
A Plan to Sell Brazilian Typical Food to the US and Then the World

Contributed by Geovana Pagel
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The Ethnic Brazil Project wants the world to consume typically Brazilian products, like juice, creamy jams, some with typical Amazon fruit, cheese bread, catupiry cheese, pepper, national floral herb teas, soy appetizers, pickled vegetables, cereal bars, spicy patés and typical Brazilian sweets.

The initiative is by the Brazilian Association of Exporters and Importers of Food and Beverages (ABBA), with the support of the Brazilian Export and Investment Promotion Agency (Apex). The project has been divided into phases and investment will total 3 million Brazilian reais (about US\$ 1.5 million) including participation in fairs and trade missions to promote the products.

According to Raquel Salgado, executive president at ABBA, the Integrated Sector Program (PSI) has created strategies to export food and drinks "with the face of Brazil" and to help small and medium companies increase their foreign sales.

"We have gone after companies with different products and with greater added value, which do not suffer so much with exchange rates that are unfavorable to exports," explained Salgado.

According to her, this specific market segment includes Brazilians living abroad and also a new kind of consumer, who is interested in new discoveries.

The first actions will be promoted next October and include a gourmet action to promote the products at delicatessens in Miami and participation in a food fair, IFE-Americas, from October 29 to 31, also in Miami. In November, the products will once again be promoted at points of sale like supermarket chains in the United States, in Miami.

For 2008, participation in fairs in Texas, New York and Canada is scheduled, accompanied by trade delegations. "We initially focussed on the North American market, but that does not mean that the whole project is attached to these actions," she explained.

The second phase of the project, to take place between 2009 and 2010, forecasts actions in the Arab world and Europe. "We are already talking to chambers of commerce, embassies and consulates in some of these countries. The idea is to promote partnerships to create two-way trade, including exports and imports," explained Raquel.

Among the Arab countries that may be visited are the United Arab Emirates and Tunisia. "We really want to promote actions in the Arab world," stated Raquel.

Apart from participation in fairs and trade delegations, the companies participating will be benefited by courses and training in foreign trade, initially to be promoted in five capitals: São Paulo and Belo Horizonte (Southeast), Manaus (North), Recife (Northeast) and Porto Alegre (South). "The courses will be provided by the organization," explained the ABBA president.

Cheese bread Gosto Caseiro (Homemade Taste), produced in the city of Piracicaba, in the interior of the state of São Paulo, is one of the products selected to participate in the Ethnic Brazil Project.

On the market for 29 years, with 50 employees and monthly production of 35 tons of cheese bread, the company has adapted its packages to the foreign market.

"We have created packages with information in English and with an appeal for export: typically Brazilian product," explained João Costa, the factory owner.

According to him, it was also necessary to reduce the packages from 500 grams to 452 grams, one pound. The company has already exported small quantities, through a distributor in Miami, and has made contact with importers in South Korea and Chile. "We are betting very much on the project. Our hope is that it will really boost our promotion abroad," explained Costa.

The Brazilian Association of Exporters and Importers of Food and Beverages (ABBA) was established four years ago with the objective of defending the interests of small food and beverage companies of Brazil.

Among the organization's objectives are opening routes and expanding business for its associates, currently 70 companies, aimed at growth and stimulating foreign trade of their products.

For this reason, the association creates commercial projects that generate opportunities abroad for Brazilian companies, as well as supplying information and tools for export to potential clients, supporting them and helping them comply with the demands of the foreign market.

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ABBA

Telephone: (+55 11) 5571-7290

Site: www.aabba.org.br

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