

# Michigan's Food & Agriculture Border Gateway Summit

Wednesday, June 29, 2011

Schoolcraft College—VisTaTech Center

On Wednesday, June 29, 2011, Michigan hosted a one day seminar in Southeast Michigan focusing on the food and agriculture sector. U.S. and Canadian businesses and agencies involved with the varied components of producing, selling, transporting, and protecting food and agriculture provided information about current challenges and future trends, and attendees from local, state, and federal agencies as well as Canadian officials and the private sector interacted to better understand the risks, consequences, and opportunities related to the food and agriculture sector and the region.

The Southeast Michigan / Canadian border area is an important economic center as a hub for movement of people, food and agricultural products, and other critical infrastructure activities. During an era of reduced resources, it is increasingly important for alignment of activities of all levels of government and the private sector. In this seminar, attendees received updates on current initiatives by multiple sectors including intelligence issues, public health, transportation, and the private sector.

This event was made possible through Department of Homeland Security funds through the Urban Areas Security Initiative grant allocated to the Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development and is part of Michigan's ongoing efforts to engage the public and private sectors of critical infrastructure. The day was also sponsored by the Canadian Consulate.

Over 160 people registered for the event and 136 people attended from wide range of backgrounds. Overall, the day was a success by achieving the goal of bringing together such a wide range of stakeholders and disciplines. The evaluation summary below represents the 54 evaluations that were turned in at the end of the session.

## Evaluation Summary

Directions: Circle the number that corresponds to your response, using the following scale<sup>1</sup>:

- 1 = Strongly disagree    **SD**  
2 = Disagree            **D**  
3 = Neutral              **N**  
4 = Agree                **A**  
5 = Strongly Agree      **SA**  
blank = Does not apply or prefer not to answer

- |  |   |        |        |         |         |
|--|---|--------|--------|---------|---------|
| 1. The presenters helped me learn the material.                        | 1 | 2 – 2% | 3 – 2% | 4 – 63% | 5 – 33% |
| 2. The presentations were well organized.                              | 1 | 2 – 2% | 3 – 2% | 4 – 59% | 5 – 37% |
| 3. The presenters demonstrated how the material impacts other sectors. | 1 | 2 – 2% | 3 – 2% | 4 – 63% | 5 – 33% |

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<sup>1</sup> Percentages were rounded to equal 100%.

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|--|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| 4. The presenters seemed genuinely interested in the material.                 | 1      | 2      | 3 – 4%  | 4 – 44% | 5 – 52% |
| 5. The material was presented in a clear manner.                               | 1      | 2 – 2% | 3 – 6%  | 4 – 61% | 5 – 31% |
| 6. The presenters gave understandable examples of how the material is applied. | 1      | 2 – 7% | 3 – 4%  | 4 – 59% | 5 – 30% |
| 7. The amount of material covered was adequate.                                | 1      | 2 – 4% | 3 – 6%  | 4 – 59% | 5 – 31% |
| 8. The depth of coverage on the material was adequate.                         | 1 – 4% | 2 – 7% | 3 – 15% | 4 – 43% | 5 – 31% |
| 9. I will relay material from today to others.                                 | 1      | 2 – 4% | 3 – 15% | 4 – 35% | 5 – 46% |
| 10. The on-line registration worked adequately.                                | 1      | 2 – 2% | 3 – 5%  | 4 – 28% | 5 – 65% |
| 11. The facility was well suited for this event.                               | 1      | 2      | 3       | 4 – 19% | 5 – 81% |
| 12. I would recommend others attend a meeting like this.                       | 1      | 2 – 2% | 3 – 5%  | 4 – 30% | 5 – 63% |
| 13. I would attend meetings that went into more depth on these subjects.       | 1      | 2 – 4% | 3 – 6%  | 4 – 35% | 5 – 55% |
| 14. I was interested in the subject before I took this course.                 | 1      | 2 – 2% | 3 – 4%  | 4 – 48% | 5 – 46% |
| 15. Overall, I rate this as a very good seminar.                               | 1      | 2 – 4% | 3 – 4%  | 4 – 39% | 5 – 53% |
| 16. Overall, I rate the presenters as excellent.                               | 1      | 2 – 4% | 3 – 8%  | 4 – 41% | 5 – 47% |
| 17. What did you like about this seminar?                                      |        |        |         |         |         |
- Plenty of informal networking during the break. Good high level discussion. Very well organized and the program kept moving.
  - Diversity of the presentations.
  - Good variety of industry represented.
  - Almost all of the topics/presenters were informative.
  - Concise and well organized. Speakers kept on time and questions were handled well.
  - A little less governmental, more private sector.
  - Chance to learn more about the various factors affecting the border and the chance to network
  - Many different subject matters were presented, presenting information individuals were previously not privy to.
  - Comprehensive, liked focus on local food.
  - Location was excellent, wide variety of topics.
  - Everything was right on time and followed the agenda.
  - Venue and content.

- Liked the good balance between US and Canadian speakers and perspectives, food and snacks and beverages were superb, facilities were very nice.
  - Mix of public/private and US/CA attendees. Final panel presentation.
  - CFIA involvement and presentation.
  - Enjoyed where the seminar was held, ability to hear and see all of the material presented.
  - Private panel discussions and Roy Norton.
  - Well organized and good information
  - Different agencies speaking at one seminar.
  - How all the agencies interact with each other and that all the aspects of importing food related items were covered for both US and Canada.
  - The variety of speakers, learning about border operations.
  - It was a good cross-segment of the industry and government
  - Liked that participants were given contact information for the presenters and attendees. This provided an excellent opportunity for businesses to network.
  - Great information on Canada-US exports and economic relations.
  - Food safety
18. What was the most important thing you learned?
- Private industry panel was the best.
  - Worthless day-too many presentations, no clear take-away, no goals for most presentations.
  - CFIA import process.
  - CBP, FSMA.
  - To not transport flour in unmarked baggies.
  - Communications/sharing info.
  - Everyone's goal is to keep food safe.
  - Information on second bridge span was very useful.
  - The FDA's current regulation.
  - How many failed inspections result from border inspections.
  - New sources for information.
  - That MI and Canada are biggest trading partners, how critical our trade is.
  - Ins and outs of modernization act.
  - Feedback from industry.
  - Industry perspective.
  - The PN refusal regulation.
  - The new accreditation opportunity for importers to partner with FDA.
  - How closely all of the agencies are working together, especially cross border-CA/US
  - How each system integrates into the other.
  - Opportunities in increasing export.
  - Insight into bring safe food to the people.
  - Interagency and industry cooperation is essential, private business is driving governmental decision.
  - That there are contacts willing to work with you or provide direction if and when needed.
  - Who does what among government agencies.
  - Cooperation between agencies and businesses results in more effective import/export, and other, systems.
  - Information for the FDA & CFIA regulatory bodies and their contact information.
  - The information on the FSMA was very helpful to pass on to others.
  - FMSA, CFIA practices and resources.
19. What would you like more information about?
- Let's do it again
  - FSMA
  - Impact of FSMA on industry (information presented could be gleaned from reading regulation).
  - Insights on evolving regulations, non-compliance in industry, guidance for industry.
  - FDA prediction and streamlining process for import and export.

- Want to hear more from industry and government-industry partnerships on food safety issues, success stories.
- How to integrate local health department into agroterrorism planning.
- FDA-Food Safety Modernization Act.
- FDA-exam information regarding importers.
- Cost impact of new regulations on food production.
- FSMA and the accreditation.
- Amount of information was adequate.
- How the agencies would work together in a foodborne illness outbreak.
- Penalties and compliance.
- What would be done to expedite the import process for perishable products with minimal impact on the food safety process, how industry cost concerns can be addressed.
- Would have liked to see more case studies, investigations that US and Canadian agencies have worked on together.
- Natural health products
- Transportation of imported products and storage of imported products.
- USDA reorganization.
- Specific branches of each of the various departments to have more precise contact information.
- Federal food safety certifications.

20. What changes would you recommend?

- Provide evaluation by speaker, speakers should provide useful information and a clear purpose for presentation, provide a goal for the day.
- Content of presentations was lacking, need more specific information.
- Did not like commercial panels.
- More private sector-would be willing to participate.
- Present most important subjects at more length and in more detail. Devote more time to subjects having most impact to all. Split up the seminar over a couple days to allow for in-depth study.
- If possible, make it a two-day seminar, allow more time for presenters to go over their information.
- Less general information on panelists companies and more discussion of issues. Should also have panelists from CBP/Ag, etc.
- More focused, less "shotgun" information. Too much material for the time.
- More structured panels (have a moderator), increase frequency of conference, increase time for speakers and decrease number of speakers for more in-depth presentations, as well.
- Summits held closer to the center of the state, if possible.
- None-all was informative.
- Would like more FDA involvement in planning.
- Have a shorter lunch session-more time from the presenters.
- Fewer presenters.
- Presentations seemed not well thought out and hurried, private companies should not use seminar as a self-serving promotional commercial.
- Less self-promoting and more on the import process. Discuss the issues at hand and what can be done to streamline the process.
- More detailed presentations.
- More presentations from the private sector to share experience that convey problems and solutions in the business world.
- Use this facility again, certification for attendance for CEU's.
- Coworkers