

EVENT – PROJECT REPORT

EVENT / PROJECT: Manitoba Ag Days – Agri-Marketing Centre

LOCATION / DATE: Brandon, MB – January 15-17, 2013
(Travel and set-up January 14th)

OVERVIEW / OBJECTIVES:

Focusing on agricultural equipment manufacturing and technology; the Agri-Marketing Centre is a ‘grassroots’ concept targeting exhibitors, OEMs, entrepreneurs, emerging and globally diversified exporters, international visitors & buyers, plus other interested agri-industry professionals. Since 1991, the Agri-Marketing Centre has been an annual and unique feature of Manitoba Ag Days, occupying a separate room on-site.

Direct input from the show’s exhibitors, industry-users, and show management drives continual and progressive change to the Agri-Marketing Centre concept which now includes:

- Message centre – telephone and fax
- Internet cafe featuring wireless capability
- Business resource centre – sector/market profiles, government programming, etc.
- Breakfast forums and export training seminars
- Consulting and export planning
- Venue for meetings and business hospitality support

‘Ag Days’ has grown to become Canada’s largest, most diverse indoor agriculturally-focused trade show – i.e. Exhibitors and attendance levels for the 2013 event were reported at 550 and 36,000 respectively.

In addition to the Department and its management of the Agri-Marketing Centre, a number of sponsors / partners also contribute their cost-sharing support to its daily operations – i.e. Farm Credit Canada, Thompson Dorfman Sweatman, Juggernaut Computers, DFAIT – The Canadian Trade Commissioner Service Abroad, Agricultural Manufacturers of Canada, Inland Audio Visual, and Manitoba Ag Days.

RESULTS:

In its 36th year, the 2013 Manitoba Ag Days continues to enjoy incremental growth which Manitoba Trade has been pleased to compliment since 1991 with its ever-growing and relevant Agri-Marketing Centre concept. For 2013, a special feature was our ‘Early Bird Breakfast and Export Forum’ which took place during two consecutive mornings and developed the following two key topics:

1. “Agri-Food Investment and Marketing Opportunities: Turning low-margin grain into high margin food!” [Panel: “Profiting from the value-added chain.”]
2. “The Emerging ‘Tractor Mother Regulation’: Requirements for tractors and towed implements in the EU.” [Panel: “going global – Europe and beyond!”]

Highlights of the breakfast forum session included:

- Good, qualified attendance (i.e. Exhibitors, manufacturers, agents, reps, and agri-professionals) which numbered 45 and 60 respectively for both mornings.
- For the first time, two speaker/panellists participated (one each morning session) via video link – i.e. Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA and Linz, Austria ... *Thank You Inland Audio Visual!*
- Two relevant and industry-responsive topics were explored:
 1. One expanded effectively on the benefits (and pitfalls) that can result by pursuing value-added processing opportunities.
 2. The second morning focused on potential opportunities (and barriers) that exist for exporters targeting the European Union – i.e. Equipment regulations, technical requirements, key promotional event(s), country specific market information/intelligence, plus a ‘real world’ example of one industry leader’s approach.

PARTICIPANTS:

As an industry liaison and export-readiness ‘grassroots’ initiative, the Agri-Marketing Centre continues to be extremely effective, not only for the emerging Northern Plains – U.S. exporter, but for the globally-diversified exporter as well. Conservatively speaking and in addition to the breakfast forum attendees, discussions were held with the representatives of well in excess of 60 exhibitors (most Manitoba-based) during the 3-day event. In addition, a number of non-exhibiting, show traffic agri-industry professionals also visited the Agri-Marketing Centre.

As a complimentary exhibitor/industry message centre, business resource centre, and internet cafe; the Agri-Marketing Centre from all reports proved equally effective as well. It is surprising to note, however, that even after providing this service to Manitoba Ag Days’ exhibitors since 1991, there were still a number of first-time visitors to the centre who had just come to learn of its existence and benefits. Hopefully, the continued publicity and ‘word-of-mouth’ promotion by Manitoba Trade and our partners / sponsors will increase the agri-industry and Manitoba Ag Days exhibitor awareness of the Agri-Marketing Centre.

Bill Teerhuis
Manitoba Trade and Investment
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