



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Chinese Cooking Contest Encourages Dishes Made From US Frozen Potatoes



DENVER—(July 14,2008) The United States Potato Board (USPB) conducted the 2008 US Potato Chef Cooking Contest in China to enhance the application of US frozen potato products in Chinese cuisine and to encourage the local Hotel Restaurant and Institution (HRI) establishments to develop more innovative dishes featuring US potato products. Before the on-site cooking contest in May, a training seminar was held on April 8, in Shanghai.

The participants at the seminar were the chefs and decision makers from 35 restaurants in five cities around China. These restaurants are clients of US frozen potato product processors and were recommended by the restaurant/culinary association in each of their respective areas. The purpose of this seminar was to introduce the current application of

US potato products in various cuisine styles and to inspire contest candidates to create new potato dishes.

By the end of April, 10 restaurants from six cities had registered for the on-site contest. Each of the chefs from these restaurants developed one dish featuring US potato products to be cooked at the contest for the final judging. The contest was held May 14 in Shanghai at the SIAL trade show in an exhibit hall where the USPB reserved a stage equipped with five professional-electronic stoves. Two big video screens were also setup on both sides of the stage. The USPB Chinese Chef Training Video was played before the contest, and a video shooting crew, via live video feeds from their cameras, projected the chefs' culinary efforts onto these screens during the contest.

After welcome speeches and introductions of the 10 chefs participating in the contest were made, the contestants were divided into two groups that would each prepare and cook their entrees in separate heats. The first group prepared their dishes for the contest on the stage, the judges were able to walk up onto the stage and observe their preparation. When the dish was finished, it was shown to the judges first and then divided to small portions for judge's tasting and scoring. After the scoring for all five dishes was completed, the same procedures were repeated for the second group.

While the judges were busy scoring the second group's entrees, the master-of-ceremony for this event interviewed some audience members and chefs to get their views about this contest. The audience unanimously agreed this kind of activity was a creative way to apply US frozen potatoes in the style and taste of local cuisines. This event increased available menu items, and provided more choices to consumers. These new dishes, developed according to local tastes and preferences, helped generate excitement and enthusiasm for US frozen potato products and the potential for increased ideas and usage by the participating chefs and restaurants.

Cooperation between the USPB and local restaurants and culinary associations is valuable for increasing demand for US frozen potatoes. Mr. David Keifner, the Deputy Director of USDA ATO in Shanghai and USPB International Marketing Manager, Susan Weller presented certificates to the restaurants the chefs were representing.

After the scores were totaled and the results were announced, Mr. Wayne Batwin, the Director of USDA ATO in Shanghai and USPB Co-Chair of International Marketing Cheryl Koompin presented awards and diplomas to each of the 10 chefs. They were recognized for different prize categories according to their total scores.

All the dishes prepared during the contest were displayed along with the US frozen potato products used in these dishes. The Chairman of Tangshan Hotel & Restaurants Association, and representatives from Culinary Arts Master Club, Guangzhou Restaurants Association and Changshu Restaurants Association attended the contest in addition to the VIP guests and judges. Many SIAL visitors stopped by to view the contest, they also showed interest in the dishes prepared and displayed in the contest.

A cooperative promotion featuring at least part of these dishes will be conducted in selected restaurants. This promotion will provide a good opportunity for these dishes to be tasted by consumers and increase the market impact of this contest.

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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. The United States Potato Board -- *Maximizing Return on Grower Investment*.