

Potatoes USA Helps Filipino Foodservice to Step outside the Box

In the Philippines these days, the traditional box of fries with your burger are practically passé – thanks to a strategic effort by Potatoes USA to promote the versatility of U.S. frozen potato products. Instead, diners at foodservice outlets in the Philippines are noshing on Tori Mojos (coated potato slices) at the Japanese restaurant *Tori Box*, ordering Nori Fish and Chips (fish sticks with nori-batter and wasabi fries) at Japanese fusion restaurant *Tokyo Bubble Tea*, eating Patatas Bravas (a mix of fry cuts topped with cheese, sour cream and marinara) served at South American-style restaurant *Peri-Peri Charcoal*, trying Spam Fries (extra-long fries topped with sliced canned spam) at *Food Truck Manila*, or enjoying Potato Pizza (featuring criss-cut fries as the dough) at the gourmet ice cream shop *Ice Giants*.

These are a few of the successes created by Potatoes USA's foodservice program during the July 2016-June 2017 marketing year. In total, 26 foodservice establishments in Manila and Cebu – representing approximately 115 outlets – began using various cuts of U.S. frozen potatoes, as well as U.S. dehydrated potatoes, as a result of exposure to U.S. frozen potato benefits from Potatoes USA activities. Thanks to funding from MAP, merchandising visits, chef seminars, menu development seminars, potato promotion festivals and Facebook activities worked together to spark creative new uses of U.S. potatoes among traditional and new users. The result was an additional 48 metric tons of net new frozen potato usage among the foodservice sector for the year.

Among the chains adding new menu items featuring U.S. potatoes, many were convinced to switch from using local fresh potatoes or competitor fries, resulting in numerous new users for U.S. potato suppliers. The program continued to tap new foodservice segments, resulting in new channels through which consumers can enjoy U.S. potato products, notably: a food truck, an ice cream shop, multiple bakery/coffee shops, two Japanese cuisine restaurants, a South American cuisine restaurant, an Italian restaurant, casual dining restaurants and cafes.

By promoting versatility, the Potatoes USA program is aiding the continuing growth of U.S. potato products to this market. U.S. exports of frozen potatoes jumped 15% by value to \$61 million and 16% by volume to 57,883 metric tons during MY 16/17, compared with the prior year. Compared with five years ago, exports are 64% higher by value and 71% higher by volume.

