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American Pecan Council

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Pecan Industry Collaborates to Bring Pecans to India Through USDA Agricultural Trade Mission

The U.S. Pecan industry met with dozens of Indian nut importers and retailers to drive exports in the world's fastest growing consumer market

Fort Worth, TX – The American Pecan Council (APC), along with the Georgia and New Mexico State Departments of Agriculture (GDA and NMDA), Georgia Pecan Growers Association (GPGA) and the Georgia Pecan Commission, attended a recent USDA agricultural trade mission to India aimed at growing the industry's global relationships to drive exports. The week-long mission included opportunities for both U.S. pecan growers and companies and Indian importers and retailers to learn from each other about India's market potential, share insights on technical logistics and capabilities like shipping and handling, and experience the flavor and functional health benefits of pecans.

"This trip built on the momentum of January's APC reverse trade mission when Indian importers visited major pecan producing states," said Anne Warden, CEO of the APC. "Importers and retailers were impressed to see the size of our united pecan delegation and took it as a sign that the U.S. pecan industry is serious about working together to crack open the Indian market."

To get better acquainted with Indian food culture, displays for nuts and dried fruits and packaging, New Mexico and Georgia growers were taken to traditional and modern Indian retail markets coordinated by GDA, GPGA and NMDA. By seeing the environments in which nuts are already packaged and displayed, growers and industry members were able to understand both the opportunities and challenges that come with a new market such as weather conditions during storage and at retail in the open air as well as limited space for eye-catching displays.

Driving Awareness and Trial In India

In addition to getting pecans in stores across India, the U.S. pecan industry is also creating awareness and trial as many Indians are unfamiliar with the delicious flavor and health benefits pecans can bring to their heavily vegetarian diets.

The New Mexico Department of Agriculture and WUSATA (a state and regional trade group working to promote trade opportunities for small and midsized food and agriculture companies) hosted a Master Class featuring Celebrity Chef Sabyasachi Gorai who taught more than 100 chef and hospitality students at Galgotias University to cook with pecans. An educational lunch event with Indian hospitality and food media and dozens of hotel and top-tier restaurant chefs also covered the history, health benefits and versatility of pecans.

“New Mexico is committed to bringing pecans to India and investing in the education and awareness it will take to make this India’s newest nut,” said Jeff Witte, New Mexico’s Secretary of Agriculture. “After speaking with chefs, the media and the hospitality industry, I’m even more convinced that American pecans are perfectly positioned to add new flavor and crunch to the extremely diversified Indian cuisines.”

The Georgia Department of Agriculture and Georgia Pecan Growers Association also worked to drive trial in India’s modern grocery retail stores like Smart Bazaar, one of the largest chains in India. During the mission, Georgia set up prominent pecan displays and passed out samples to shoppers, appealing to the younger Indian demographic who crave new and exciting flavors with an affinity for American products. To drive further trial in one of India’s newest grocery stores – Food Stories – where consumers go for high-end food and experiences, the APC recruited famous chef Harpal Singh Sokhi for a live cooking demo where he spoke to customers about the snacking potential of pecans and the flavor and texture of pecans in classic Indian dishes.

“It’s impossible to beat the taste and quality of American pecans, and we were thrilled to see the enthusiastic reception by local consumers during the US-India Trade Mission to New Delhi,” said Georgia Commissioner of Agriculture, Tyler Harper. “The Indian market represents an incredible opportunity for our pecan producers, and we look forward to continuing to build this important relationship.”

To round out activities and continue to build on important importer and retailer relationships, the APC co-hosted an evening reception with the Nut and Dry Fruit Council of India (NDFC India) and the American Pistachio Growers. The reception, attended by more than 100 people from the dry fruit and nut industry, helped attendees hear first-hand the perspective of importers and retailers and what they viewed to be the opportunities and challenges to importing and selling American Pecans in India.

“We heard loud and clear from Indian importers and retailers that they want our commitment to India,” said Justin Jones, chairman of industry relations for the APC, Georgia pecan grower and co-owner of brand Zorro Pecans. “That means they’re looking for consistency and quality with every container that goes into the country. I know the U.S. pecan industry can deliver and with an opportunity as big as the Indian market – 400 million consumers with purchasing power right now – there’s plenty of room to get involved.”

If you have any questions about getting involved in exports to India or beyond, please reach out to the American Pecan Council, your local grower association and/or your state departments of agriculture who are here and committed to helping grow the U.S. pecan industry at home and abroad.

About the American Pecan Council

The American Pecan Council (APC) is a group of passionate pecan growers and shellers whose life work is dedicated to growing, harvesting and processing America's native nut. Founded in 2016 through a Federal Marketing Order, the APC's mission is to promote the many benefits of the American Pecan and help tell the story of this truly unique nut. With oversight by the USDA, APC aims to build consumer demand, develop markets and establish industry standards. APC is based in Fort Worth, Texas, and funded by pecan handlers in 15 pecan-producing states: Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, California, Florida,

Georgia, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Mississippi, North Carolina, New Mexico, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Texas. To learn more visit www.AmericanPecan.com.

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