



STEP – Agriculture

**Petfood Forum
April 29 – May 1, 2019
Kansas City, MO**

TRIP REPORT

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Overview / Mission Description

Saskatchewan Trade & Export Partnership (STEP) organized the first ever business development mission to the Petfood Forum in Kansas City from April 29 to May 1, 2019. The Forum is known as the petfood industry's global conference and is focused on technologies utilized in the processing of pet foods and pet treats. The Petfood Forum is serving the global pet food manufacturing industry and provides an opportunity to learn the latest research and innovative information on pet nutrition, global pet food market growth, pet food processing, packaging and many others.

Petfood Forum provides the ideal opportunity for pet food professionals from around the world to network, exchange ideas and do business with one another and with pet food manufacturers and suppliers.

The event provides the opportunity to visit nearly 350 suppliers from ingredient, additive and formulation solutions, processing and packaging equipment, packaging solutions, co-packing all in one location.

Summarized Agenda

Monday, April 29, 2019

Kansas City, MO

08:00-18:00	Move-in/Installations for exhibitors	Exhibit Hall D-E (Booth #1516)
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Tuesday, April 30, 2019

Kansas City, MO

07:00-17:30	Registration Desk Opens	Lobby 2300
08:30-10:15	• Seminar and concurrent session	Grand Ball Room A
09:30-18:30	• Exhibitor floor open	Exhibit Hall D - E
10:25-13:00	Pet Food Tech Talk Stage	The Pet Food Talk Stage Exhibit Hall D-E
13:00-16:00	Concurrent Sessions:	Kansas City Convention Center Room 2502 -Room 2505
16:00-17:00	Networking Reception	Hall D-E

Wednesday, May 1, 2019

Kansas City, MO

08:30-09:45	• Seminar and concurrent session	Grand Ball Room A
08:30-15:00	• Exhibitor floor open	Exhibit Hall D - E
13:45-14:55	Panel Discussions	2500 Rooms
15:00-16:00	• Seminar	Grand Ball Room A
16:00-17:00	Closing Networking Reception	Grand Ballroom D & Patio
15:00-20:00	Move-out/tear down	Booth #1516

Market Information

Pet food is big business in the U.S. The American Feed Industry Association reports that there are 517 pet food manufacturing facilities in the U.S. Dogs and cats represent the largest portion of this market, with it being reported that there are 74 million pet cats and 69 million pet dogs in the U.S. who consume over 3.3 billion pounds of pet food. As pet owners continually adopt a more humanizing approach to their pets, they continue to spend more money and pay greater attention to the nutritional requirements of their pets, driving the market for new healthy ingredients.

The U.S. pet food market was valued (retail sales) at US\$31.1 billion in 2017 and is forecasted to reach US\$40.1 billion by 2023, growing at a CAGR of 4.32% (2018-23). Dog food represented the largest portion of the market, accounting for 68.4% of the U.S. pet food market in 2017, followed by cat food (28.6%) and other pet foods (3.0%).

More and more, North American pet owners are considering pets to be part of the family and thus are viewing their pet's health and diet in the same light. A 2016 study by Nielsen reports that American pet owners are increasingly humanizing their pets, with 95% of pet owners reporting that their pets are part of their family. Additionally, American pet owners are increasingly preferring non-GMO and natural products over scientifically formulated products.

Results

A total of ten STEP member companies joined the mission. STEP represented one member. Three STEP members co-exhibited at the STEP booth and seven members walked the show. There is significant interest to use pulses as an ingredient to the pet food, however the quantity of the products requirement is small.

Quantitative Results

Trade Leads: 61

Deals in consummated: 19

of Companies Participated: 10

of Companies represented: 1

Anticipated sales: About C\$2.11M in the next 12 months.

Recommendations

The Pet Food industry is going through some unique changes. There are two main stream growth movements that are happening; one is animal free and the other is grain free. Both of them are popular in the market. Speaking to some of the industry experts, I understand that the grain free movement has come to its peak. Another factor that is a bit of an issue in the industry is the sudden surge of pulse companies that are wanting to sell to the industry. The industry has always been in the upward in terms of making money, however there is a fear that given the availability of cheaper ingredients, this growth may be slowed down.

One thing that is clear is this industry is niche and requires small but steady supplies. There needs to be some relationship building required as a first step to be successful in the industry. For this, we need to go back to the show. Many of the visitors, including some of our members that I met have been visiting the show for years. Some of our members who were at the show for the first time want to go back next year. Therefore, I would recommend that we continue to participate in the show.

STEP Contact For Further Information

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Pictures

