

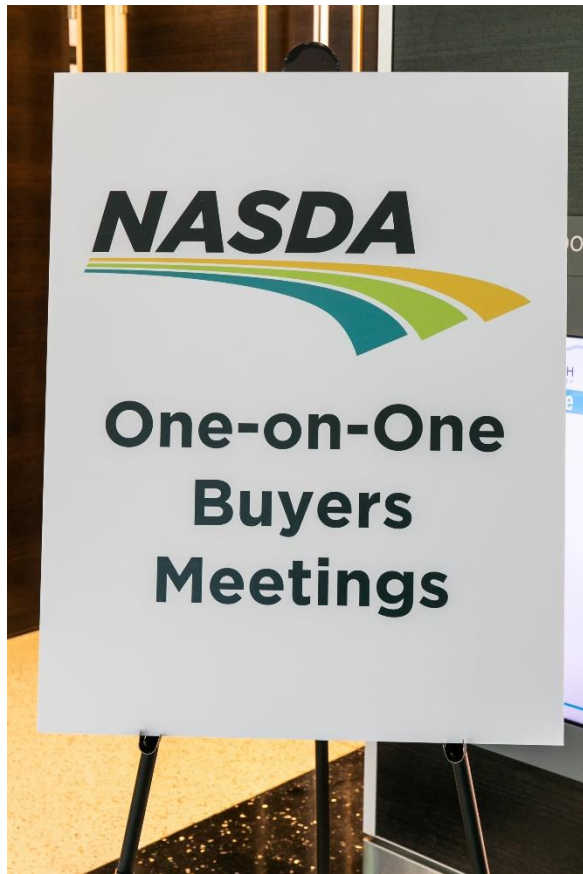
Diverse opportunities for international market access are key to maintaining a resilient economy and food system

Commissioner Amanda Beal reflects on her state's opportunities at "A Taste of the States: Miami" tradeshow hosted by the NASDA - USDA partnership to elevate small to medium sized food and beverage business in the international marketplace.

By Maine Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Amanda Beal

State departments of agriculture serve as the primary champions for U.S. export promotion of food products – and for good reason. Market expansion helps everyone. Offering more choices at the grocery store, supermarket or restaurant expands revenue for our farms and food businesses and can positively impact the communities and places where the farm products are grown, including those who harvest, process, package and present a great product.

The Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry supports and advocates for Maine agriculture and promotes Maine farm products across the state, country and globe. Maine is committed to helping farmers, suppliers and buyers use the [Real Maine](#) promotional program to reach new markets. The promotional program underwrites and offers a training experience for national and international trade event exhibit opportunities, like the NASDA's "A Taste of the States: Miami" pavilion at the Americas Food and Beverage trade show. Opportunities like these turn into invaluable business-to-business networking connections.



Over 550 one-on-one meetings between NASDA-hosted exhibitors and hand-picked potential buyers took place at the 2022 show in September. NASDA hosts the “A Taste of the States: Miami” pavilion, an exhibition at the Americas Food and Beverage Show, exclusively for small and medium food and beverage businesses. The exhibiting companies are selected by their state agriculture departments to participate in the pavilion based on companies’ export experience, business goals, uniqueness of products and more to support the growth and development of smaller businesses. NASDA is able to host this opportunity thanks to its 40-year partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service to further the success of U.S. businesses in the international marketplace.

Dozens of Maine brands have participated in the Americas Food & Beverage Show and other trade shows. Shows like Americas Food & Beverage provide value in the form of new customers and new markets. This show serves as a short-term venue to meet hundreds of buyers and other export industry representatives. Without the show, these audiences would have otherwise been out of reach. We’re thankful Maine brands like Atlantic Sea Farms, Maine Crisp, and Del Conte Sauces were able to exhibit at the 2022 “At Taste of the States: Miami.” **Having diverse opportunities for market access - for all scales of operations - is key to maintaining resilient food and agriculture sectors of our economy.**



Exhibitors at the A Taste of the States: Miami show projected over \$18 million in sales, 88 of whom project sales to a new country.

A Taste of the States: Miami entrepreneurs showcasing with Maine also receive coaching and are matched by NASDA with potential buyers at the event. **The different levels of collaboration support a resilient economic sector, which can be ready to meet the demand for delicious, high-quality foods and farm products from Maine and across the U.S.** In total, NASDA hosted 155 exhibitors for A Taste of the States: Miami.

In Maine, like other states across the country, we take great pride in our farmers and the care they take to produce food in ways that enhance our communities and our state as a whole. The work they do on behalf of all of us is commendable and important, and we appreciate NASDA's leadership and advocacy on many fronts in support of our agricultural producers.

Commissioner Beal serves as a 2022-2023 NASDA board member and is currently board president of Food Export Northeast. NASDA members sit on the Boards of Directors of State-Regional Trade Groups including the Western United States Agricultural Trade Association, Southern United States Trade Association, the Food Export Midwest and Food Export

Northeast. Learn more about NASDA and its partnership with USDA FAS to promote international trade at nasda.org/tradeshows.