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Hong Kong U.S. Food Community Celebrates Chef Achievement

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Approved By:

M. Melinda Meador

Prepared By:

Annie Lai

Report Highlights:

On January 12, 2016, sixteen professional chef teams representing Hong Kong and Macau establishments competed in the Global Broad-Based Initiative funded United Tastes of America Hong Kong Challenge. The contestants utilized over 30 U.S. ingredients sponsored by 15 cooperators and 9 companies in their 4 courses which resulted in an expanded appreciation of U.S. food ingredients by key culinary professionals.

The second iteration of the FAS Global Broad-Based Initiative - “United Tastes of America - Asian Chef Challenge” Hong Kong competition took place on January 12, 2016 at the Vocational Training Council Pok Fu Lam Complex. Two-person teams from 16 establishments in Hong Kong and Macau prepared 4-course menus using over 30 U.S. ingredients supplied by 15 USDA cooperators and 9 local companies.

Event surveys showed that, among the U.S. ingredients utilized in the competition, 15 were new to some chefs, and 22 were deemed products that they would use in the future. Some chefs stated that the event provided them an opportunity to try using ingredients they were not familiar with. As the goal of the project was to increase the exposure of U.S. ingredients to key culinary professionals and thereby drive demand, the GBI was an unquestionable success.

The contest took place at the training facilities at the Vocational Training Council complex, where Chinese and Western culinary professionals are in training. During the competition, ATO Hong Kong and a key importer presented a seminar for students about U.S. organic products.

Photos of the competition and seminar at the Vocational Training Council complex:





After the competition, U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service Administrator Phil Karsting welcomed the chef teams and culinary community to the award ceremony, praised the use of U.S. ingredients, and thanked everyone for their support of U.S. agricultural products in a pre-recorded message. Consul General Hart and sponsors awarded prizes to the teams.

The Sheraton Hong Kong Hotel and Towers team won the Hong Kong championship. The team won second runner-up at the final in Tokyo.

A total of 20 cooperators and 15 local companies contributed to the overall United Tastes of America Hong Kong Challenge. The event promoted U.S. ingredients and raised awareness of quality U.S. agricultural products among the Hong Kong food and beverage decision makers.



Photo above: USDA Foreign Agricultural Service Administrator Phil Karsting welcomed guests in a pre-recorded message.



Photo above: A key sponsor, Mr. Oliver Win (left), and Consul General Hart (right) awarded prizes to the winning Sheraton Hong Kong Hotel and Towers team.



Photo above: All contestants, judges, Consul General Hart and ATO Hong Kong Director Melinda Meador.



Photo above: Guests enjoyed a buffet featuring U.S. food ingredients utilized in the competition dishes.



Photo above: Guests also had a chance to take home U.S. food ingredients featured in the competition by browsing at a U.S. market table and placing their choices in a bag sponsored by Cotton Council International.