



[V.I. Economic Development Authority officials to lead trade mission of local food manufacturers to annual Fancy Food Show in New York City](#)

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CHARLOTTE AMALIE, St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands – June 28, 2013 – V.I. Economic Development Authority (VIEDA) officials will lead a trade mission of local food manufacturers from the USVI’s State Trade and Export Promotion (STEP) program to New York City’s 59th Annual Summer Fancy Food Show from June 30-July 2, 2013 at The Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, according to Chief Executive Officer of the VIEDA Percival E. Clouden.

On Sunday, June 30, the VIEDA, through the USVI’s STEP program, will also be hosting a reception titled, “A Taste of the USVI” from 5:00PM to 8:00PM at the Affinia Manhattan Hotel in New York City that will feature food products of this program’s food manufacturers to the show’s attendees. Participants of this reception will include these local businesses: W-RIGHT Apiary, V.I. Fruit Preserves, Tropical Pops Popsicles, Grandma Joe’s Lemon Grass Iced Tea, and Buddha Sushi. This is the first time that the attendees of the Summer Fancy Food show will be exposed to some of these beloved Virgin Islands delicacies.

“This is EDA’s first step towards exposing our small businesses to the potential opportunities of exporting their products and services. Gaining access to these markets requires implementing a wide range of factors, and participation in the STEP program is a critical component in opening these doors. There is absolutely no reason our businesses should be restricted to our physical borders and this is exposing them to the possibilities,” said Governor John P. deJongh, Jr.

This annual food show will allow some of our local food manufacturers from the USVI’s STEP program to participate in the show’s training programs, and connect and network with 2,400 exhibitors from 80 countries & regions as they promote their products. The Summer Fancy Food show is one of North America’s two largest Specialty Food & Beverage Events.

“This annual event is indeed an awesome opportunity for our USVI STEP participants. I am also excited about the upcoming reception and its potential to help these local small businesses thrive and grow through these types of initiatives and export-related activities,” said VIEDA’s Chief Executive Officer Percival E. Clouden.

The Fancy Food Shows are hosted by the Specialty Food Association, a “preeminent not-for-profit business trade association established in 1952 to foster trade, commerce and interest in the \$86 billion specialty food industry. The Association is an international organization composed of more than 3,000 member companies including domestic and foreign manufacturers, importers, distributors, brokers, retailers, restaurateurs, caterers and other specialty food businesses.”

“Having recently been exhibitors at the 2013 SIAL Brazil: The Latin American Food Marketplace - a food trade event held in Sao Paulo from June 25-28 - the USVI’s STEP program’s food manufacturers will represent the best of the V.I.’s food industry at the reception in New York City, bringing forth food products that are infused with the islands locally grown fruits, vegetables, spices and herbs. These businesses have participated in a six-week training program on export-related activities and have participated in the development of our new exporting website, www.usvimarketplace.com, to meet the demands of the international community. Their attendance at the shows in Brazil and New York City are just the next step in their plans to achieve their goals of exporting their products to foreign buyers,” said U.S. Virgin Islands STEP Project Coordinator Nadine Marchena Kean.

The STEP program, which is authorized by the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010 through the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), is a three-year pilot program trade initiative that is designed to help small businesses grow, increase their exporting activities, and raise the value of the products and services. Governor John P. deJongh, Jr., has



designated the VIEDA as the agency to administer the STEP program in the Territory. Last year was the second time the Territory applied for the STEP grant and was awarded \$322,498 to assist qualified local small businesses with exporting their products and services to foreign markets.

To learn more about the “A Taste of the USVI” reception, contact Marketing and PR Specialist Semele A.C. George at 340.714.1700, ext. 258. Learn more about the USVI’s STEP participants at www.usvimarketplace.com. To learn more about the Specialty Food Association’s Fancy Food Shows, visit www.specialtyfood.com.

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