

# Colombians Come to Northarvest

Eighteen importers from Colombia traveled to Northarvest, August 17-21 on a reverse trade mission. The visit was a follow-up to a North Dakota Trade Office delegation of five North Dakota pulse and dry bean processors to Colombia in April. The US Dry Bean Council (USDBC) conducted two trips to Colombia last year.

The reverse trade mission agenda included presentations at the Northern Crops Institute on the nutritional properties of pulse ingredients, as well as their applications in baked goods, snacks and pasta. The importers also heard presentations from four Northarvest dry bean processors, had three hours of one-on-one meetings, and toured SRS Commodities in Mayville, North Dakota, Great Northern Ag in Plaza, JM Grain in Garrison, and Legume Matrix in Jamestown.



*Mark Weber, Director of the Northern Crops Institute, greets the group of 17 Colombian importers on the reverse trade mission Aug. 17-21.*

The USDBC has been active in Colombia and has a number of new promotional activities planned over the next year, including collaborating with the USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) in Bogota and other US commodity groups on the "Sabor USA" or "Flavor USA" media campaign.

Northarvest Bean Growers Association Execu-

tive Vice President Tim Courneya is glad to know the USDBC promotion to Colombian consumers has begun, and thinks it will result in increased sales of US pinto beans to the South American country. "Our beans are priced very competitively and Colombian consumers like them, both for the taste and the price." Courneya says overall exports of US dry beans to Colombia in just the first six months of this marketing year equaled the exports of the previous three years combined.

Since the implementation of the US-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement in 2012, US agricultural exports to Colombia have doubled to \$2.4 billion. Colombia is currently the 10th largest market for US exports.

Sabor USA will air on a

local Colombian TV channel that focuses on younger audiences, and will include restaurant and retail promotion, social media, and a TV/internet cooking show using US ingredients. The TV channel's cooking show will dedicate the upcoming season exclusively to US food culture. The purpose will be to educate, entertain and inspire Colombians about American food. Each episode will feature recipes made with food represented by the different US commodity groups active in Colombia, including the USDBC.

The FAS intends to expand Sabor USA to other Spanish speaking countries and USDBC will continue to support these efforts to gain greater exposure for US dry beans in the Americas.



*Tim Courneya, Exec. VP of the Northarvest Bean Growers Association, with Dr. Clifford Hall, Associate Professor in the NDSU Food Sciences Department.*