

Food Philippines highlights the health benefits of coconut products at the Winter Fancy Food Show 2015

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif., Jan. 7, 2015 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – The Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions, in partnership with the Philippine Trade and Investment Centers in Silicon Valley and Los Angeles, is gearing up for the Philippine participation at the 2015 Winter Fancy Food Show on January 11-13, 2015.

Famous for its coconuts with a distinct flavor and texture, the Philippines is considered as the world's leading supplier of coconut products and the second top coconut-producing country.

At the 40th Winter Fancy Food Show slated at the Moscone Convention Center in San Francisco, USA, on January 11-13, 2015, the healthy and natural coconut and its various applications and food by-products will be the focus of Philippine promotion – products that speak of well-being and quality lifestyle, a positioning that will surely delight the US consumers due to its many health benefits.

The Philippine coconut very well responds to the global need for 100 percent healthy and natural food products, attracting both trade and businesses from around the world. Export statistics show that coconut products are consistently among the country's top 10 merchandise exports.

Government data show volumes of coconut-based products exported from the Philippines averaged 1.8 million MTs during the last 10 years from 2004 to 2013. The data also show average value of those exports totaled nearly USD1.3 billion during the reference period.

The coconut's food and non-food uses diversified over the years, enabling this palm to gain the distinction of being called the "tree of life." Among the food products from the coconut are the virgin coconut oil, coconut water, coconut sugar, coconut fiber, and coconut meat (copra) among others.

"We are very happy with the wide acceptance and appreciation of the Philippines' specialty food products by the buyers and visitors of the last edition of Winter Fancy Food Show. This 2015, we will make Food Philippines more exciting, highlighting the distinct flavor and texture of the Philippine coconut," said Rosvi Gaetos, executive director of the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions (CITEM), adding that the Philippine participation is an effort to promote the "tree of life" and its healthy and natural by-products.

Coconut water is growing in popularity not only in the U.S. but also worldwide as a healthy beverage and an alternative to the sugar-loaded soda and energy drinks. This has drawn global attention to the Philippines, being

the second-largest source of best-tasting, high-quality coconut water. It had become a popular drink globally because of its natural benefits and lack of chemical preservatives. It is rich in potassium and magnesium, and contains a considerable amount of vitamin B, which aims in strengthening the muscles, delaying fatigue, and maintaining normal heart function. It also has the ability to clear up and moisturize the skin from within, aids in the prevention of indigestion, boosts hydration, reduces blood pressure, and dissolves urinary stones.

The virgin coconut oil, considered by health experts as the *creme de la creme* of coconut oils, is made in the Philippines from fresh and young coconuts. According to nutritionist and Coconut Research Center president Bruce Fife, famously known as "Dr. Coconut," in his book "The Coconut Oil Miracle," health benefits of coconut oil include the prevention of heart, colon, pancreatic, and liver tumors, improving digestion, reduction of health risks associated with diabetes, osteoporosis, heart, kidney and gallbladder diseases, and prevention of obesity and overweight problems, among others.

Coconut oil, in general, is extracted from coconut meat through smoke drying, sun drying, or kiln drying, refining, bleaching, and deodorizing. It is the most commonly used oil in food processing and cosmetics. It is the most readily digested of all the fats of general use in the world, providing about 9,500 calories of energy per kilogram.

Other by-products derived from coconut meat are coconut flour, desiccated coconut, coconut milk, and coconut chips. Philippines' heritage food products like the country's popular delicacies and cuisine, which are integral part of the Filipino food culture, are usually made with these coconut by-products as ingredients.

Along with the Philippine coconut food products, Food Philippines will bring its specialty food products with approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (USFDA), fair trade, organic, kosher, and halal certifications at the Winter Fancy Food Show, the West Coast's largest specialty food and beverage event.

Food Philippines is a branding initiative that ensures food products made of quality, healthy, natural ingredients are derived from the Philippines' tropical islands. It unifies the overseas promotional efforts of CITEM, the export promotions arm of the Philippine Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). Under this national brand, the Philippines is positioned as Asia's most exciting sourcing destination for food exports, being one of the world's top exporters of fresh fruits and marine products.

Organized by CITEM, in partnership with the Philippine Trade and Investment Center (PTIC) in San Francisco and Los Angeles, the Philippine participation in the Winter Fancy Food Show is one of DTI's major efforts to intensify the promotion of Philippine specialty food products in overseas trade shows.

In this edition, the 16-member core group of participants will bring 100 percent healthy, natural, organic, and heritage foods such as products derived from coconut, mango, banana, pineapple, and other tropical fruits,

herbal teas, nuts, sauces and condiments, cocoa and coffee, delicacies, and confectioneries, to be showcased at the South Hall, Booth No. 3029.

For inquiries and to schedule appointments for one-on-one meetings, please contact the Philippine Trade and Investment Center-Silicon Valley at 1 (415) 773-2336 / 1 (408) 980-9637 or email ptisf@aol.com or ptic-sv@phllippinecentersf.com.

For additional information, visit:
<http://investphilippines.org/siliconvalley>.

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