

Minnesota Business on the Grow
By Nick Clementi, Sandhill Consulting Group

The National Restaurant Association met in Chicago at the end of May with over 70,000 people in attendance. There is a section of the show entitled “American Food Fair” featuring products from particular regions and states.

Minnesota was well represented as its large sign proclaimed the area where restaurant operators could find goods from the State of Minnesota.

W.W. Johnson Meat Company of Minneapolis was sampling their certified Angus Beef to fair goers. In addition to the great tasting beef, WW Johnson was selling the benefits of their internal safety controls and their flexible packaging process. (learn more at wwjmeat.com)

Buddy’s Kitchen in Burnsville was showing their packaged sandwiches and their custom gourmet omelets. A sampling of their omelets immediately reveals the creamy smooth goodness and the fresh taste. (www.buddyskitchen.com)

Eichten’s Cheese and Bison of Center City features ward winning European style cheese and cheese spreads. Eichten’s boasts all natural cheese with no artificial flavors or preservatives. Eichten’s offers their cheese and bison in wheels and specialty packs, as well as gift sizes. (www.specialtycheese.com)

Papa George’s of Minneapolis was sampling their premium quality sausage, in flavors such as sage, Italian, and maple. The Papa George’s Gyro Kit and ground lamb offerings attracted attention around their booth. (www.papageorges.com)

The Rochester Meat Company, from where else but Rochester, was promoting their offering of the “best looking, best cooking and best tasting patty” with their ground beef made from their special forming process. Their special process holds the juices in while you cook to enhance the flavor and texture of the burger. (www.rochestermeat.com)

Captain Ken’s Foods of St Paul brought their oven baked beans to feature at the NRA. These are the same great tasting beans they bring to the Minnesota Governor's Fishing Opener's Community Picnics & Shore Lunches. New products being featured at the show included Wagon Trail Chili with Beans, Chili Hot Dog Topping, and Beans in BBQ Sauce with Smoked Pulled Pork. (www.captainkens.com)

Compart Family Farms of Nicollet (www.compartduroc.com) showed the “Black Angus” of pork and the Northern Plains Potato Growers (www.nppga.org) were featuring “The Best Bred Red” potatoes and the twin cities Rhino Filtration (www.rhinofiltration.com) were displaying wet waste filtration systems for use by operators.

The business of supplying food and supplies to America’s restaurants is alive and growing in Minnesota.