grafton	Eclectic Creations Minot	Generic Flax Seed, LLC Minot
Oh Jane's Grand Forks	Carl's Bakery Bismarck	JW Handcraft Fargo
Darin Hense Fargo	Karen Davidson - Zipper Artist Minot	Kathy's Kreations Amenia
Horse N' Around Creations Walcott	Heartland Repair Service Ross	Towne Enterprises Mandan
Renewing the Heart Dickinson	JD Jaco Products Inc. Finley	West Dakota Feed & Seed Ross
CountrySun Mandan	Jingle Bell Reindeer Company Fairview	Resurrection Collection Bismarck
Ed Loeb's Sausage Fargo	Natrual Premium Meats (NPMI) New Rockford	Debbie's Sewing Room Designs Minot
Maverick Enterprises Grand Forks	Treasures Everlasting, LLP Gackle	Karen & Fond Memories Minot
Prairie Coffee Roasters Bismarck	Angell's Images Bismarck	Loeb's Legacy Specialty Sausage Lisbon
Sandy's Splendid Soaps Cavalier	Creativisions Inc. Grand Forks	
Putnams Country Corner Montpelier	Gray Squirrel Photographic Grand Forks	

Minneapolis Gift Mart Set for March

Eleven Pride of Dakota companies will be making the trip once again to the Minneapolis Gift Show. The spring show takes place Saturday, March 6 - Tuesday, March 9, 2004 at the Radisson Hotel in Bloomington.

The Minneapolis Gift Mart is a wholesale permanent showroom facility featuring over 6,000 lines of gift and accessory merchandise in 160 showrooms. In addition to the permanent showrooms, during the March and August markets, temporary booths are set up at the Radisson Hotel. There are an additional 1,000 lines of merchandise in 150 booths. The Department has sponsored a Pride of Dakota room at the last nine shows. Buyers for this show come from all over the region.

The companies that are participating in the March show are: Mable's Taste of Home, Crane Creek Gardens, Plastics Plus, gmCreations, House of Mulciber, Givinity Press, Noodlewear Designs, Thunderbird Ranch, Golden Flax 4U, Dolls by B.O.C.K. and Bonnie's Country Classics.

New Marketing Intern Onboard

Marketing Services has a new intern! Andy Maier will be in our office from now until May. He is currently a junior at NDSU majoring in Agricultural Economics. He comes from a family farm near Barnesville, Minnesota. They raise wheat, corn, soybeans, and sugar beets. His future plans include graduating from college, working in the agri-business sector for a few years and returning home to farm.

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