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## Slovakia

**Post:** Berlin

### **American Foods Promotion in Slovakia Levies Economic Boom**

**Report Categories:**

CSSF Activity Evaluation

CSSF Activity Report

Livestock and Products

SP1 - Expand International Marketing Opportunities

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**Report Highlights:**

On September 21, 2017, FAS Berlin supported the first-ever American foods promotion in Slovakia. FAS Berlin with U.S. Meat Export Federation and U.S. Embassy in Slovakia collaborated on a U.S. beef and pork at a promotion held at the Chief of Mission Residence in Bratislava. The event targeted Slovakia's upper-end hotels and restaurants including establishment owners and chefs. The event was well received with individuals initiating contact with the U.S. beef and pork suppliers active in the Slovakian market.

## **General Information:**

### **BACKGROUND**

On September 21, 2017, FAS Berlin supported the first-ever American foods promotion in Slovakia. FAS Berlin with U.S. Meat Export Federation and U.S. Embassy in Slovakia Public Affairs Section and U.S. Foreign Commercial Service worked together to promote U.S. beef and pork at a promotion held at the Chief of Mission Residence in Bratislava. California wines and U.S. craft beers were also made available. The event targeted Slovakia's upper-end hotels and restaurants including establishment owners and chefs. Media were also invited with the U.S. Ambassador, FAS Agricultural Attaché Emily Scott and USMEF Monty Brown providing interviews. The event was very well received with many individuals making contact with the importers and distributors who supply U.S. beef and pork to the Slovakian market.



Residence Guests Enjoy U.S. Beef and Pork Cooking Demonstration

### **STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF SLOVAKIAN MARKET**

Though not initially obvious, Slovakia and particular the capitol city of Bratislava is an interesting market for U.S. food and agricultural products. Slovakia has one of the fastest-growing economies in the EU. In Bratislava, the per capita GDP is 186% of the EU average, making it the sixth highest region within the EU (following London, Luxemburg, Belgium, Hamburg, etc). Unemployment rates around the country are at historic lows, with the area around Bratislava presenting an actual unemployment rate of approximately 2%. A trip through downtown Bratislava reveals several white table cloth restaurants, including steakhouses featuring American beef. New restaurants are opening all the time, with some specializing in American-style BBQ and/or hamburgers. Aged beef from new world countries made it to a few restaurants as well. Smaller towns outside of Bratislava feature hotels with mineral spas and high-end restaurants, catering to elite Eastern European, Russian, and Middle Eastern tourists.

Infrastructure is good with many companies traveling easily between neighboring Austria and Czech Republic. Many professionals and importers speak English. Customers have a high degree of

confidence in the quality of American foods, though price may be an issue. However, conversations with one company revealed that high price was not a deterrent, but rather an incentive for people to purchase American products which are seen as a luxury item.

Actual trade numbers are difficult to detail with most products moving through the EU from ports in Germany and the Netherlands. Many individuals also simply drive to neighboring cities including Vienna to acquire goods. The GATS estimated the 2016 FAS Agricultural Total trade to Slovakia at \$1.4 million while Global Trade Atlas puts estimates at \$9.2 million (HS codes 1-24).

### **EVENT**

Recognizing the potential in the Slovakian market, FAS with FCS and the U.S. Embassy in Slovakia welcomed over 50 representatives from Slovakia's hotel, restaurant and industry sector as well as press at a promotional event featuring U.S. beef and pork at the U.S. Ambassador to Slovakia's residence in Bratislava. U.S. Ambassador Adam Sterling; U.S. Agricultural Attaché, Emily Scott; and USMEF representative Monty Brown gave welcoming remarks speaking to the quality and consistency of U.S. beef and pork. The Ambassador's chef prepared U.S. brisket, top sirloin and pork loin on a BBQ in the garden where guests could watch and mingle. A sommelier presented California wines and U.S. craft beer was also provided.



U.S. Ambassador, Adam Sterling, Welcomes Guests

The event was very successful with several people driving many hours to attend. Regional distributors of U.S. beef and pork attended the event and made contact with interested restaurants and individuals. The mood was good with many productive conversations and meetings taking place around the residence. One company expressed their interest in promoting U.S. craft beer, another popular and growing product, in Slovakia. It's clear that the both demand and an entrepreneurial spirit exist in Slovakia!

Ambassador Sterling, FAS Attaché Scott, and USMEF Monty Brown provided television interviews. The event received attention on Slovak online and cable news programs. It was presented on the Embassy's Facebook page and Twitter feeds as well.

Slovakia is covered by the FAS Berlin office. If you have any questions or would like to contact FAS Berlin for additional information on the Slovakia (or Slovenia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Austria, or Germany) markets, please email [AgBerlin@fas.usda.gov](mailto:AgBerlin@fas.usda.gov). Or check out our website at <http://fas-europe.org/>