WFLO HOSTS CHINESE COLD CHAIN EXECUTIVES

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Six Chinese cold chain executives attended the recent 2011 International Association of Refrigerated Warehouses-World Food Logistics Organization (IARW-WFLO) Annual Convention & Expo in New Orleans LA. The convention was the first stop in a two-week educational tour of the eastern United States, customized to expose the delegation to best practices in cold chain management.

The tour was sponsored by the United States Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service Cochran Fellowship Program (CFP). This program provides US-based agricultural training opportunities for senior and mid-level specialists and administrators from public and private sectors who are concerned with agricultural trade, agribusiness development, management, policy, and marketing.

At the convention, the Cochran Fellows attended sessions that provided in-depth information on the most important trends and issues affecting the cold chain industry. The delegation had the opportunity to learn about the products and services of more than 100 cold chain companies exhibiting at the Expo. The delegation also attended the 2011 United Fresh Produce Convention to gain a better understanding of traceability, logistics and food safety systems, and other key issues affecting grower-shipper operations.

After leaving New Orleans, the delegation traveled to Washington DC to meet with representatives of several US government agencies. In the Washington metropolitan area, the delegation had the opportunity to visit EVAPCO, Jamison Doors, Merchants Terminal Cold Store, Mullica Hill Cold Storage, and Garden State Freezer Inc to see refrigeration equipment.

The delegation then traveled to New Jersey and visited the Food Innovation Center in Bridgeton, where discussions centered on the relationship between maturity and quality in produce, packinghouse operations, effects of post-harvest shelf life, and respiration rates of fruits and vegetables.

At Rutgers University, the delegation attended a presentation on applied post-harvest handling and an overview of food safety issues and the cold chain. Later, they visited Halls cold storage facility to see meat, seafood, and poultry operations as well as solar power equipment. Other topics covered in presentations to the delegation included transportation issues and the concerns of importers/exporters sending fresh produce to global markets.

The delegation’s tour was coordinated by Richard Tracy, WFLO director of international programs. For more information, visit www.wflo.org.