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Maximizing Return on Grower Investment



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## USPB's Food-Aid Program in Action

### International Food Assistance Initiative empowers PVOs, aid recipients

**DENVER (May 28, 2009)**—Through its International Food Assistance Initiative (IFAI), the United States Potato Board (USPB) provides targeted training to the staff of private voluntary organizations (PVOs), as well as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Introducing dehy and all of its benefits to food programming has been an important, integral activity to building the foundation of the program. The more knowledgeable a PVO's staff is regarding the qualities and benefits of dehy; the more likely they will be to include it in

their programs. If USAID staff members understand these same benefits, they are more likely to approve dehy's usage in the programs they oversee.

April 2009 proved to be a busy month for the program. Following the IFAI Workshop and International Food-Aid Conference (IFAC), the USBP joined in a "Taste of Food Aid" event for USAID foreign based staff meeting in Washington DC. The USAID staff participated in a demonstration in which US dehydrated potato products were prepared and taste-tested.

At the end of April, the USBP provided training to Counterpart International, a nonprofit organization dedicated to "giving people a voice in their own future through smart partnerships offering options and access to tools for sustained social, economic and environmental development." Counterpart's global senior management team members were in Lansdowne, VA, for Counterpart's Strategic Planning sessions.

"In the busy world of humanitarian assistance and food programming, you have to take advantage of these rare chances to meet with these decision makers," said TK Kuwahara, USBP International Marketing Manager/Dehy. "Having the opportunity to meet with and present the benefits of dehy to several country leaders in one place, at one time, is outstanding and very valuable.

"Through the USBP international food assistance initiative, we are basically 'extensions' to the PVO staff. We can help them with compiling the necessary information about integrating US dehy into their food programming. This information includes calculating rations and order sizes, developing monitoring and evaluation protocols to facilitate communication with USAID staff or designing pilot programs and in-country trainings. These issues can be very overwhelming for organizations and that is typically why they stick with 'what they have been doing' for years. Adding new commodities can be very time consuming for the staff and we want to reduce that burden for them."

In both meetings, participants received instruction about the convenience, taste, versatility, nutrition and economics of dehydrated potatoes. Dehydrated potato products can be mixed and prepared with other fluids besides water, like mashed fruits and juices, or milk. The neutral flavor of dehy is especially helpful in feeding small children when considering their acute sensitivity to taste.

Both the Counterpart International and USAID staff noted how US dehy products like flakes and granules are particularly well suited for school feeding and emergency programs. Everyone was very surprised to learn how easy dehy is to use and how nutritious potatoes are. Potatoes have potassium which is essential for recovery from being under nourished and vitamin C which is complementary to other commodities in helping to unlock plant-based iron for absorption.

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David Fairbourn is Manager, Industry Communications & Policy, at the United States Potato Board in Denver. The mission of the USBP is to increase demand for potatoes and potato products through an integrated promotion program, thereby providing US producers with expanding markets for their production. David can be contacted at 303-369-7783 or [david.fairbourn@uspotatoes.com](mailto:david.fairbourn@uspotatoes.com). For complete information about the programs, ROI results, resources and tools available to all members of the industry through the USBP, please visit [www.uspotatoes.com](http://www.uspotatoes.com). The United States Potato Board—Maximizing Return on Grower Investment.

