

NEWS RELEASE

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U.S. Dairy Exports to Southeast Asia Set New Record in 2018

Partnership with World Gourmet Summit supported U.S. Cheese exports to record high of 19,000MT to Southeast Asia

SINGAPORE, April 23, 2019 – According to year-end U.S. government (U.S. Census Bureau) trade data released in March, dairy exports from the United States to Southeast Asia reached a historical high in 2018 – 441,000 metric tons (MT), an increase of 28 percent over the previous year. This stellar export volume growth to Southeast Asia comes off a record year in worldwide dairy exports from the United States, shipping nine percent more over 2017. The year-round dairy production from all 50 states in the U.S., expansion capabilities to meet increasing demand and highly regulated, and trusted food system means the U.S. will continue to increasingly provide high quality dairy nutrition throughout the globe, including Southeast Asia.

“2018 was a milestone year for the U.S. dairy industry in Southeast Asia, as we significantly ramped up multifaceted programs supporting customer business and innovation success with U.S. Dairy,” said Vikki-Nicholson West, Senior Vice President, Southeast Asia Business Unit, U.S. Dairy Export Council. “Our commitment continues to deepen region-wide, where awareness and excitement about U.S. dairy advantages is steadily rising amongst chefs and food and beverage manufacturers. We will continue to find new ways to support the nutritional and dietary needs in Southeast Asia while delivering the taste and enjoyment consumers seek” she added.

In 2018, Southeast Asia was the second largest export destination for U.S. dairy exports, coming in after Mexico, but ahead of Canada and China in terms of both metric tonnage and export value. U.S. dairy exports to the region grew by nearly 100,000 MT over 2017 thanks to strong shipments of whey ingredients, milk powder and cheese which all reached new all-time records. In contrast, exports to China started off strong but slowed mid-year following strong headwinds amidst retaliatory tariffs.

U.S. cheese shipments formed one of the brightest spots for exporters in 2018, increasing by two percent to a total of 348,591 MT exported globally, effectively making the United States the world’s largest single-country cheese exporter. Cheese exports to Southeast Asia, although still small compared to North Asian countries, followed a similar uptrend, posting 19,000 MT in exports to the region – a 15 percent increase over 2017.

“We are encouraged by the uptick in demand for U.S. Cheese in Southeast Asia, not just for commonly-known cheeses like cheddar and mozzarella, but also for artisan and specialty cheeses, including many American Originals. This bears great testament to the strength of our U.S. Dairy proposition, where our rich supplier network, vast product diversity and strong quality assurance frameworks make for highly desirable products that fit the unique and specific needs of the Southeast Asian region,” said Dalilah Ghazalay, Regional Director – Southeast Asia, U.S. Dairy Export Council. “We continue to introduce new applications for U.S. Cheeses, capitalizing on the variety, versatility, and craftsmanship inherent in each piece of cheese exported from the United States” she added.

The U.S. Dairy Export Council (USDEC) is also focused on establishing and strengthening partnerships to drive innovation in the region. These activities showcase how the United States' sustainably-produced milk supply yields a high-quality lineup of dairy protein, milk powder, specialty ingredients and cheeses which provides advantageous solutions for the region's product developers and chefs. One flagship program features U.S. Dairy as the Official Dairy Partner for the World Gourmet Summit (WGS) for the second consecutive year in 2019. The WGS partnership aims to inspire chefs in the region to innovate new, Southeast Asia-friendly food creations leveraging the versatility and variety of award-winning U.S. cheeses.

At this year's WGS, USDEC hosted a "U.S. Dairy Innovative Chef Challenge" where five acclaimed finalists had 45 minutes to prepare and plate dishes using Monterey Jack and Chipotle Cheddar – two distinctively original U.S. cheeses, and requiring them to pair it harmoniously with ingredients and flavors that haven't been explored elsewhere.

Millar Mai, Head Chef of modern Southeast Asian restaurant Ding Dong, was announced as the Innovative Chef challenge winner on the evening of April 22nd at the World Gourmet Summit opening reception. His culinary creation Lobster Tail Roulade Stuffed with U.S. Chipotle Cheddar Seafood Mouseline and U.S. Monterey Jack Glaze elevated U.S. Cheese as the star of the luxurious dish, delightfully pairing both Monterey Jack and Chipotle Cheddar with lobster and exemplifying that U.S. Cheese truly has no boundaries in the skilled hands of chefs.

"While U.S. Cheese is a relative newcomer to Asia, its culinary potential shines bright in both Western and Asian style cuisines, versatilely offering everything from fine-dining gourmet menu items to more casual comfort dishes," said World Gourmet Summit co-founder and organizer Chef Peter Knipp of Peter Knipp Holdings. "Like winner Chef Mai and the other chef challenge finalists have demonstrated, I look forward to more chefs and consumers in Southeast Asia discovering the delicious taste and innovation potential of U.S. Cheese as the secret ingredient transforming ordinary dishes into magical experiences" he added.

The U.S. Dairy Export Council also invited Chef Shaun O'Neale, winner of U.S. Masterchef Season 7 to run a U.S. Cheese masterclass and other culinary demonstrations in partnership with the WGS to further showcase the versatility and wide applicability of U.S. Cheeses to other chefs in attendance.

"Our participation and collaboration with industry-level events like the World Gourmet Summit in Singapore goes beyond just a showcase of the many applications of U.S. dairy products. It also acts as a testbed for innovation around U.S. dairy products, challenging the industry's best in stretching the limits of their imagination and professional ability to discover new applications for our exported products. At the end of the day, we enable the discovery of new, culturally-relevant applications of our cheeses, while celebrating the uniqueness and versatility of what our dairy products offer – a win-win situation for consumers and businesses in the region," said Ms Ghazalay.

Please find attached a folder comprising data and infographics highlighting U.S. dairy export shipments to Southeast Asia, as well as hi-res images of our artisan U.S. Cheeses.

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About U.S. Dairy Export Council

The U.S. Dairy Export Council® (USDEC) is a nonprofit, independent membership organization that represents the global trade interests of U.S. dairy producers, proprietary processors and cooperatives, ingredient suppliers and export traders. USDEC aims to enhance U.S. global competitiveness through programs in market development that build global demand for U.S. dairy products, resolve market access barriers and advance industry trade policy goals. As the world's largest producer of cow's milk, the U.S. dairy industry offers a sustainably produced, world-class and ever-expanding portfolio of cheese varieties as well as nutritional and functional dairy ingredients (e.g., skim milk powder, lactose, whey and milk proteins). USDEC, together with its network of overseas representatives in Southeast Asia and around the world, also works directly with global buyers and end-users to accelerate customer purchasing and innovation success with quality U.S. dairy products and ingredients.



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