

2011 MWFPA CONVENTION RECAP

This 107th Midwest Food Processors Association Convention and 84th Annual Processing Crops Conference was held November 29-December 1, 2011 at the Kalahari Resort & Convention Center in Wisconsin Dells, WI, bringing together over 900 industry professionals from across the U.S. and several countries.

Attendees enjoyed a full schedule of education seminars, a bustling trade show with more booths than ever before, terrific keynote speakers and much more. Next year's convention is set for November 27-29 at the Monona Terrace Community & Convention Center in Madison, WI.

Processing Crops Conference

The ever popular Processing Crops Conference returned for its 84th year with a full program. Annually the conference presents research on better crop varieties, improved agricultural practices to benefit producers, consumers and the environment, as well as innovative ways to produce crops that are abundant, high quality, safe and nutritious for consumers while being profitable for producers. Speakers this year included representatives from private industry and the Universities of Illinois, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

The sustainability workshop concluded that the processing industry is ideally positioned to develop a national sustainability standard for processing vegetables and MWFPA will be part of that effort.

Attendees Welcomed by Wisconsin Agriculture Secretary

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Secretary Ben Brancel welcomed everyone to the convention on Wednesday morning. He thanked our members for being part of a \$59 billion industry that adds value to Wisconsin agricultural products. The Secretary outlined some of the initiatives undertaken to get the Department to focus on its core mission of serving business and agriculture in the state. He pointed out that business serves a purpose and that purpose is not to be regulated.

As a humorous aside, Secretary Brancel noted that the importance of agriculture and processing in the state is evidenced by the statistic that “four out of four people eat.”

Wednesday Keynote Breakfast Speaker David Schmidt

This year's kickoff breakfast speaker was David Schmidt, President and CEO of the International Food Information Council Foundation.

Mr. Schmidt provided valuable insight into consumer perceptions about manufactured foods and presented messages that would resonate with consumers and reverse some of the public misconceptions.

He told attendees that food processing is a noble profession that is not always appreciated. He added that being silent about the positive aspects of processed food was not going to work in the present environment where there is much criticism of manufactured food and large-scale agriculture. Mr. Schmidt noted that positive messages surrounding manufactured foods are not reaching consumers and he identified a number of messages that can resonate with consumers.

He also addressed sustainability and the large and growing public concern about meeting the needs of an increasing world population. This, he said, makes large-scale food production and processing all the more important.



Schmidt thanked MWFPFA for joining the “Alliance to Feed the Future.” The mission of the Alliance is to multiply the impact of separate efforts that build understanding of food production and technology issues among key stakeholders to balance the public dialogue on modern agriculture and large-scale food production.

Keynote Luncheon Speaker Boaz Rauchwerger – Unbelievable!



During a lively and entertaining hour, luncheon keynote motivational speaker, trainer, and author, Boaz Rauchwerger told MWFPFA attendees that the root of success is a positive attitude and a focus on the basics.

He kept asking the audience, "How's business?" and encouraged them to reply, "Unbelievable!" — whether they believed it at that moment or not. He focused his presentation on a series of questions and answers that he says, when used with customers and employees, will positively build business.

At left, Boaz calls upon some of the conference attendees to demonstrate how to handle the five key questions and answers that will enable a person to connect with anyone in a matter of minutes.

MWFPA Board of Directors/ Annual Membership Meeting

The MWFPFA Board of Directors met during the convention and voted to award a \$7,500 grant to the Wisconsin Agricultural Education & Workforce Development Council. The Council was created by state law to support agricultural employment and educational needs. The grant will assist the Council in raising awareness among emerging workers and the unemployed about the agriculture/food processing industry and its career opportunities.



This year's convention featured the annual membership meeting held during the Thursday breakfast. Copies of the 2011 MWFPFA Annual Report were distributed and MWFPFA President Nick George, Board Chair Derek Frye of McCain Foods USA (left) and Vice Chair Ken Sevcik of Faribault Foods provided an executive report and financial review of the past year.

All Industry Reception



The All Industry Reception Tuesday night provided plenty of opportunity for networking and socializing between processors and vendors. This was but one of several events for industry folks to forge business relationships or strengthen existing ones. The convention's numerous social activities gave participants an occasion to discuss new products, in addition to providing time for industry friends and acquaintances to relax, have fun and celebrate all of the past year's successes.

Convention Exhibit Time



Convention attendees made the exhibit show a busy area, meeting with associate members that could assist them with their business needs and entering contests to win great prizes.

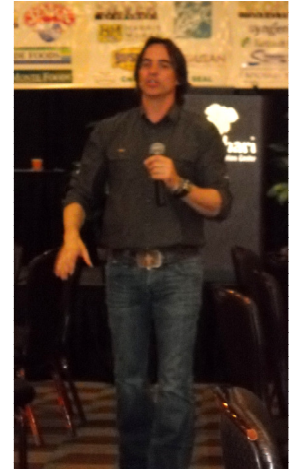
Hall activity was enhanced with the inclusion of time dedicated to exhibitors – one-half hour before and after breakfasts and lunches. In addition, exhibitors and attendees enjoyed the always popular mid-afternoon beer, wine and snacks in the exhibit hall.

Thursday Keynote Breakfast Speaker – Keni Thomas

Former Army Ranger and Bronze Star recipient Keni Thomas provided convention goers with a poignant and riveting account of his war experience in Mogadishu, Somalia during the deadly battle immortalized by the book and film "Black Hawk Down." He presented thought provoking leadership lessons and his moving presentation affected many of those in the convention hall in ways they never expected.

Thomas recommended leading by example – others will follow, you will make a difference and you will change lives. He emphasized how each one of us is a piece of the puzzle that makes everything work.

Great leaders, he said, understand that it is not about them; rather it is about something much greater than self. Thomas, who is also an acclaimed country music singer, finished off his performance with one of his songs entitled "Not Me."



One-hundred and ninety servicemen and -women, who were attending a conference at the Kalahari, were invited to watch Mr. Thomas' presentation. In a meet-and-greet after his address, Thomas signed copies of his book "Get It On!" and had his picture taken with conference attendees for over an hour. Sales from the book go to the Special Operations Warrior Foundation. That charity provides college financial assistance to the children of special operations personnel killed in action or training.



2010 Safety Contest Winners

Winners of the 2010 MWFPA Safety Contest were recognized at the Safety Breakfast on Wednesday. Forty-two food processing plants in Illinois, Minnesota, and Wisconsin competed in the contest. Awards are based on OSHA data with monthly reports of incident rates for participating plants. Al Bodden (left), MWFPA Safety Committee Chairman from Del Monte, Cambria, WI, presented the following awards:

EMPLOYER-UNITS REPORTING <75,000 EMPLOYEE-HOURS

Del Monte Foods, Mendota Field Dept. #208

EMPLOYER-UNITS REPORTING = OR >75,000 BUT <150,000 EMPLOYEE-HOURS

Lakeside Foods, Brooten

EMPLOYER-UNITS REPORTING = OR >150,000 BUT <250,000 EMPLOYEE-HOURS

Lakeside Foods, Reedsburg

EMPLOYER-UNITS REPORTING = OR >250,000 BUT <400,000 EMPLOYEE-HOURS

Lakeside Foods, Plainview

Seneca Foods, Blue Earth

EMPLOYER-UNITS REPORTING = OR >400,000 EMPLOYEE-HOURS

Seneca Foods, Montgomery Plant & FD

1,000 DAYS WITH NO DISABLING INJURIES AWARDS

Del Monte Foods, Plover/Markesan FD
Seneca Foods, Wisconsin Central Ag (Second Consecutive)

1,000,000 HOURS NO DISABLING INJURIES AWARD

Seneca Foods, Rochester
Seneca Foods, Oakfield

GREATEST IMPROVEMENT RECORDABLE INCIDENT RATE

Faribault Foods, Faribault Plant

HONOR ROLL FOR EACH OF FIVE CATEGORIES RANKED ACCORDING TO INCIDENT RATE IS AS FOLLOWS:

EMPLOYER-UNITS REPORTING <75,000

None

EMPLOYER-UNITS REPORTING = OR >75,000 BUT <150,000 EMPLOYEE-HOURS

Lakeside Foods, Poynette Dist. Center
Lakeside Foods, Seymour

EMPLOYER-UNITS REPORTING = OR >150,000 BUT <250,000 EMPLOYEE-HOURS

None

EMPLOYER-UNITS REPORTING = OR >250,000 BUT <400,000 EMPLOYEE-HOURS

Seneca Foods, Cambria
Ryder Beaver Dam Logistic Center
Seneca Foods, Ripon

EMPLOYER-UNITS REPORTING = OR >400,000 EMPLOYEE-HOURS

Seneca Foods, Cumberland
Lakeside Foods, New Richmond

Ladies and Gentlemen . . . The Britins!!



The Wednesday evening entertainment gave convention-goers an opportunity to indulge in some childhood memories, jam to some good music, and have an all around “fab” time with The Britins. The band presented a chronological presentation of The Beatles’ material with vintage clothing and instruments. They chronicled much of the Beatles’ catalog with a broad selection of songs from all their albums.

The Britins wonderful attention to detail and crisp chords brought the audience to their feet to dance more than a few times. Perhaps with a little help

from our friends, The Britins will get back to the MWFPF convention in the future.

Cash Prize Giveaway & Big Prize Raffle

There were many cash prizes, 4 flat screen TVs, 4 iPads and 1 Polaris 500 ATV given away this year!

Thirty-nine exhibiting companies sponsored TV, iPad and ATV raffle drawings. The following processor attendees walked away with the prizes:

Mark Gavigan, Seneca Foods
Jerry Zaske, Seneca Foods
Jeremy Lindloff, Lakeside Foods
Dan Wilson, Lakeside Foods
Bob Watrud, Lakeside Foods
Rick Rabensdorf, Del Monte Foods
Joel Johnson, Birds Eye Foods
Pete Simon, Lakeside Foods
Brian Strauch, Bush Brothers
Matt Ishmael, Del Monte Foods (ATV WINNER, right)
Mark Zahn, Seneca Foods
Barbara Kleiber, Seneca Foods
Mark Thomas, Del Monte Foods
Jeffrey Blum, Del Monte Foods
Aaron Hancock, Del Monte Foods
Joe Holschbach, Lakeside Foods
Josh Gibbons, Del Monte Foods
Gary Collien, Seneca Foods
Andy Slinden, Seneca Foods
Brenda Miller, Lakeside Foods

