

2023



CELEBRATING  
**growth**

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



**Food  
Export**  
Midwest USA

YOUR CONNECTION TO GROWTH®

As we reflect on the past fiscal year, we are pleased to present the annual report for Food Export-Midwest. Your ongoing support and commitment have played a pivotal role in the success and growth of our organization.

The successes of 2023 were numerous and diverse. Whether it was achieving major milestones, sharing success stories, or helping expand the market presence of suppliers in our region, these accomplishments are a testament to the dedication and hard work of the entire team at Food Export-Midwest. Together, we celebrated victories, learned from challenges, and continued to grow as a united force.

# dear friends

## AND COLLEAGUES

Among the accomplishments this past year was the development of a cohesive senior leadership team across both Food Export-Midwest and Food Export-Northeast. The two organizations have shared a strategic alliance for nearly 25 years and have worked together on behalf of the 23 states we represent collectively. The new leadership structure created clearer accountability, more streamlined decision-making, a richer strategic focus, and enhanced communication. We are better positioned for scalability and growth across both organizations.

At the heart of our achievements lies the outstanding teamwork that permeates every facet of our organization. Our staff, across the different program areas, demonstrated exceptional collaboration, going above and beyond to ensure that our goals were not only met but exceeded.

We crafted Mission, Vision, and Values statements. This was a collaborative effort among staff, member state representatives, board members, In-Market Representatives, contractors, and industry partners. This work resulted in the following mission statement:

**“At Food Export-Midwest and Food Export-Northeast, our mission is to empower small- and medium-sized businesses in our regions to sell their food and agricultural products internationally.”**

This mission is supported by our vision of simplifying success, enriching exchange, and realizing resources on behalf of the food and agricultural companies we represent. Our goal is to connect these companies with the world’s importers, distributors, manufacturers, and retailers to increase their export sales.

In the third quarter of 2023, we launched a state-of-the-art Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, aligning with industry best practices. This crucial upgrade enhances our ability to manage interactions with current and potential suppliers efficiently, ensuring that we deliver tailored programs and services that meet the evolving needs of our stakeholders. In the past year, we have tirelessly worked towards empowering small- and medium-sized Midwest companies to venture into the international market. Our mission remains at the core of our endeavors. Through education, market development, and promotion, we have been successful in simplifying the complexities associated with exporting value-added food, agricultural, and forestry products. The connections forged have not only strengthened our regions but have contributed to the vitality of our businesses and local communities.

Our vision underscores the importance of collaboration and support, evident in our strong partnerships with the 13 member-state agencies we represent and with USDA’s Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS). These alliances are instrumental in driving significant investment in the growth and prosperity of our member states and U.S. agriculture.

Our focus on producing results, as noted in this annual report, underscores our dedication to the long-term success of our stakeholders. Through innovation and expertise, we are driven to help our suppliers succeed, contributing to the prosperity of our local communities.

As we move into the next fiscal year, we do so with confidence, knowing that our team is the foundation of our continued success. The opportunities ahead will undoubtedly require continued collaboration and innovation, and we are confident that our staff will rise to the occasion.

Sincerely,



*Blayne Arthur*

**SECRETARY BLAYNE ARTHUR  
BOARD PRESIDENT**

Oklahoma Department of Agriculture,  
Food and Forestry



*Brendan Wilson*

**BRENDAN WILSON  
CEO/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Food Export-Midwest



2023  
**performance**  
MEASURE RESULTS



Stock | #18317387

**1,499**  
Participants Registered  
in Our Programs

**15,143**  
Buyer/Seller Contacts

**1,977**  
New Distributorships  
Established  
by Suppliers

**633**  
First-time Sales  
to a New Market

A warehouse interior with a forklift operator in a blue jacket. The background shows high shelves with boxes and a yellow forklift.

**604**  
Unique Companies  
Participating  
in Programs/Services

**132**  
New Participants  
in Our Programs

**137**  
Companies New  
to Food Export

A close-up of a tray filled with golden-brown fried chicken nuggets.

**\$604,479,495**  
Actual Sales  
(Branded + Generic)

**\$885,856,877**  
Projected Sales  
(Branded + Generic)





212

Branded Program  
Participants

268

Buyers Mission  
Participants

37

Focused Trade Mission  
Participants

Stock | #321520235



718

Trade Leads  
Disseminated  
to U.S. Suppliers



90

Completed  
Supplier Success Stories



253

Webinar Participants

409

Online Catalog  
Participants

# financial STATEMENT

## Statement of Activities

Period Ended December 31, 2023

REVENUE AND SUPPORT	Undesignated	Program	Total
Federal Program Reimbursements	\$ —	\$ 13,486,937	\$ 13,486,937
Industry Fees	\$ 1,003,938	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 2,503,938
State Membership Dues	\$ 127,000	\$ —	\$ 127,000
Interest Income	\$ 43,110	\$ —	\$ 43,110
Miscellaneous Income	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —
Total Revenue and Support	\$ 1,174,048	\$ 14,986,937	\$ 16,160,985
EXPENSES	Undesignated	Program	Total
Program Reimbursable Expenses	\$ —	\$ 13,486,937	\$ 13,486,937
Personnel	\$ 564,243	\$ 1,419,635	\$ 1,983,878
Travel and Meetings	\$ 79,933	\$ —	\$ 79,933
Professional Fees	\$ 66,996	\$ —	\$ 66,996
Other General and Administrative	\$ 364,399	\$ 80,365	\$ 444,764
Total Expenses	\$ 1,075,571	\$ 14,986,937	\$ 16,062,508
Net Assets	Undesignated	Program	Total
Increase in Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions	\$ 98,477	\$ —	\$ 98,477
Beginning of Period	\$ 2,591,792	\$ —	\$ 2,591,792
End of Period	\$ 2,690,269	\$ —	\$ 2,690,269

## Statement of Financial Position

As of December 31, 2023

ASSETS	Undesignated	Program	Total
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 295,795	\$ 89,757	\$ 385,552
Investments	\$ 1,085,497	\$ —	\$ 1,085,497
Interfund Accounts	\$ 1,449,992	\$ (1,449,992)	\$ —
Receivables	\$ 265,883	\$ 1,361,021	\$ 1,626,904
Furniture, Equipment, and Leasehold Improvements, Net	\$ 166,140	\$ —	\$ 166,140
Other Assets	\$ 447,977	\$ —	\$ 447,977
Total Assets	\$ 3,711,284	\$ 786	\$ 3,712,070
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	Undesignated	Program	Total
Liabilities			
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	\$ 522,957	\$ 786	\$ 523,743
Deferred Program Fees	\$ 65,697	\$ —	\$ 65,697
Deferred Member Dues	\$ 115,000	\$ —	\$ 115,000
Other Liabilities	\$ 317,338	\$ —	\$ 317,338
Total Liabilities	\$ 1,020,992	\$ 786	\$ 1,021,778
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$ 2,690,292	\$ —	\$ 2,690,292

## Food Export–Midwest 2023 Staff

**Brendan Wilson**  
Chief Executive Officer/  
Executive Director

**Michelle Rogowski**  
Chief Operating Officer/  
Deputy Director

**Laura England**  
Chief Communications  
Officer/Deputy Director

**Robert Lowe, CPA**  
Chief Financial Officer

**Teresa Miller**  
Chief Program &  
Partnership Officer

**Molly Burns**  
Branded Program Director

**Femke Bosch**  
International Marketing  
Program Manager

**Gina Donio**  
Marketing &  
Communications Manager

**Mike Weiland**  
IT Manager

**Paul Weiss**  
Liaison Manager

**Gabriel Burton**  
Branded Program Associate

**Laura Buske**  
Marketing &  
Communications Coordinator

**Dawn Cook**  
Branded Program Associate

**Cindy Curtis**  
Liaison

**Lourdes Figueroa**  
Marketing &  
Communications Associate

**Sarah Gerards**  
International Marketing  
Program Associate

**Daniel Griffith**  
Liaison

**Kelly Kim**  
International Marketing  
Program Associate

**Katie LaBarge**  
Branded Program  
Coordinator

**Matthew Lorenz**  
Liaison

**Matt Mager**  
IT Coordinator

**Eric Salzeider**  
International Marketing  
Program Coordinator

**Stefan Vasilevski**  
Marketing &  
Communications Associate

**Veronica Wade**  
Senior Branded Program  
Coordinator

## Food Export–Northeast 2023 Board of Directors

**PRESIDENT**  
**Blayne Arthur**  
Secretary  
*Oklahoma Department of Agriculture*

**VICE PRESIDENT**  
**Thom Petersen**  
Commissioner  
*Minnesota Department of Agriculture*

**SECRETARY/TREASURER**  
Randy Romanski  
Secretary  
*Wisconsin Department of Agriculture,  
Trade and Consumer Protection*

**MEMBERS**  
**Jerry Costello**,  
Director  
*Illinois Department of  
Agriculture*

**Don Lamb**, Director  
*Indiana State  
Department  
of Agriculture*

**Mike Naig**, Secretary  
*Iowa Department of  
Agriculture and Land  
Stewardship*

**Mike Beam**, Secretary  
*Kansas Department of  
Agriculture*

**Dr. Tim Boring**,  
Director  
*Michigan Department  
of Agriculture & Rural  
Development*

**Chris Chinn**, Director  
*Missouri Department  
of Agriculture*

**Sherry Vinton**,  
Director  
*Nebraska Department  
of Agriculture*

**Doug Goehring**,  
Commissioner  
*North Dakota  
Department  
of Agriculture*

**Lydia Mihalik**,  
Director  
*Ohio Department of  
Development*

**Hunter Roberts**,  
Secretary  
*South Dakota  
Department of  
Agriculture*

## State Regional Trade Groups (SRTGs)

Food Export–Northeast is one of four non-profit State Regional Trade Groups (SRTGs) that promote the export of food and agricultural products from their respective regions of the United States. The SRTGs were first created as a cooperative effort between the State Agricultural Promotion Agencies and the United States Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS). The SRTGs work in conjunction with their member states to provide a wide range of services to facilitate trade between local food companies and importers around the world.

### OTHER STATE REGIONAL TRADE GROUPS

**Food Export USA–  
Northeast\***  
One Penn Center  
1617 JFK Boulevard,  
Suite 420  
Philadelphia, PA 19103 USA  
T: 215.829.9111 F:  
215.829.9777  
[www.foodexport.org](http://www.foodexport.org)

**The Southern U.S. Trade  
Association (SUSTA)**  
701 Poydras Street,  
Suite 3845  
New Orleans, LA 70139 USA  
T: 504.568.5986 F:  
504.568.6010  
[www.susta.org](http://www.susta.org)

**The Western U.S. Trade  
Association (WUSATA)**  
4601 NE 77th Avenue,  
Suite 240  
Vancouver, WA 98662 USA  
T: 360.693.3373 F:  
360.693.3464  
[www.wusata.org](http://www.wusata.org)

\*In 2000, Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast formed a strategic partnership to enhance our ability to carry out our shared missions. This agreement ensures both organizations retain their independent status, while the companies we serve benefit from the collaborative effort created by the partnership. These positive effects include streamlined operations, pooled marketing resources, and more activities in a broader range of international markets.

As of December 31, 2023



309 West Washington Street, Suite 600  
Chicago, IL 60606 USA

T: 312.334.9200  
F: 312.334.9230  
[www.foodexport.org](http://www.foodexport.org)

Food Export–Midwest administers many services through Market Access Program (MAP) funding from the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the USDA. Persons with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations or alternate means of communication of program information should contact us. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. Food Export–Midwest prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, familial/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. To file a program discrimination complaint, go to <https://www.ascr.usda.gov/filing-program-discrimination-complaint-usda-customer>.

**ABOUT US** Food Export Association of the Midwest USA (Food Export-Midwest) is a non-profit organization that promotes the export of food and agricultural products from the Midwest region of the United States. The organization has been helping exporters of Midwestern food and agricultural products sell their products overseas since 1969, when it was first created as a cooperative effort between 13 Midwestern state agricultural promotion agencies and the United States Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS). Food Export-Midwest, in conjunction with its member states, provides a wide range of services to facilitate trade between local food suppliers and importers around the world. The Midwest is one of the world's leading food-producing areas. Midwestern farmers harvest grain, as well as oil seeds, fruits and vegetables, beans, livestock, and dairy products. Consequently, the Midwest is home to hundreds of companies who provide consumers around the globe with high-quality processed food and agricultural products.