



UNITED STATES  
*Potato*  
BOARD

Maximizing Return on Grower Investment



# PRESS RELEASE

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From left, Washington Processed Potato Grower Mike Pink, Ms. Phuong Dang of P R Consultants Ltd. and USBP International Marketing Vice President John Toasperm during a recent trade mission to Vietnam.

## **USBP Hires Vietnam Representative To Initiate Frozen Potato Marketing Program**

**DENVER—(October 7, 2009)** The United States Potato Board (USBP) will be represented in Vietnam by P R Consultants Limited. The P R Consultants Ltd. office in Vietnam was opened in 2007 and currently represents the US Dairy Export Council in the market. The office is based in Ho Chi Minh City, the commercial hub of Vietnam.

P R Consultants Ltd. is associated with the USPB's representative in China, but is an independent operation headed by Ms. Phuong Dang, who previously worked for three years as Agricultural Products Business Development Manager in Vietnam for the New Zealand Trade and Enterprise. Prior to that she worked for three-and-one-half years with Land O' Lakes as its Program Director on the Vietnam Assistance Program funded by USDA.

Vietnam has one of the fastest growing economies in Southeast Asia and is modernizing very quickly, since the country joined the WTO in 2007. The country combines a large agricultural sector with an ever expanding manufacturing base.

The food service sector in Vietnam is expanding rapidly, with sales of \$25.8 million in 2008, up 7 percent over the previous year. Western-style restaurant chains have only been in the market since the late 1990s and are led by Kentucky Fried Chicken with 50 outlets. More recently, Pizza Hut entered the market along with the Filipino burger chain Jollibee and the large Korean food conglomerate Lotte.

Four- and five-star hotels and resorts are expanding rapidly in Saigon and Hanoi, as well as on the beautiful coast of Vietnam. Growth in modern retail has been restricted by local ownership regulations, with 84 percent of sales still through traditional markets and mom and pop type stores. However, supermarkets and hypermarkets are starting to appear and will offer another sales avenue for US potato products. The cold chain in Vietnam has improved greatly, but still falters in the last stage of delivery.

The USPB will initiate its activities in Vietnam with a frozen potato marketing program. Initial efforts will focus on cold chain development, fry station management and increased awareness of US product quality and variety. US exports of frozen potato products to Vietnam for fiscal year 2008-09 were 872 metric tons valued at \$841,041. The USPB also sees opportunities for fresh-chipping and table-stock potatoes, as well as dehydrated potatoes in the market and will initiate programs for these products as warranted.

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David Fairbourn is Manager, Industry Communications & Policy, at the United States Potato Board in Denver. The mission of the USPB 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. For complete information about the programs, ROI results, resources and tools available to all members of the industry through the USPB, please visit [www.uspotatoes.com](http://www.uspotatoes.com). The United States Potato Board—Maximizing Return on Grower Investment.

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