

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Date: 1/5/2017

GAIN Report Number: UAE 01-2017

United Arab Emirates

Post: Dubai

Tempered Progress for SIAL Middle East 2016

Report Categories:

Trade Show Evaluation

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Report Highlights:

U.S. exhibitors confirmed \$66,000 worth of on-site sales and project \$1,196,000 over the next 12 months. SIAL's business atmosphere is proving to be a good fit for two types of exhibitors: Prospective exporters who are new to the region and exploring market opportunities, and conversely, seasoned exhibitors that wish to have face-to-face meetings with their regular clients and discuss their trade partnership.

Executive Summary:

This is the seventh year for SIAL Middle East. The exhibition started in 2010 with eight international pavilions and approximately 7,200 visitors. This year, the number of visitors to the show reached an estimated 17,000 with a total of 30 international pavilions (950 exhibitors) participating in the event. The show's content provided a broad overview of food trends and innovation with more than 1,000 chefs competing in the "La Cuisine by SIAL Competition" (see picture 1) and the "SIAL Innovation World Champion Awards" that focused on 150 new and innovative products from exhibitors. The show concluded with over \$1 billion in confirmed sales among all exhibitors.

SIAL Middle East was held at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC) in Abu Dhabi and was organized in partnership with the Abu Dhabi Food Control Authority (ADFCA). The UAE market continues to offer significant agricultural export opportunities in order to satisfy a growing tourist industry, increasing population, and the economic expansion for the Dubai World Expo 2020.

The USA Pavilion featured 10 exhibitors that displayed a wide range of U.S. food products. One U.S. exhibitor, Beanfields Snacks, had a range of gluten-free rice and beans chips that was given a "SIAL Innovation Award" and was featured in the SIAL Innovation Award area of the show. The Hosted Buyers Program was a major success in this event with all U.S. exhibitors participating in one or more of the "speed meeting" sessions organized each day of the show. The speed session gave each exhibitor a guaranteed meeting with a variety of buyers in order to generate interest in their products (see picture 2).

Additionally, OAA Dubai conducted a market briefing for U.S. exhibitors on the first day of the event that gave participants an overview of the U.S. trade relationship with Gulf countries and consumer trends for food products. OAA Dubai also managed a FAS booth during the exhibition to introduce U.S. exhibitors to local buyers and importers. Finally, the event organizers from Imex Management Inc. were very helpful and available during the entire show. Logistical and administrative support was sufficient and satisfactory for all U.S. exhibitors.

SIAL's business atmosphere is proving to be a good fit for two types of exhibitors: Those who are new to the region as it provides ample time to meet with importers and discuss business deals, and conversely, exhibitors that are well-established in the region as it provides them with the right platform to meet with their regular customers and discuss trade partnerships and business deals.

General Information:

1. Name of Show: SIAL Middle East 2016
2. Dates: December: 5 -7, 2016
3. City/Country: Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

I. STATISTICAL SUMMARY**A. Profile of Visitors**

1. Total number of show visitors: 17,000
2. Estimated number of trade visitors (identify by type of business, if possible): 17,000 (All show

visitors were identified as trade visitors, as the general public was not allowed to attend the show).

3. Estimated number of foreign (third country) visitors (if applicable): Unknown
4. Estimated number of visitors to U.S. Pavilion: Unknown
5. Number of serious trade contacts made by U.S. companies: 125

B. Profile of U.S. Pavilion

1. Size in square meters: 126
2. Number of booths: 8
3. Number of guests at U.S. trade reception, if held: No U.S. trade reception was held.
4. Number of U.S. firms, trade associations, and Departments of Agriculture: 11

C. Product/Sales Information

1. Number of products test marketed: 39
2. Products that generated the most buyer interest: A variety of products generated interest. Bean and rice chips, frozen beverages, can coffee brew with dates, eggs, gyros and chicken shawarmas, gyro cones.
3. Total estimated on-site sales: \$66,000
4. Total projected 12-month sales resulting from show: \$1,196,000

D. Show Expenses

1. U.S. Pavilion \
 - a. Space Rental \$ N/A
 - b. Design \$ N/A
 - c. Construction \$ N/A
2. Public Relations \$ N/A
3. Catalog \$ N/A
4. Reception(s) and Seminar(s) \$ N/A
5. Customs Clearance \$ N/A
6. Other \$ N/A
7. Total Expenses (aggregate of items 1-6) \$ N/A

E. Exhibitor Expenses and Revenues

1. Participation fees/direct payments
 - a. Average cost per firm. \$ N/A
 - b. Total for all firms. \$ N/A
2. Total exhibitor expenses (aggregate of items 1b + 2b) \$ N/A
3. Revenues
 - a. Average per firm \$ N/A
 - b. Total for all firms \$ N/A

II. FAS FIELD EVALUATION

A. Show Objectives:

- Introduce U.S. suppliers and U.S. products to a multitude of food buyers in order to increase the U.S. share of UAE, GCC, and Middle East agricultural markets.
- Strengthen trade partnerships between U.S. food suppliers and GCC food importers.
- Increase importers' awareness of the wide range of U.S. food products.
- Increase U.S. food exporters' awareness of market opportunities in the Gulf region.

B. Show's Success in Achieving the Objectives (report relevant evidence):

This year the USA Pavilion included 10 exhibiting companies. Based on show evaluations received from all exhibitors, the majority listed the show as extremely effective; they were satisfied with the quality of the visitors and indicated their positive intention to exhibit in SIAL 2017.

Show's success is illustrated in the following figures provided by U.S. exhibitors:

- Confirmed on-site sales: \$66,000
- Projected sales over the next 12 months: \$1,196,000
- Serious trade contacts made: 125

C. Show Highlights (mention any special features or events):

- The Hosted Buyers Program via "3 minute speed meetings"
- La Cuisine by SIAL Chefs competition
- The SIAL Innovation World Champions showcasing innovative products

D. Suggestions for Improving Future Shows:

- Most of the U.S. exhibitors appreciated the location and design of the USA Pavilion. However, one said that it should be more "functional" with improved lighting. Another exhibitor suggested better positioning of USA logo.
- Almost all of the exhibitors suggested changing the exhibition dates and ensure it does not coincide with other major exhibitions or events in the UAE.

E. Suggestions for Improving FAS/W Management or Support of Show:

More timely allocation of CSSF funds for supporting the show.

F. Exhibitor Problems:

None reported

G. Photographs:



Picture 1: Chefs competing in the La Cuisine by SIAL competition



Picture 2: From one of the speed meeting sessions



Picture 3: From the show

H. Public Relations/Advertising:

The show was highlighted on major local events and promotions websites such as Abu Dhabi Events

and Events Eye. It was also covered in all local newspapers and through social media. Sample from the [press](#)