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Impressions: 35,500

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US: National Mango Board's Foodservice Efforts Serve Up Success

The National Mango Board's (NMB) strategic foodservice efforts are playing an important role in moving mangos from the produce aisles to restaurant tables. Since 2007, the number of menu items with mango increased by more than 20 percent, and based on current trends, the fruit made the list of the top eight "Fruit Ingredients on the Move," according to a 2009 Mintel Menu Insights report.



NMB is playing a strong role in the fruit's success with year-round efforts to raise awareness and promote education about mangos at the foodservice level. Programs in 2009 include a sponsorship of the 12th Annual World of Flavor conference this month at the Culinary Institute of America in California. The NMB partnered with Sodexo on a limited-time-offer promotion earlier this year, sponsored The Flavor Experience this past summer and participated in the International Foodservice Editorial Council Annual Conference in October. The NMB's participation with IFEC deepened last month when NMB marketing manager, Megan McKenna, was elected to serve as an IFEC board member for a three year term.

"The NMB's foodservice program works on many different levels, including media outreach, event sponsorship and menu development in order to maximize exposure for mangos on a limited budget," said Wendy McManus, marketing director for the NMB. "The foodservice industry is the gatekeeper for what many consumers add to their shopping lists each week, so forming these connections in foodservice can have a major impact on the mango industry."

The NMB engaged in a limited time offer summer promotion with Sodexo where six mango dishes were featured at 2000 locations. During the promotion, mangos were featured in their Tropical Fruit Salad Cup, Mango Chicken Chop Salad, Mango and Avocado Chicken Ciabatta, Thai Shrimp and California Avocado Salad, Grilled Fish Tacos and Mango Shrimp Salad Croissant. To promote these mango dishes Sodexo created promotional point of sale materials for each dish featuring a recipe description, photography, nutritional information and the NMB logo.

Grilled Fish Tacos signage for Sodexo promotion featuring fresh mangos and the NMB logo

In August, the NMB sponsored The Flavor Experience in San Diego, CA, where mangos were featured in eight of the dishes offered to attendees during the three day conference; from parfaits and custards to pastas, salads and kabobs. The NMB showcased mangos with chefs and foodservice operators and identified restaurant chains who showed an interest in adding fresh mangos to their menus. In addition, Chef Robert Danhi's toolbox session focused on fresh mangos and their versatility in texture and taste on the menu during all levels of ripeness.

The NMB attended the International Foodservice Editorial Council (IFEC) Annual Conference in October in which representatives of the NMB met with 20 foodservice media editors in fast-paced 10 minute sessions to talk about editorial opportunities for the upcoming year. The NMB also donated a case of fresh mangos to the silent auction and sponsored the Chef Showcase, an event in which local chefs were paired with specific products to create foodservice-oriented dishes. The NMB's partner chef, Paul McCabe from Kitchen 1540 in San Diego, created a Smoked Coriander Rubbed Lamb Loin with Mango Kosho, Hon Shimeji, Green Mango Slaw and also had a Mango Pate De Fruits.

The NMB's online foodservice section, www.mango.org/foodservice, is updated consistently to meet the needs of the industry. Visitors will find information on mango varieties and availability, how to select, cut and store, foodservice recipes, a crop forecast and even where to find suppliers.

The NMB's 2009 foodservice program is already surpassing results from 2008, with more than 3.2 million impressions to date for an advertising equivalency of almost \$125,000. Continued foodservice efforts in addition to consumer, trade and retail programs in 2010 will more thoroughly integrate mangos into the U.S. market and make them a top fruit of choice in households across the country.