

Porkstars-2024

SPEAKERS

Chris Eck, Al Wulfekuhle, John Herath

John Herath 00:00

The U.S. Meat Export Federation recently teamed up with the National Pork Board and Indiana soybean Alliance for the third season of Porkstars, a high-profile cooking competition in Vietnam. Indiana soy grower Chris Eck traveled to Vietnam for the Porkstars event.

Chris Eck 00:14

We came with Indiana Soybean Alliance to promote U.S. pork, which is, you know, our soybeans from Indiana, are our main ingredient in the pork, and that's a good way to extend the profits towards making a more valuable product and exporting those to Vietnam. The Porkstars is pretty good. We're in the third year. It's fun to see this much excitement around something you're going to have for dinner. But they've really made it a big show. They had several contestants to start with, eliminated down to three, and then those were each matched with a, I think, an influencer off of Tiktok or, you know, social media, and then they're set up - each of them make a dish, and then we'll see who wins at the end.

John Herath 00:52

While the Vietnam market does present some access challenges. National Pork Board President Al Wulfekuhle of Iowa sees potential.

Al Wulfekuhle 00:59

It's a niche market. We have to sell the quality of U.S. pork, the reliability, the taste and flavor. We're not going to compete on price. There's a tariff issue here that keeps us a little more expensive than some of our competitors, so we have to sell it on quality, taste and flavor. It's a long game. I think we need to be here. I think there's a lot of market potential. But as this economy grows, as the middle class rises, as they move to more of a structure away from wet markets and grocery stores and to a modern Western economy, I think that's when the real opportunity comes for us.

John Herath 01:40

The Porkstars event was sponsored by the National Pork Board, the Indiana soybean Alliance and the Indiana corn Marketing Council, with event proceeds benefiting a Vietnamese charity that provides nutritious meals to children in rural Vietnam. For more please visit USMEF.org. For the U.S. Meat Export Federation, I'm John Herath.