

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Post: Guangzhou

Baking with U.S. ingredients: Easy, Fun, Healthy, and Accessible

Report Categories:

Market Development Reports

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Report Highlights:

Halloween-themed media baking seminar promotes U.S. ingredients

General Information:

On October 8, ATO Guangzhou organized a Halloween-themed U.S. baking ingredients promotional seminar geared toward local Guangzhou media. Drawing on the media's interest in covering culture and U.S. holidays, ATO strategically planned this seminar to give journalists an introductory hands-on baking experience using U.S. ingredients that can be sourced locally in the new high-end supermarkets in Guangzhou. Though South China's bakery is internationally recognized, American style baked goods offer a new taste and a nutritional component that is also of interest to local consumers. Though most Chinese residents do not own ovens, media participants were excited to learn a new skill as it was the first time they had baked goods instead of the usual steaming. Executive Chef Manfred Knoeple of the China Hotel- A Marriott Hotel and Sous chef Peter Feng led a group of 20 media representatives through a two-hour comprehensive seminar covering four recipes step-by-step. Each recipe included the participation of two to three media representatives that had a chance to assist the chefs in preparing peanut butter cookies, blueberry walnut muffins, corn bread, and banana butter cupcakes.

In the United States, there is an undisputed fact amongst the supermarket retail industry: Halloween is the largest revenue driving holiday. That mentioned, U.S. ingredients can be found in most local supermarkets, so baking with U.S. ingredient is an easy, healthy, and fun way to prepare treats for the newly adopted U.S. holiday. Given the seminar was held on a Saturday and because the trick-or-treat component of Halloween is geared towards children, media participants were encouraged to bring their children to the seminar and participate in the baking activities. Children's involvement in the seminar fomented an environment of creativity and excitement among the group. The U.S. Consulate General Guangzhou's Community Liaison Office also participated in this seminar along with one of her sons emphasizing the American baking tradition to media guests. Additionally, one of the best features of the seminar was that participants had an opportunity to sample their own freshly baked goods.

ATO Guangzhou also invited the local representatives of the Almond Board of the California, California Raisin Board, U.S. Potato Board, and the California Walnut Commission as this was an opportunity to increase contact with media outlets and strengthen the relationship with them in a more relaxed setting than most of the events they frequently engage the media representatives. The media attending the event included News Express, Life of Guangzhou, The Southern Metropolis Daily, Information Times, Guangzhou Daily, Guangzhou Daily On-line, Trend Weekly Magazine, China Southern Airlines Elite Magazine, U Life Magazine, Hopes Magazines, and Oliver restaurant magazine.

Continued promotions with U.S. baking ingredients are needed in the South China market since USDA cooperators are mostly focused on the industrial and trade audiences, it was important for ATO Guangzhou to demonstrate how easy and accessible baking is to local residents. Additionally, middle class households pay great attention food safety and health aspects of snacks. What better way to control of food safety than for consumers to bake their own goods. Post recommends launching similar activities periodically in order to maintain consumer awareness in an informal and relaxed setting.

Other evidence of this event's success was the extensive coverage in personal micro-blogs of most of the media participants. They took pictures and commented on various features of the seminar. One reporter commented at length about her interest in purchasing a small oven to explore baking as a new hobby that can attract more friends and keep her family happy. The seminar used CSSF funding and cost a total of

\$635.

Immediate feedback from media outlets

U.S. Agricultural Consul: Baking is Easy with U.S. ingredients

http://www.lifeofguangzhou.com/node_981/node_989/node_994/node_1024/2011/10/10/131821597991599.shtml

Southern Metropolitan Daily

<http://gcontent.oeeee.com/1/8e/18ead4c77c3f40da/Blog/ee1/c365e5.html>

Life Dayoo.com http://life.dayoo.com/meal/201110/17/108610_19903822.htm