WEBINARS

WORKING THE MIDDLE GROUND: HOW TO FIND BROKERS AND DISTRIBUTERS

Wednesday, Sep 24, 2025 | 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM
Registration: Monday, Sep 8 - Tuesday, Sep 23, 2025
Microsoft Teams | United States of America

https://www.wusata.org/e/R7V49Z9

EVENT DETAILS

Working the Middle Ground: How to Find Brokers and Distributers

September 24, 2025, 10 am to 11 am PDT

The Microsoft Teams link will be sent via a Calendar Invite after registration is completed

Presented by Bryant Christie Inc.

This seminar is designed for Western U.S. exporters, particularly growers, packers, processors, and food marketers, who are seeking to enter or expand in international markets through partnerships with brokers and distributors. The session will provide a practical overview of the roles these intermediaries play in market access, highlighting when to work with a broker versus a distributor and how to select the right fit for your product and target region. Attendees will gain insights into sourcing and vetting potential partners, conducting due diligence, and structuring agreements that balance flexibility with accountability. The presentation will also cover strategies for navigating cultural and regulatory differences, protecting brand integrity, and avoiding common pitfalls that lead to costly missteps. A featured case study will share firsthand lessons from a successful West Coast exporter working with international partners. Participants will leave with actionable steps to identify, evaluate, and manage brokers and distributors effectively, helping to build sustainable, resilient market entry strategies abroad.

Detailed Webinar Overview:

1. Welcome & Objectives

- Introduce session goals: finding reliable market partners abroad
- Why brokers & distributors matter in international trade
- Common challenges exporters face when entering new markets alone

2. Understanding Roles and Responsibilities

- Broker vs. Distributor: Key Differences
- When to choose one over the other (market maturity, product type, exporter readiness)
- Hybrid models and regional variations

3. Market Entry Strategy: Choosing the Right Partner

- What to look for in a broker/distributor:
- Red flags: poor communication, lack of references, unclear contracts
- Matching partner type to product (perishables vs. shelf-stable, bulk vs. branded)

4. Finding and Vetting Candidates

a. Where to find brokers/distributors:

- Trade shows (e.g., Gulfood, Asia Fruit Logistica, Foodex Japan)
- USDA/FAS resources, state trade offices, trade associations
- Referrals, industry directories, and chambers of commerce

b. Due diligence checklist:

- Credit checks, references, track record, and compliance with local laws
- Using pilot shipments or trial agreements to test relationships

5. Structuring Relationships and Agreements

- Key contract elements: exclusivity, payment terms, performance benchmarks
- Protecting brand integrity abroad
- Balancing flexibility with accountability
- Case study: A West Coast exporter's success/failure story with brokers/distributors

6. Q&A

- Interactive Q&A

Learning Outcomes:

1. Differentiate between brokers and distributors and explain when each is most suitable for specific products and markets.

2 . Identify key traits of reliable partners and recognize red flags that signal potential risk.

3. Apply practical methods for sourcing candidates through trade shows, government resources, associations, and referrals.

4. Conduct effective due diligence using financial, operational, and reputational checks.

5 . Design pilot or trial arrangements to test new partnerships before scaling.

6. Negotiate and structure agreements that balance accountability, exclusivity, and brand protection.

7. Leverage case study insights to anticipate common challenges and replicate best practices in partner management.