

Export Exchange 2014: 200+ Buyers from 41 Countries Spell Success

With 210 international grain buyers from 41 countries and an additional 200 U.S. exporters representing every sector of the coarse grains value chain in attendance, Export Exchange 2014 was this year's premiere global grain trade conference. Wrapping up on Oct. 22, the conference was a resounding success for both international buyers and U.S. suppliers.

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Held every other year by the U.S. Grains Council (USGC) and the Renewable Fuels Association (RFA), Export Exchange focuses on trade of corn, sorghum, barley, distiller's dried grains with solubles (DDGS), corn gluten meal and corn gluten feed during a three day conference program plus, for most of the international attendees, pre- and post-conference site visits. This year, 18 buyer teams attended the conference and toured farms, elevators, ethanol plants, technology providers and export terminals in 19 states. These teams had the opportunity to see the scope and sophistication of the U.S. production system firsthand, building their confidence in the United States' ability to meet their demand.

Building Connections That Last a Lifetime

The Export Exchange program gave attendees ample time to do business both while attending the conference in Seattle, Washington, USA, and on their tours.

"The point of Export Exchange isn't just the sales that were made this week," said Ron Gray, USGC chairman. "For us, this effort is about establishing and nurturing relationships with our customers that will continue to grow when they get back home and in the years to come."

Educating Customers to Encourage Sales

In addition to meeting with suppliers, Export Exchange attendees were briefed on the global supply and demand situation, key economic drivers affecting the global feed grains trade and the latest developments in shipping, financing and the U.S. policy environment.

Trade Teams Explore Midwest

The United States is the world's largest exporter of coarse grains. With a record corn harvest now reaching export channels, the pre- and post-Export Exchange tours were an opportunity for the world's top buyers to see the U.S. supply and quality for themselves.



International buyers and end-users made key connections with U.S. suppliers during Export Exchange 2014.

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Bullish Outlook for Feed Grains, Global Food Trade

The outlook is good for global agricultural producers and agricultural trade, according to Curtis Jones, the global director of economic analysis for Bunge Global Agribusiness, who spoke on Oct. 21 to the attendees of Export Exchange 2014 in Seattle, Washington, USA.

Keynote Address Outlook for Agricultural Exports

Delivering the keynote address, Jones said a rising population and rapidly growing incomes in the emerging economies will continue to support robust demand for feed grains and other agricultural products.

He noted that growth in agricultural imports will continue to be led by countries in Asia, the Middle East and North Africa. Demand growth in these regions is structural, as many countries face significant land, water and other resource constraints in expanding their own food production. At the same time, countries in this region boast some of the world's fastest rates of economic growth.

"Growth in U.S. agriculture depends on exports. The world's fastest growing economies are abroad, and 95 percent of the world's population lives outside our borders," said Ron Gray, USGC chairman. "U.S. agricultural exports are supporting economic progress and better lives for people around the world. We are excited to have had our customers from all over the globe in Seattle, and we are here to learn how to serve them better."



Curtis Jones addressed attendees at Export Exchange 2014.

For U.S. producers, suppliers and agribusiness – and their international customers – world agricultural trade has both a noble purpose, feeding the world and a practical payback, ensuring the future profitability of their businesses and communities.

As a share of total U.S. production, U.S. coarse grain exports have increased by more than 70 percent since 1960, when the Council first opened its doors, according to United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Foreign Agricultural Service's (FAS) figures. ♦

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Visit the Council's Flickr page to view more photos of Export Exchange 2014.

Trade teams were in the field the week before and the week after Export Exchange. Teams hailed from regions as diverse as Egypt, Japan, China, the European Union and Southeast Asia. The Council works directly in all of these markets, with offices in 10 locations outside of the United States.

For more information about Export Exchange 2014, please visit www.exporthexchange.org. To view photos and video updates from the event as well as pre- and post-Export Exchange tours please visit the Council's Flickr page: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/usgc> and YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/USGrainsCouncil>. ♦

See more from the U.S. Grains Council on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube

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Global Grain Trade Applauds Innovation, Technology in Ag Production

B iotechnology benefits farmers and consumers worldwide, and innovation in plant science is essential to meet the world's rapidly growing demand for food, said Dr. Howard Minigh, president and chief executive officer (CEO) of CropLife International, when he presented to the nearly 500 attendees of Export Exchange 2014 on Oct. 22.



Howard Minigh presented about biotechnology's role in feeding the growing global middle class, Oct. 22, 2014.

Minigh addressed the crowd of international buyers and domestic traders gathered in Seattle, Washington, for the biennial conference meant to help the two constituencies build relationships to facilitate grain trade in the coming years.

The Benefits of Biotechnology

Since being commercially introduced in the mid-1990s, the economic benefits of plant biotechnology at the farm level have exceeded \$117 billion, according to PG Economics. In 2013, 18 million farmers in 27 countries – more than 90 percent of them lower-income farmers in the developing world – planted biotech crops.

Despite the widespread adoption of this technology, its sometimes unpredictable regulatory framework driven by political forces rather than science have created notable challenges to global trade. The timelines for approval in several large importing countries are lengthening. The trend also affects the United States, the world's leading exporter. As recently as 2008, the U.S. was a global leader in biotech approvals, now it trails Canada, Brazil and Argentina on this measure.

Feeding the World

"The United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates that the world needs to increase food production 70 percent by 2050, which means we must grow more with less," said Ron Gray, USGC chairman. "To meet this demand, we need better technology of all types, and we also must continue to embrace trade as a path to food security. These are critical topics to discuss at meetings like Export Exchange."

The Council recognizes that food security is a priority for every nation and believes international trade is a powerful tool for enhancing the food security of all peoples. It is imperative that countries broaden their concept of food security beyond self-sufficiency in order to take advantage of the safety net trade ensures and to meet the demand from the growing middle class for higher quality food options. ♦

USGC Facilitates Relationships that Advance Food Security and Economic Growth

F ounded in 1960, the U.S. Grains Council develops export markets for U.S. barley, corn sorghum and their value-added products through tailored programs that meet an individual country's culture and needs. USGC's technical programs teach livestock and poultry producers how to use coarse grains effectively and manage their operations efficiently. Its trade servicing efforts educate potential and current customers about the U.S. marketing system, including financing, government programs, U.S. coarse grains quality and prices. USGC's trade policy initiatives identify foreign barriers to U.S. coarse grains exports.

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Export Exchange 2014 is just one example of numerous programs the U.S. Grains Council hosted this year to facilitate networking that will build relationships and ultimately grow our members' and buyers' business.

Promoting the Value of Trade

The Council's work goes beyond conferences like Export Exchange. In 2014, the Council began assessing markets for potential U.S. ethanol exports; worked with Tanzanian livestock associations to expand their industry; provided technical information about low-oil distiller's dried grains with solubles (DDGS) to Japanese customers; promoted biotechnology's benefits through initiatives like MAIZALL; and released its Corn Harvest Quality Report and Export Cargo Quality Report.

These programs have helped make the United States a top coarse grain exports. In the 54 years the Council has been operating, U.S. coarse grains exports have increased by more than 400 percent.

More Than Just a Conference

Many Export Exchange and USGC trade team participants expressed a continuing preference for buying U.S. grains due to the consistency and quality of the grain and the transparency and reliability of the U.S. marketing and delivery systems. USGC programs helped build these buyers' trust in the U.S. marketing system.

The Council, as the trusted bridge between international customers and U.S. agriculture, will continue to provide customer education on grain supply, use and reliability.



USGC staff and consultants work around the world and around clock promoting U.S. coarse grains and co-products.

Ecuadorian Buyer Talks Export Exchange Impact

One of the visits prior to Export Exchange 2014 included six Latin America feed industry executives, who traveled to the United States to make face-to-face connections with U.S. producers and traders. The team gained valuable firsthand information about what to expect when importing from the United States.

"I believe now in the usage of U.S. grains in our country because of how the United States manages quality," said Edison Garzón, CEO of BioAlimentar. "This was a great program in which I learned a lot."

A short video update from Garzón explaining Export Exchange 2014's impact is available here:

http://youtu.be/Xl_ILm73v8. ♦

"It's one thing to sit in a conference and hear industry and government leaders talk about how U.S. producers and suppliers have an abundant supply of high-quality coarse grains and co-products available for export," said U.S. Grains Council President and CEO Tom Sleight. "Export Exchange and other Council

Build Your Connections with U.S. Grains Suppliers

programs provide that, and more. But there is still no substitute for the ground truth you get from getting out into the field, and talking directly to farmers and exporters." ♦

The U.S. Grains Council provides a trusted bridge between international buyers and U.S. suppliers. Helping fulfill that mission, the Council offers lists on its website, <http://grains.org/buyingselling/corn/commercial-grain-exporters>, of commercial grain exporters who are looking to connect with potential customers. Please feel free to reach out to these suppliers to fill your demand. ♦