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Date: 4/9/2012

GAIN Report Number: JA2510

Japan

Post: Tokyo ATO

Two Success Stories - Trade Lead System Japan 2012

Report Categories:

Market Development Reports

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Report Highlights:

ATO Japan continues to find success increasing U.S. exports using the Trade Leads System (TLS) as a Yokohama based trading house purchased orange essence from a Florida supplier in late 2011. The success helped a Japanese manufacture whose supply of product was interrupted by the after effects of the Great Eastern Japan Earthquake and Tsunami in 2011. Originally, the company imported a limited quantity to supply a factory in a devastated area, but the U.S. has since become a source of product.

In addition, a middle size trading house purchased Natto soybean from a Minnesota supplier. ATO Tokyo has teamed up with the American Soybean Association-International Marketing (ASA-IM) Tokyo Office, who took an important role for this trade lead success.

The total value of these two trades was over \$130,000*. The importers are expecting to continue the business with the same suppliers and future total sales are expected to reach \$1.1 million per year.

General Information:

Orange Essence:

Daichi Bussan, a trading house in Yokohama-Kanagawa, purchased 8.2 metric tons of orange essence aroma (liquid) from a Florida based supplier, Cutrale, in late 2011.

The trading house had previously used another U.S. supplier, but that company found that the U.S. company had shut down the production of orange essence right after the buyer placed an order in 2009. After the March 2011 earthquake, the buyer pursued every avenue to find an alternative supplier, but couldn't find one. The buyer finally contacted the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo and was introduced to the ATO.

First, ATO Japan's local specialist consulted with the buyer's office in order to assess the financial background and integrity of the inquiry. To increase chances for success, ATO Japan worked to identify more potential suppliers than the TLS initially provided. The Trade Lead System has the flexibility to add potential suppliers from outside of the system. As such, the ATO specialist obtained additional contacts from the Florida Department of Citrus. This additional process enhanced the trade lead potential and helped the buyer to select a reliable supplier.

The new Trade Lead System is an interactive system which can adjust to most of requirements in order to match U.S. supplier and Japanese buyer. In this case, ATO Japan used the valuable resources of the local U.S. agricultural cooperator offices. After two years since new TLS started, ATO Japan has been using cooperator resources and links those resources into the TLS. This process enhances TLS potential significantly.

Natto Soybean:

A medium sized Tokyo trading house purchased soybean for Natto (a fermented soybean product) from a Minnesota supplier in October 2011. During preliminary consultation, the ATO Tokyo specialist learned that Japanese trading house has no soybean import experience but represents a reliable end-user which wants to buy the product from them. After the TLS registration, the system provided a total of 112 potential suppliers, and 9 suppliers replied positively to the inquiry. The buyer didn't know how to sort out the list and could not narrow down to one supplier. ATO Tokyo worked with American Soybean Association-International Marketing (ASA) Tokyo Office to help the buyer contact the suppliers that could best meet their needs.

This case was a good example of interactive collaboration between ATO and cooperator representative offices in Japan.

Conclusion:

These two successes demonstrate the flexibility of the TLS system and how interaction with the cooperator community can enhance TLS effectiveness.

*The two companies do not want to reveal actual sales. Therefore, post has combined the sales in order to allow for reporting but maintain business confidentiality.