

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Winning Hearts and Minds through Stomachs

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Market Promotion/Competition

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Report Highlights:

Sponsored by the Department of State's Bureau of International Information Programs, two prestigious chefs, who make up the American Chef Corps, were invited to the U.S. embassies in El Salvador and Honduras to participate in their first ever Culinary Diplomacy programs. FAS saw the visits as opportunities to promote U.S. agricultural products. Over 600 local culinary arts students and top chef instructors benefited from the American foods exhibition coordinated through FAS/El Salvador. While in Honduras, culinary creations for 100 food industry magnates, which incorporated U.S. pork, were paired with wines from the United States.

General Information:

Sponsored by the Department of State's Bureau of International Information Programs, U. S. Embassy Public Affairs Offices in San Salvador and Tegucigalpa invited two prestigious chefs, who make up the American Chef Corps, to participate in their first ever Culinary Diplomacy programs.

Chef Hoss Fuentes, Executive Chef at the Palm Restaurant in Nashville, Tennessee, visited El Salvador from March 7 - 13, 2015. The focus of the Culinary Program was to have an educational exchange among Chef Fuentes and students from the two of the most prestigious culinary arts schools, Escuela Especializada en Ingeniería ITCA-FEPADE (formerly known as "Instituto Tecnológico Centroamericano-ITCA-FEPADE") and Academia Panamericana de Arte Culinario (APAC), to highlight the diversity and quality of U.S. food and restaurant industry, as well as sharing the latest trends in food preparation techniques. FAS/El Salvador promoted U.S. agricultural products throughout the program. This was a great opportunity as the over 600 culinary students are the future decision makers in the local hotel, restaurant, and institutional (HRI) sector.



Over 600 culinary arts students gathered to listen to Chef Fuentes' motivational speech.

FAS's participation in the planning of the program provided an opportunity to request Chef Fuentes' assistance in promoting U.S. bone-in beef and pork products in his cooking demonstrations. Chef Fuentes designed delectable menus that included U.S. beef cuts such as bone-in rib eye, tenderloin, and skirt steak. On Tuesday, March 10th, U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador, Mari Carmen Aponte, attended the main event at ITCA and gave a motivational speech to over 600 culinary students. After Ambassador Aponte's intervention Chef Fuentes shared with the students his keys to success in the culinary business.

During the event, FAS/El Salvador coordinated an exhibition of American food products with the support of local importers; this exhibition provided a pop of color to the ITCA event. Products such as U.S. apples, potatoes, dried tomatoes, and gluten free baking mixes were displayed.



Ambassador Aponte visits the American Food Exhibition.

As part of the close working relationship with the U.S. Potato Board and Washington Apple Commission representatives, 20 pounds of Russet potatoes and 200 apples (50 of each variety as follows: green, yellow, ambrosia and Braeburn) were donated. These products were used during a dinner at Ambassador Aponte's residence, which was a great success as well.

Promotional tour of American food products

The two-time winner of the James Beard award, Chef Guillermo Perrot, showcased American cuisine, promoted American food and food-related products, and engaged with Hondurans from all walks of life during his February 22 – March 1, 2015 visit. Mr. Perrot addressed topics like childhood nutrition, U.S. assistance to small farmers, and export promotion. Mr. Perrot is the head chef and partner of the Cuba Libre restaurants, with locations in Washington, D.C., Orlando, Atlantic City, and Philadelphia, where he helped introduce Latin fusion cuisine.

Mr. Pernot met with more than 50 culinary school students, some who aspire to own their own restaurants, or to become top chefs – or just find employment in the food industry. He spent two days working with students, offering hands-on training in knife skills, herb selection, and other food preparation topics. He also demonstrated how to follow a vegetable-rich diet. The U.S. trade association, U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF), provided an overview on the different cuts and outstanding quality of U.S. beef and pork products.

Using mainly products from a major U.S. agricultural importer and rural farmers, Mr. Pernot created his multi-"Garden of Eden" meal with the culinary students. The consisted of grilled bone marrow, sautéed vegetables, butternut squash puree, homemade pumpkin-seed and brightly colored sauces. During an evening reception in Tegucigalpa attended by nearly 100 food magnates, Chef Pernot's culinary creations were paired U.S. wines. Thanks to the support of FAS/Honduras local grocer, La Colonia, the meal featured American ceviche and four-day marinated U.S. pork prepared Cuban-style and paired with a robust pinot noir.



products
sensory
dish

brittle,

industry
with
and
sea bass

Chefs Hoss Fuentes and Guillermo Pernot are two of only 60 chefs in the American Chef Corps, a Department of State's initiative that features culinary engagement in public diplomacy.

