

**John R. Kasich**  
Governor

**For Immediate Release:**

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## **Ohio Companies Participate in Agriculture Market Visit to Colombia**

*International Visit Seeks to Expand the Export Market in Colombia*

**Columbus** – The Ohio Department of Development, in partnership with the Food Export Association of the Midwest, is participating in an export-focused market visit to Colombia this week. This delegation, composed of small- and medium-sized food producers, seeks to expand Ohio's exports to Colombia.

Tim Sword, the Global Agricultural Program Manager at the Ohio Department of Development's Global Markets Division, is leading the market visit to Bogota and Medellin, two of Colombia's largest cities. Four of the nine companies joining him on the visit are based in Ohio, including Shearer's Foods, Inc. from Brewster (Stark County), Smokin' Joes from Columbus (Franklin County), Pierre Frozen Foods from Cincinnati (Butler County), and Herr Foods, Inc., which has a plant in Chillicothe (Ross County).

This visit is a follow-up to the Food Export Association's market visit to Colombia last year, in which Ohio companies met with food purchasers, distributors, and retailers. Colombia was Ohio's 34th largest export market in 2010, during that year, Ohio firms exporting \$121.8 million worth of products to Colombia. This was a 15 percent increase, up from \$105.9 million in 2009.

Ohio's top food exports to Colombia include malt flour, food preparations, sausages and other prepared meats, and tomato ketchup. With the possible ratification of a new free trade agreement between the United States and Colombia, Ohio's exports to Colombia could grow substantially in the future.

The Food Export Association of the Midwest USA is a nonprofit organization that promotes the export of food and agricultural products from the Midwestern region of the United States. The organization has been helping U.S. suppliers of Midwestern food and agricultural products sell their products overseas since 1969, when it was first created as a cooperative effort between 12 Midwestern state agricultural promotion agencies and the United States Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS). The Food Export-Midwest, in conjunction with its member states, provides a wide range of services to facilitate trade between local food suppliers and importers around the world. These services include export promotion, customized export assistance, and a cost-share funding program.

To learn about other Food Export Association market visit opportunities, contact Tim Sword at (614) 728-3120 or [Tim.Sword@development.ohio.gov](mailto:Tim.Sword@development.ohio.gov).

*The **Global Markets Division** is extending Ohio's economic reach into the global marketplace. Ohio's trade managers and network of Ohio international offices promote the export of Ohio goods and services and work to solidify Ohio's position as a premier location for investment.*

*Working with our partners across business, state and local governments, academia, and the nonprofit sector, the **Ohio Department of Development** works to attract, create, grow, and retain businesses through competitive incentives and targeted investments. Engaged every day in marketing, innovating, investing, and collaborating, the **Ohio Department of***

**Development** works at the speed of business to accelerate and support the teamwork that is necessary for success by providing financial, informational, and technical assistance to those making an investment in Ohio's future.

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Media contacts: Bethany McCorkle at (614) 466-6619 or  
the Communications and Marketing Office at (614) 466-2609

Office of Communications & Marketing • 77 South High Street • P.O. Box 1001 • Columbus, Ohio 43215 • U.S.A. • 614 | 466 2609

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