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USDA and co-operators boost reduction and re-utilisation of food waste in Asia

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The Food Waste Reduction and Nutrient Recycling Technology Forum was held at Park Hyatt Hotel in Guangzhou, China to introduce US efforts toward the reduction of food loss and waste (FLW) to interested colleagues in China. In addition, the Forum shared practical success cases in the reduction and re-utilisation of FLW worldwide. The aim of this forum was to boost the reduction of escalating FLW across the globe and potential re-utilisation through innovative technologies. USDA's Agricultural Trade Office (ATO) in Guangzhou launched this forum and hopes to hold similar discussions in the future. North American Renderers Association (NARA) and Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute (ASMI) participated in the forum and shared industrial expertise in processing by-products from meats, poultry, bakery and fishery for the production of high-quality animal food ingredients.

JonAnn Flemings - Director of ATO in Guangzhou opened the forum and addressed the current status of global FLW, as well as the importance of FLW reduction toward the elimination of poverty, growth of economic prosperity, and the reduction of methane and carbon dioxide - two green-house gases produced during decomposition in a landfill. She also stressed the need to conserve our natural resources (land, water, labour and energy).

This forum is the first time that such topics on FLW reduction, re-utilisation, technologies and managerial practices in relevant fields were presented to the public and discussed across various industries. USDA's practices in FLW reduction, presented by Flemings and Buzby, showed valuable experiences by a responsible government, which could be used as a model by other countries. USDA's FLW outreach activities worldwide undoubtedly provide incentives to take action towards the global reduction of FLW. The Forum's industrial collaborators demonstrated up-to-date technologies in the re-utilisation of FLW and the use of technology upgrades in similar industries in developing countries while building more robust international supply chains for animal food ingredients.

Nearly 1,000 people attended the forum on-site and online from over 500 companies in FLW collection and handling, restaurant/food market supply service, animal feeds, pet foods and other industries. It is estimated that the forum will be held again in 2024.