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Economic Development Department Assists Garduño's with new Asian distribution

SANTA FE, NM – The New Mexico State Economic Development Department is playing a central role in expanding international markets for New Mexico businesses by assisting Garduño's of Mexico Restaurant & Cantina in securing distribution for their products in Asia.

The Office of International Trade, in association with Ms. Michelle Keng, the Director of the New Mexico Taiwan Trade Office, accompanied Garduño's Executive Food and Beverage Director Chef Eddie Adams to Taipei, Taiwan for the American foods promotion held June 20-29. From a prime position in the WTC Nangang Exhibition Hall, Mr. Adams conducted hugely popular demonstrations and tastings for the 75,000-plus daily visitors to the USA Pavilion. The mission exposed Garduño's, and their homegrown New Mexico products, to a huge new market, with an eye towards permanent Asian distribution.

The trip yielded several results:

- Two pallets of Garduño's salsas purchased to be distributed in outlets like Mitsukoshi, Jason's, Breeze and Dream Mall. There is also a pending order for 60,000 lbs. of additional product to be distributed this fall.
- Seeds were planted for potential restaurant franchising opportunities in Taipei.
- A major Taipei 5 Star Hotel requested to host a New Mexico Food Promotion where the food and beverage will be provided by New Mexican companies and featured in a month long promotion at the hotel with guidance from Chef Eddie Adams.

Mr. Adams said the Economic Development Department matched the enthusiasm of the Garduño's family, stating, "The department is as committed as we are to seeing this succeed." With the timely assistance of the EDD, essential details like shipping deadlines and converting product labels to Chinese were accomplished, allowing the mission to happen.

Mr. Adams also praised the EDD for guiding him through the entire process. "It's not quite so scary walking into a dark room if you know there is a light switch!"

According to Mathew Woodlee, Director of the Office of International Trade, "Successes like this show how New Mexico can play on a global scale, whether it is through our cutting-edge technology or our unique food products. Services at EDD are designed for clients like Garduño's, who will now be more capable of expanding their international sales."

The Office of International Trade is planning another mission to Tokyo, Japan, Singapore and Taiwan scheduled for November 2009. This additional trip will allow the EDD and Adams follow up on leads created during the first trip, as well as seek out new distribution opportunities. The mission is open to other New Mexico businesses that may be interested in expanding operations or trade with Asia.

Garduño's has been a New Mexico institution for 40 years. From a single original Albuquerque restaurant in 1968, the business has grown to employ over 500 in their 9 restaurants and packing companies in New Mexico. They have franchised additional locations in Las Vegas, Nevada, and Scottsdale, Arizona. The Garduño's family is committed to supporting New Mexico by exclusively using Hatch green chile, fresh local ingredients, and bottling their salsas in Albuquerque.

The Office of International Trade (OIT) supports New Mexico companies by providing client-focused programs that encourage, develop and facilitate international business. These efforts lead to job creation, expanded sales and international recognition for the State of New Mexico. The OIT focuses on three aspects of international development: trade (exporting), technology collaboration and international investment promotion. Working in conjunction with other state and federal programs, OIT executes activities designed to promote all three aspects of New Mexico's international development.

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