

SUCCESS STORY: CHERRY CENTRAL COOPERATIVE

Cherry Central Cultivates New Relationships in China with Market Builder



Cherry Central Cooperative is developing new export sales in China through the assistance of the Food Export Association of the Midwest. According to Eurmonitor statistics, fruit and nut exports to China from Midwest states reached over \$875,000 in 2013. Hoping to capitalize on the fruit export market in China, Cherry Central received a personalized report of their international prospects.

“From a Market Builder study, Cherry Central was able to learn what competitors’ products are found in China as well as pricing on those items,” said Brian Klumpp, director of business development. “In that same report we were able to learn what potential customers, brokers and importers thought about our products and what improvements could be made in packaging, price points and product offerings.”

Food Export’s Market Builder has become a valuable resource for Cherry Central and is leading to export success. The Market Builder service provides individualized data for exporters who are looking to secure a spot for their product in an international market, find new distributors or importers, and receive valuable feedback about their product. Klumpp noted that their individualized report was reasonably priced and saved the Cherry Central team at least a year of work.

“Cherry Central has made new relationships with buyers as a result of participating in Food Export activities. In China, we have new relationships that we continue to foster and believe that they will be increasingly important to our growth in China,” said Klumpp.

Cherry Central is pleased with their increased knowledge of foreign markets and thinks they are better positioned as a result of Food Export’s services. In addition to the Market Builder, Cherry Central is a Branded Program participant and has participated in multiple Food Export activities including the Food Service Buyers Mission at the National Restaurant Association Show in May 2014.

Cherry Central sees exporting as a crucial component of their business and has expanded their reach into foreign markets with the help of the Branded Program. Klumpp noted, “By utilizing the Branded Program, Cherry Central has been fully prepared to enter new markets as we are armed with all we need to do so; comprehensive market studies, vetted contacts through the Food Export and financial support on things such as travel and marketing materials.”

Cherry Central is located in Traverse City, the 1st Congressional district of Michigan. The company produces and sells frozen fruits, dried fruits, fruit juices, applesauce, juice concentrates and purees. Their fruits include cherries, apples, blueberries, cranberries and many others.

Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast are private, non-profit associations of Midwestern and Northeastern state agricultural promotion agencies that use federal, state, and industry resources to promote the export of Midwestern and Northeastern food and agricultural products. Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast administer many services through Market Access Program (MAP) funding from the USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service.