

## **Retail Promotions Spur Greater Home Consumption of US Fries**

A series of US “Potato Market” promotions in the Philippines spurred consumers to try US frozen potato varieties at home, driving sales increases of 185%, 291% and 466% during the three promotions. The promotions aimed to develop awareness among consumers regarding the various cuts of US frozen potatoes and encourage them to make the products a part of their home diet.

While consumers in the Philippines are aware of US frozen potatoes, they generally consume them at foodservice outlets. While frozen potato products are available in modern retail stores, they are not a highly popular item, largely because knowledge of proper preparation methods for home use is not widespread among Filipino consumers.

To overcome this, Potatoes USA initiated its new “Potato Market” promotions this year to create a higher profile for frozen potatoes in the retail sector. The MAP-funded activity is an interactive event that aims to make consumers comfortable with the idea that they can prepare dishes using frozen fries at home. In fact, Filipino consumers love fries outside the home, and potatoes are a part of their ordinary diet. Therefore, it was a matter of helping consumers understand that they can prepare frozen potato products themselves, in both traditional and innovative recipes, to enjoy their great taste at home as well.

Potatoes USA targeted one of the country’s largest retail chains, SM Supermarket, and carried out the first promotion in December 2018 at SM San Lazaro. During the weeklong promotion, promoters discussed the benefits, qualities, and preparation possibilities of frozen potatoes with consumers. Approximately 1,000 consumers per day tried fresh-cooked US frozen potatoes and were provided with recipe cards to take home, leading to a 185% jump in sales. In January 2019, Potatoes USA followed with Potato Market promotions at SM City Fairview and SM Seaside Cebu, again conducting interactive education with the stores’ customers and providing samples of US fries. These convinced customers to drive up US frozen potato sales 291% and 466% during the promotion period. The Potato Markets were also valuable in developing stronger relationships with retailers and demonstrating to them how promotions can bring about immediate improvements in sales.

Ongoing development of the retail sector is one of the factors contributing to increased exports to the Philippines. During the first half of the marketing year (July-December 2018), US frozen potato exports to this market rose 15% by volume to 31,757 metric tons and 14% by value to \$34.4 million.