

# Canadian Food Ingredients Mission to the US-Midwest

February 25–29, 2019

## Draft Itinerary

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### Day 1 – Mon, Feb 25 – Minneapolis, Minnesota

Afternoon/evening: Fly to Minneapolis

- Check into Renaissance Minneapolis Hotel, The Depot (US \$129/night + tax)
- 5-7pm: Optional / no-host gathering at “Milwaukee Road Hole in the Wall” (within Renaissance Minneapolis)

### Day 2 – Tues, Feb 26 – Minneapolis/Chicago, Illinois

9:30am – 3:30pm: B2B meetings with food processors in Minneapolis – Renaissance Minneapolis, Hiawatha 1&2

- Box lunch provided during meetings

3:30-5:00pm: Happy hour reception in Hiawatha 1&2 for US buyers and Canadian suppliers

Evening: Fly to Chicago

### Day 3 – Wed, Feb 27 – Chicago/Cleveland, Ohio

9:30am – 3:30pm: B2B meetings in Chicago

3:30-5:00pm: Reception

Evening: Fly to Cleveland

### Day 4 – Thurs, Feb 28 – Cleveland

9:30am – 3:30pm: B2B meetings in Cleveland

Closing dinner/reception in Cleveland

Thursday evening or Friday morning: travel back to Canada

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## Overview of Food Manufacturing in the US-Midwest Region

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### **Minneapolis– February 26**

The US-Upper Midwest region (Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota and North Dakota) is a hotbed of opportunity for Canadian ingredient suppliers. With historical roots in the farm economy, the Upper Midwest is now home to some of the world's leaders in food processing – including General Mills, Cargill, Land O'Lakes, The Schwan Company and Bellisio Foods. In recent years, the food start-up scene in the region has exploded – particularly within the Twin Cities Metro area of Minneapolis –churning out small and medium-sized food manufacturers that offer unique opportunities for suppliers of niche ingredients and technologies (e.g., Seven Sundays, Brody's 579, Way Better Snacks). Given the importance of agri-food and ingredients to the region's economy, there are well-established distributors and brokers as well who are interested in doing business with Canadian suppliers.

### **Chicago– February 27**

The long legacy of Chicago lives on its prosperous food industry. Mondelez, Kraft-Heinz, TreeHouse Foods, Hearthside Food and Conagra Brands are just a few of the familiar names of the 4,500 companies in the industry which call the area home. A thriving start-up scene supported by incubators like The Hatchery and Cleveland Avenue along with investment and innovation groups for PepsiCo and Tyson Foods keep things fresh and have helped to launch and develop companies like Farmer's Fridge, RXBar, SkinnyPop and Home Chef. This cluster – supported by a solid network distributors and brokers – represents potential customers for Canadian ingredient suppliers and is an excellent opportunity to highlight Canada's expertise in growing, processing and innovating with healthy, functional, environmentally sound ingredients.

### **Cleveland– February 28**

The Cleveland metropolitan area enjoys a concentration of food manufacturers. Conveniently located near agricultural producers and an abundance of fresh water, over 370 food processing and manufacturing facilities call Cleveland home. Notable companies in the region include Nestle USA, J.M. Smucker Co., H.J. Heinz, and Shearer's. In addition to manufacturing, Ohio is home to significant institutional resources dedicated to growing the food processing sector. The Center for Innovative Food Technology and the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center provide research and development as well as commercialization support to growing food manufacturers. Like other cities with strong agri-foods sectors, there are numerous food distributors and brokers concentrated in this region.