

The World Tea Expo

Las Vegas Convention Center

June 24 – 26, 2011

A report on participation

Introduction

Keeping in view of Tea Market positioning in the US Markets, Nepali tea industry stakeholders have been attending the world tea expo since 2003. This year, with the support of NEAT/USAID, the participation at the expo was made not just as an exhibitor at the booth but also by focusing on other promotional programs such as Origin Tea tasting, Focused Nepal Tea presentation and buyer seller meet.

In general, this year the Expo was attended by about 5000 people. There were 204 exhibitors, roughly 30 from the origin countries and the balance, local US based Wholesalers, Retailers and Allied Trades. In comparison to the last year's expo and the year before and before, this year a remarkable participation was noticed from the tea producing countries not just by taking a booth or two but in the form of Pavilion. For Instance India and China had over 10 booths Pavilion while Taiwan had an Island to show off their Oolongs.

Nepal made its presence felt by undertaking various programs. One of the key factors that attracted visitors to Nepali booth was "the Origin Tea Tasting Event". Recommendation made by the Origin Tasting participants to visit and try Nepal Teas helped in many ways. This attraction was supported by exclusive teas that were selected and pre tasted in Kathmandu prior to Expo participation.

Day 1: June 23, 2011

Origin Tea Tasting Event

Day 1 was filled with a packed program of 8 countries showcasing their teas in the form of a tea tasting program where about 150 existing and new tea traders participated actively from morning 9 am through evening 6 pm.



During this event each country was given a slot of 4 – 8 teas to showcase. Nepal being a beginner in such a show received 4 slots of teas. We had carried out a critical tea selection process before leaving for Las Vegas in Kathmandu whereupon we selected 4 teas comprising of Green Tea, White Tea, Oolong and Gold Leaf from various members of Himalayan Orthodox Tea producers

Association (HOTPA). Information on brewing time, weight, temperature of water etc was handed over to the Prep Staff at Hall S222 on the eve of June 22nd. *(In the Picture: Nepal Tea Presentation under process)*



Nepal Origin tasting started from 3.30 pm and lasted for a little over 40 minutes. About 94 new buyers and 10 more existing participants and other speakers were present at the event. A multimedia presentation was prepared beforehand for this exclusive event which was presented to the audience during this show.

One by one all of the 4 teas were tasted and explained to the fullest possible satisfaction of the attendee. The result of this tasting brought about a large number of visitors in the later days of Exhibition.

Day 2-4: The Expo

The Expo started from 24th and lasted till 26th of June. Nepal had taken a corner booth near special events. The placement of the booth # 349 was not as expected. The main reason for us to have taken this location was to get maximum possible exposure by taking the advantage of the special session floor which was located next to booth 349. Unfortunately the special session floor was partitioned by a black curtain which was not visible earlier while selecting the booth.

Nevertheless, the booth was decorated with promotional materials that were hand carried by the participants.



Additionally the booth had all the necessary accessories that were needed to make Nepal exhibition effective. *(In the Picture from left: Chandi Prasad Parajuli from Parajuli Tea, David Walker, NEAT Consultant, Kamalrajmainali from Himalayan Shangrila Tea, Udaya Chapagain from Gorkha Tea and Chairman of HOTPA, Santosh Limbu from Mist Valley, Krishna Prasai from Ilamt Tea Producers, Ram Mainali from Ilam Tea House and Myself : All geared up for the show in traditional attire)*

Exhibition is considered a success due to the following main reasons;

- Record visitors turn out at the booth. Although we do not have an exact figure, we estimate that over 800 visitors turned out at Nepal booth. This record is higher than our past experiences.
- Quality of the visitor was very encouraging. 8 out of 10 visitors were buyers with inquiry on Nepal Tea. Many of them have shown interest to visit Nepal on their own. A lot many had visited Nepal but had no idea on Nepal Tea. However, most of these buyers were small buyers and that they will need to buy our teas from a distributors. It is assumed that US based Tea buyers who

carries Nepal Tea like Harney and sons, Metropolitan Tea, Qtrade etc will have increased sales of Nepal tea due to the introduction of such small buyers.

- Envious Neighbor: Indian friends from Darjeeling enviously commented that Nepal participation has improved over the years. This is an excellent indicator of our attraction at the show.



On the second day from 4.00pm – 5 pm, a focused Tea Tasting event was organized by HOTPA. The audience targeted during this event were larger US Tea Buyers and Media people. 7 different types of Nepal teas were selected for this purpose comprising of 3 Whole Leaf Second Flush Orthodox, 1 Organic Green, 1 CTC PF1, 1 Himalayan Black Curl and 1 Himalayan White. Among large buyers were Martin and Baur, G.S. Haly and Company, Tea Importers. The tasting presentation was followed by a press conference. During the event, all the Nepali

delegates who participated in the Focused Tea Tasting show were in typical Nepali Traditional attire. After the Focused Tasting event, all the delegates returned to the booth in the same attire. This attire was an additional attraction for the visitors to flock in the booth to inquire about Nepali Tea while not forgetting to take a quick or elaborate photo session with Nepali delegates. *(In the Picture: 7 exclusive teas from Nepal that were tasted)*

- At least 2 recognized US Tea Buyers have confirmed their visit to Nepal to buy teas. Mr. Joshua Kaiser from Rishi Tea has plans to visit Nepal in September and Ms Sarah Scarborough from Republic of Tea Company is visiting Nepal from August 13 – 17, 2011. This not only shows their interest in buying Nepal Tea but also to initiate a Nepal Brand Tea sales on a longer term basis. Ms Sarah’s visit program is presently under preparation. Mr. Joshua will send his itinerary later this month. *(In the picture from left is Miraj Subba (Mist Valley Tea), Kamalraj Mainali from Himalayan Shangrila Tea and myself and the Owner of Rishitea Joshua Kaiser)*



- US Tea Association Tea Tour has been confirmed for May 2011. President of Tea Association of



USA will be working with us to identify and select appropriate visitors for Nepal Tours so as to get a maximum exposure for Nepal tea as well as to help expand Nepal Tea Market in the USA. Tea Association USA has a concern though on the ability of Nepal Tea to host 20-25 visitors at the garden. We had informed them that we will

do that by splitting the group into 4 – 5 subgroups during night halts. Whereupon our Tea Factories could host smaller groups in the plantation area. *(In the Picture is Joseph P. Simrany, President Tea Association of USA and myself)*

- Most of the important Media personal and media houses have taken Nepal in their interest and as press material for their immediate and future publications. A dinner reception was hosted by HOTPA on the occasion of Media, buyers seller meet at a restaurant Gandhi Cuisine. The results



have already started pouring in. Among the media houses, “The World Tea Media”, Tea Time Magazine, The Tea House Times and Spa Management were present during the dinner meeting. Dan Bolton from the World Tea Media has committed to do a write up on Nepal Tea Garden and we will have to give him details after the selection of the Garden. The Tea Hose Times has requested us to provide

permission to display our CDROM at their sites to which we have approved immediately. This program could lead to a bigger success in Nepali Tea Promotion effort leading to higher sales of Nepali Tea in the Us Markets.*(In the Picture is Dan Bolton and myself followed by Tea Times, Tea Spa, Teahousetimes and other members at dinner hosted by Nepali Team)*

(Refer Mr. David Walkers’ report for further Details)