



NEWS RELEASE

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NMA 60th CONVENTION DEFINES FUTURE FOR MEAT

OAKLAND, CA – Attendees to the National Meat Association’s annual convention March 1-4, 2006 were treated to the most detailed roadmap yet for *The Future for Meat*. The proactive theme is not just a convention slogan, but a state of mind for the association which turns 60 this year.

Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns received a standing ovation for his remarks to on Thursday morning March 2. Although he addressed a wide range of topics with critical import to agriculture, he kept meat squarely in focus as one of the most important commodities produced and processed in this country.

It was a thread picked up by speakers throughout the event. Meat isn’t just the center of the plate it is in so many ways a center of life. The panelists for the Future for Meat session on Saturday, March 4, discussed the troubles that the industry will face, from regulatory uncertainty to rocky trade issues, as well as the paths to success, including flexibility, determination and an understanding that consumer needs will drive future trends more than ever. Later that same day, Smithfield CEO Joe Luter III discussed his company’s efforts to address these changes through vertical integration and expansion into Eastern Europe.

The convention also included two full sessions of roundtable seminars with speakers from the government and industry, as well as consultant experts and influential pundits. Topics addressed included marketing, surviving an EIAO visit and meat processing technology, among others.

Evergood Sausage Co. took home the “Hold The Mustard” Award from this year’s Sausagefest for their delicious Chipolte Sausage. All the entrants’ products were delectable, however, and it was a very tough call for voters, as always. The musical a cappella group, The Standards, brought harmony in on the heels of the award.

The association also managed to host its first live auction, with funds going to the NMA Scholarship Foundation. Student scholarship recipients were on hand to receive their awards at the annual meeting.

Dave Wood of Harris Ranch was presented NMA’s highest honor, the E. Floyd Forbes Award, as well as national recognition in the Congressional Record by his congressmen Rep. Jim Costa (D-CA-20).

National Meat Association is a non-profit trade association. Since 1946, NMA has represented meat packers and processors, equipment manufacturers and food suppliers who provide services to the meat industry. The association has members throughout the United States, as well as in Canada, Australia and Mexico.