

FOOD EXPORT ASSOCIATION OF THE MIDWEST USA AND FOOD EXPORT USA – NORTHEAST

U.S. Feedlink

A publication highlighting information about the U.S. animal feed and pet food ingredients and additives industries

The Sustainable Packaging Imperative

What international buyers should consider when sourcing U.S. feed ingredients and additives

When importing feed ingredients and feed additives from the United States, the product itself is only part of the purchasing decision. Packaging must protect the product during international transportation, meet destination-market requirements, and function effectively throughout the importer's distribution system.

Packaging materials, weight, recyclability, and waste reduction are also receiving greater attention worldwide. For international importers sourcing from the U.S. Midwest and Northeast, this makes packaging and sustainability important topics to discuss with suppliers before placing an order.

Start With Your Market

International importers are often in the best position to understand the conditions packaging will face in their markets.

Consider the journey a product will make after leaving the supplier: possible ocean transit, high humidity, temperature fluctuations, and multiple handlers between the port, warehouse, distributor, and end users.

For feed ingredients and additives, reducing packaging material should not come at the expense of moisture protection, contamination prevention, product stability or safe handling. A lighter package that results in damaged bags, leaking containers, or spoiled product may ultimately create more waste.

Understanding these conditions can help importers identify the packaging characteristics that matter most when discussing options with U.S. suppliers.

Ask the Right Packaging Questions

Buyers and manufacturers should discuss packaging options during the sourcing process. Depending on the product, alternatives may include different bag sizes, bulk or semi-bulk formats, alternative pallet configurations, or reductions in secondary packaging.

Importers should also consider what happens to packaging after use. A material that is technically recyclable may offer limited benefits if suitable recycling infrastructure is unavailable locally.

Questions to prospective suppliers can include:

- What packaging formats and sizes are available?
- What type of packaging is necessary to maintain product quality?
- Can unnecessary secondary packaging be reduced?
- Are recyclable or recycled-content materials appropriate for the product?
- Can packaging or pallet configurations be optimized for international transportation?
- Can packages and labels be modified for destination-market requirements?

These discussions allow importers to evaluate suppliers on more than product specifications and price.

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Food
Export
Midwest USA



Food
Export USA
Northeast

featured products



For more information about these or other featured products please email: feedlink@foodexport.org



Actus Nutrition

Eden Prairie, Minnesota

PEF (Protein Encapsulated Fats) is a highly efficient energy source designed to optimize animal performance and feed efficiency. Utilizing advanced encapsulation technology, PEF delivers protected fat sources wrapped in digestible proteins, enhancing nutrient absorption and energy utilization. This innovative formulation supports growth, reproduction, and metabolic function, making it an ideal choice for high-performance diets across multiple species.



Esmilco

Fall River, Wisconsin

Rapid Rehydrate is a specialized electrolyte supplement developed by Esmilco to support young calves during critical periods such as heat stress, scours, or post-transport recovery. Designed for rapid absorption, it replenishes essential electrolytes to restore hydration and promote overall calf health.



Great Lakes Bio Systems, Inc.,
Sturtevant, Wisconsin

DTM1000 acts as a prebiotic and is designed to re-balance the trace minerals lacking in today's shrimp/fish nutrition and culturing environment.



Houdek Manufacturing

Brookings, South Dakota

ME-PRO is a fermented, plant-based ingredient for aquafeed. ME-PRO is a highly digestible protein ingredient that offers excellent support in stress recovery and nutrient absorption. ME-PRO is traceably and sustainably produced utilizing both GMO and non-GMO meals.



NuTech Biosciences, Inc.

Oneida, New York

Mineralate-Cr is an organic, highly bioavailable chromium propionate feed supplement manufactured by Nutech Biosciences. It is specifically formulated to enhance glucose metabolism, reduce environmental stress, and improve overall growth performance and carcass traits in Swine, Beef cattle, Dairy Cattle, Poultry, and Horses.



SCD Probiotics

Kansas City, Missouri

SCD Bio Livestock is a science-backed, multi-strain livestock probiotic additive that's safe for routine use. Its patented combination of live beneficial microbes and bio-fermented organic acids equip your animals with the best internal system to optimize their food's nutritional content and defend against stress and disease.



Tranect LLC

Boston, Massachusetts

Soybean meal is widely used in poultry, livestock, dairy, and aquaculture feed formulations as an important source of protein and amino acids. U.S. origin soybean meal is valued for its consistent quality, nutritional profile, and suitability for international animal-feed markets.



Esmilco Expands Global Reach with Food Export–Midwest

Wisconsin-based Esmilco, Inc. has steadily expanded its international reach, bringing its expertise in milk replacers and young animal nutrition to customers around the world. As the company has pursued opportunities in Europe, Asia, and other international markets, resources available through Food Export–Midwest have helped support its export development efforts.

Esmilco has actively pursued new international customers by participating in major industry events, including VIV Asia and VIV Europe, where the company can showcase its milk replacers and young animal nutrition products to buyers from around the world. “Food Export–Midwest has given us opportunities to get in front of international buyers and better understand where our products fit in different markets,” said Jessica Esveld-Govier, VP at Esmilco. “Those connections are extremely valuable when you’re trying to develop business overseas.”

Together, these efforts are helping Esmilco introduce its specialized animal nutrition products to new customers and continue building a sustainable international presence.

“For a company like ours, having resources that help open doors in international markets makes a real difference,” Esveld-Govier added. “Food Export–Midwest helps us make connections that can turn into long-term export relationships.”

Learn more at <https://www.foodexport.org/>.

“Almost every supplier I met is extremely promising for our business and the program is very beneficial to us.”

Peter Traboulay, Head of Quality and Product Development, East Caribbean Group of Companies | St. Vincent & the Grenadines | 2026 World Pork Expo Buyers Mission



U.S. Feed Suppliers Expand Footprint at Bulgaria Focused Trade Mission

The Food Export–Midwest Focused Trade Mission to Southeast Europe for Feed Ingredients was a resounding success. It brought together U.S. feed ingredient suppliers and key buyers from across Southeast Europe in Sofia, Bulgaria. During the mission, 23 buyers from Bulgaria, Turkey, and North Macedonia met with six U.S. suppliers in more than 70 one-on-one meetings, generating qualified sales leads and significant buyer-projected purchases.

Held in Sofia, Bulgaria, the event facilitated targeted one-on-one B2B meetings giving participating suppliers opportunities to introduce their products directly to buyers and distributors while gaining valuable insight into market needs and local distribution networks. Backed by the USDA and the U.S. Embassy, the mission also provided participants with market intelligence to help them better understand opportunities in Southeast Europe.

By connecting U.S. suppliers directly with regional buyers, the Focused Trade Mission helped establish new business relationships and strengthen the presence of U.S. feed ingredients in the region. The mission demonstrated the potential for Midwest feed ingredient suppliers to develop new trade opportunities in Southeast Europe.

Minnesota

STATE FEATURE

25.3M+

farm acres operated

64K+

farms in Minnesota

\$8.3B

in agriculture exports

4th

largest ag exporter in the U.S.

TOP FEED INGREDIENTS



Soybeans



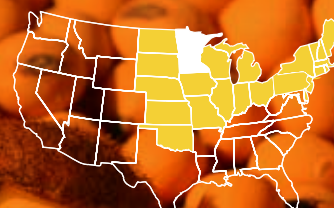
Corn



Hay



Wheat



Food Export States
Minnesota

Sources: USDA, US Trade Representative

FROM FEEDSTUFFS TO PRECISION NUTRITION

Science, scale, and innovation has made the Midwest a force in animal nutrition

Over the past century, the Midwest's animal nutrition industry has evolved alongside changes in agriculture, feed standards, ingredient processing, and nutritional science. Once closely tied to the region's agricultural commodities, the industry now produces specialized proteins, fats, milk replacers, fermentation-based products, and other advanced nutrition solutions.

The transformation began as feed became more sophisticated. The Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO), whose members include state and federal feed regulators, traces this evolution in its history of feed regulation. Consumers once judged mixed feeds containing whole grains by sight, smell and sometimes taste. As ground feeds became common, those methods proved inadequate, driving the use of protein, fat, and other nutrient measures to evaluate feed.

In 1909, feed control officials convened to consider new ingredients and develop uniform feed legislation, definitions, regulations, and labeling requirements. Agriculture was changing, too. USDA records show oat acreage declined sharply during the 20th century, while soybean acreage grew from less than 500,000 acres in the early 1920s to more than 70 million acres by century's end.

Minnesota-headquartered Actus Nutrition traces its history to 1945, when it began as Midwest Dried Milk Company, focused on milk replacer and young-animal health products. Today, Actus produces milk and whey proteins, functional fats and other nutritional ingredients, operates animal-feed facilities in several Midwestern states and exports to more than 50 countries.

Over generations, the industry has combined agricultural resources with science, manufacturing expertise and innovation to create increasingly specialized nutrition solutions. That ability to add value remains an important regional strength and opportunity.

TransAgra International offers another example. In 1960, founder Herbert Peer discovered the company's proprietary strain of Lactobacillus fermentation product and developed a process to culture it. Marketed as the animal feed supplement Culbac, it helped establish a business that today manufactures microbial fermentation products in Storm Lake, Iowa.

Over the past century, feed evaluation moved from sight and smell to defined nutrient and ingredient standards, soybean production expanded dramatically, and Midwestern companies developed specialized proteins, fats, milk replacers, fermentation products and other functional ingredients supporting animal health and performance.

The Midwest's animal nutrition story is no longer simply about agricultural commodities. Companies with decades of regional history demonstrate how those roots have grown into specialized ingredients, advanced manufacturing and nutrition technology.

Find the Right U.S. Suppliers with Feed Show PLUS!

International trade shows can bring hundreds of exhibitors together, making it challenging to find the right suppliers. For buyers seeking U.S. value-added feed ingredients, additives, and supplements, Feed Show PLUS! can make that search more focused.

Food Export invites qualified buyers and provides them with information about participating U.S. suppliers prior to the show, including company profiles, product details, contact information, and booth locations.

Food Export's In-Market Representatives can direct or personally bring buyers to participating suppliers' booths, creating another avenue for finding products and making relevant connections.

For international buyers, Feed Show PLUS! offers a straightforward benefit: an easier way to discover U.S. feed ingredient and additive suppliers and connect with companies that may fit their sourcing needs.

Interested buyers can check our calendar of events at <https://www.foodexport.org/events/> for upcoming Feed Show PLUS! opportunities.

South Dakota

STATE FEATURE

42.2M+

farm acres operated

28.2K+

farms in South Dakota

\$4.6B

in agriculture exports

12th

largest ag exporter in the U.S.

TOP FEED INGREDIENTS



Corn



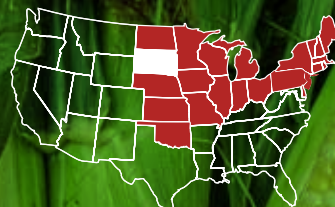
Soybeans



Hay



Wheat



■ Food Export States
■ South Dakota

Sources: USDA, US Trade Representative

supplier directory

For more information about these or other companies please email: feedlink@foodexport.org

Ab E Discovery, dba Optum Immunity

Waterloo, Wisconsin | optumimmunity.com

Optum Immunity: Leading the Way in Optimizing Animal Immune System Capacity. Our mission is to optimize animal GI tract immunity, ensuring every animal has an effective immune system to manage parasites and pathogens.

Actus Nutrition

Eden Prairie, Minnesota | actus.com

At Actus Nutrition, we supply the inspired ingredients needed to create the best possible animal nutrition products. Milk replacers, fat supplements, amino acids and just about every kind of specialty dairy ingredient imaginable. At Actus Nutrition, it's our job to make sure every animal in the herd can perform at its best.

Bunge North America

St Louis, Missouri

bunge.com/Food-Ingredients/Our-Businesses/Plant-Proteins

Bunge soy protein concentrate powders and textures deliver high-quality protein with nine essential amino acids for growth and lower anti-nutritional factors to support easier digestion for poultry, piglets, calves, pet and aqua. The textured options provide excellent craveable "meaty bite" and "chew". They are sustainably made to support your carbon goals.

CJ Stengel Inc. dba Stengel Oils

Milbank, South Dakota | stengeloils.com

Omega-3s are a good fat responsible for basic cellular health in all body tissues, including those of animals, and become the building blocks for health allowing them to regulate nervous and cardiovascular functions, build a shinier coat, improve skin condition, and decrease hairballs. Sammy's Shiny Coat is 100% virgin, cold-pressed flax oil and contains no fillers such as soybean oil.

Esmilco Inc.

Fall River, Wisconsin | esmilco.com

Esmilco provides premium private label milk replacers and specialty products for baby animals, helping brands deliver optimal nutrition from day one. With a focus on quality, consistency, and innovation, Esmilco partners with businesses to create customized formulas that support healthy growth, performance, and long-term success in young livestock.

Great Lakes Bio Systems, Inc.

Sturtevant, Wisconsin

greatlakesbiosystems.com/collections/aquaculture

For more than 30 years Great Lakes Bio Systems, Inc. (GLB) manufactured amino acid complexes, probiotic technologies, mineral blends and enzyme products for use in the aquaculture and poultry industries. Our products are designed to enhance gut health by addressing all variables in the grow-out process including improving the feed the animal consumes, decreasing mortality, increasing feed conversion and daily weight gain, promoting competitive exclusion and ultimately increasing grower profits.

Houdek Manufacturing

Brookings, South Dakota | houdeknature.com

Houdek ferments plant-based meals to transform them into powerful ingredients for aquaculture, livestock, and companion animal diets.

NuTech Biosciences, Inc.

Oneida, New York | nutechbiosciences.com

Nutech Biosciences Inc. manufactures high-quality, organic trace minerals and performance additives - supplements for livestock, swine, aquaculture, and poultry. Utilizing advanced chemical technologies, their highly bioavailable additives—including chromium propionate, chelates, and custom premixes—enhance glucose metabolism, reproductive health, and immune function, driving superior animal health, growth performance, and producer profitability.

SCD Probiotics

Kansas City, Missouri | scdprobiotics.com

Healthy, balanced livestock guts help protect against growth and performance losses. This probiotic for livestock supports efficient digestion in cattle, swine, goats, sheep and poultry of all ages

Tranect LLC

Boston, Massachusetts | tranect.com

Tranect is a U.S.-based exporter specializing in the sourcing and export of agricultural commodities and animal feed ingredients. With strong expertise, Tranect supports buyers with competitive supply solutions, consistent quality, and export-compliant documentation. We export Soybean Meal, DDGS, Corn Gluten Meal, and feed grade Whey Permeate, Lactose and NFDM.

TransAgra International Inc.

Chicago, Illinois | transagra.com

TransAgra is the leader of natural health solutions for animals, plants, and forage production. Culbac® plant solutions from TransAgra are designed and proven to help you make the most of your soil, seed, root mass, and plant health while enhancing production.

Universal Probiotics

Linwood, Kansas | universalprobiotics.com

Universal Probiotics is the producer and owner of a Direct Feed Microbial Symbiotic feed supplement for companion animals and livestock. The product is a granular animal feed supplement. It is privately controlled and confidential beneficial bacteria culture combined with various nutrients including pre-biotic ingredients which enhances the effectiveness of the supplement.

Vesta Nutra

Indianapolis, Indiana | vestanutra.com

Established in 1996, Vesta® Nutra's mission is to enhance quality of life for humans and animals through science-driven nutraceutical ingredients and finished products. Our innovative products support cognition, energy production, immunity, beauty, joint function, and metabolism. We use cutting-edge manufacturing processes in our FDA-registered cGMP-certified plant.



The Sustainable Packaging Imperative *(continued)*

Make Labeling Part of the Conversation

International importers of U.S. feed ingredients and additives need to understand the labeling requirements in their markets. Depending on the product and market, these can address product identification, composition, net quantity, batch information, directions for use, safety information, responsible parties, and language.

Identifying local requirements early and communicating them to suppliers can help avoid complications, particularly when labels require translation, additional information, or changes to package artwork.

Sustainability requirements also vary by market. Regulations may address packaging minimization, recyclability, recycled content, environmental labeling, and producer responsibilities.

Appropriate local authorities or regulatory specialists can provide guidance on requirements for specific products and markets.

Bring Local Knowledge to the Supplier

Customer preferences, recycling infrastructure, and distribution practices may affect whether a supplier's standard export packaging is suitable. For example, customers may prefer larger industrial packages to reduce packaging waste, or certain materials may be difficult to recycle locally. Sharing this information can help suppliers determine whether modifications are needed.

Buyers should also consider total supply-chain impact. Package dimensions and weight can affect freight efficiency and container utilization,

while durability can affect product losses. The objective is to balance environmental considerations with product protection, compliance, and commercial practicality.

Connecting With U.S. Suppliers

Food Export-Midwest and Food Export-Northeast can help qualified international buyers connect with U.S. suppliers through Buyers Missions and other market-development activities. These meetings provide opportunities to discuss packaging preferences, sustainability expectations, and regulatory requirements alongside products, specifications, and pricing.

Importers may encounter promising U.S. products whose packaging or labels are not yet suitable for their markets. Food Export's Branded Program can provide partial cost reimbursement for eligible, foreign-market compliant packaging and labeling expenses directly to participating U.S. suppliers, making market-specific adaptations more feasible and cost efficient. The program can help importers and suppliers work together to adapt products for specific international markets.

Sustainable packaging works best as a partnership. Importers bring knowledge of their regulations, customers and distribution systems; suppliers bring knowledge of their products and protection requirements. Together, they can develop packaging and labeling solutions that support sustainability, protect product integrity, and build successful long-term trading relationships.

USFeedlink

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events

- **Feed Show PLUS! at FIGAP**
Guadalajara, Mexico | Oct. 21-23, 2026
- **Buyers Mission at IPPE**
Atlanta, GA | Jan. 27, 2027
- **Feed Show PLUS! at VIV Asia**
Bangkok, Thailand | Mar. 10-12, 2027

- **Buyers Mission at Pet Food Forum**
Kansas City, MO | Apr. 26, 2027
- **Buyers Mission at World Dairy Expo**
Madison, WI | Sept. 29, 2027

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U.S. agricultural products

