

# Fancy Food Show

## Visa Invitation Letter Process

### Request for Visa Invitation letters:

We need to receive your visa invitation request for the Summer Fancy Food Show by May 1, 2010

- You need an appointment date with your embassy.
- You need to have paid for your booth space
- If you have done both, please email your request & the following information to [hpaul@nasft.org](mailto:hpaul@nasft.org)
  1. Name
  2. Title (ie. Owner, President, Manager, Sales Manager)
  3. Sex (Male / Female)
  4. Date of Birth
  5. Company Name
  6. Company Address
  7. Passport Number
  8. Company Fax
  9. Company Phone
  10. American Consulate / Embassy in your country - street address, fax number & email.

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### Visa Waiver

A U.S. visa allows a foreign citizen to travel to a United States port of entry and request admission into the U.S. from a U.S. Immigration Inspector. Since September 11, visa applications have been subject to a greater degree of scrutiny than in the past. **The timeframes for visa processing today are difficult to predict with accuracy for any individual applicant and could vary significantly by country. Advance planning on the part of travelers is essential to receive a visa in time for proposed travel dates to the United States.**

As part of the organizer's communications to each prospective overseas participant, we encourage you to stress the importance of reviewing any existing U.S. visa the participant may have and to apply early for any new visa required.

For the 27 countries in the Visa Waiver Program, citizens meeting the visa waiver criteria will not need a visa, but they must have a machine-readable passport. Please refer to [http://www.travel.state.gov/visa/tempvisitors\\_novisa\\_waiver.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/visa/tempvisitors_novisa_waiver.html) for more information on these requirements.

Canadian citizens do not need a visa, but should visit [http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/without/without\\_1260.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/without/without_1260.html) for more information. The U.S. Embassy Consular Section will decide, per immigration law, about a particular applicant's eligibility for a given visa type based on the information and documentation presented to the consular officer. As a general rule, except for Canadians and those who can travel on the visa waiver program, anyone who wants to attend a business, educational, professional, or amateur sports event, conference or meeting who is not a government official, will generally need a visitor visa (B1/B2). Media and journalists, including citizens from Visa Waiver Program countries, will generally need an "I" or media visa. Government officials traveling for official purposes will need an "A" visa. Please refer to the Department of State website for Visa Wait Times for visa appointments at [http://www.travel.state.gov/visa/tempvisitors\\_wait.php](http://www.travel.state.gov/visa/tempvisitors_wait.php).

Advance planning by foreign travelers is critical. We recommend all foreign travelers consider the following when making their plans to travel to the United States:

- Identify whether a visa is required.
- If the traveler already has a U.S. visa appropriate for this travel, check the expiration date on the visa to make sure it will not expire before the planned travel date.
- Each applicant should contact the U.S. Embassy or Consulate Consular Section in his or her country of residence to determine any additional visa procedures, including the timeframe required to schedule an appointment for the interview. An interview is required for most visa applicants.
- Please see the link below for the Visa Wait Times list. Wait times vary by Embassy and Consulate and it is imperative that applicants plan ahead. Please check our website for information on contacting a Consular Section directly on the Department of State's website at <http://usembassy.state.gov/>
- If a visa is needed, a foreign traveler should apply for his or her visa as soon as possible, but no later than 60 days before the travel date. If the conference is scientific in nature, or the applicant has a scientific background, the visa application should be made no later than 90 days in advance of the travel. Applicants should apply to the U.S. Embassy Consular Section in his or her country of residence.

Under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), an applicant must overcome the presumption that he or she is an intending immigrant. An applicant must demonstrate, to the consular officer's satisfaction, that he or she has strong social and economic ties to his or her country of residence, that the applicant will return to his or her country of residence before the visa expires, and that the applicant has access to sufficient funds to cover the entire trip. Meeting organizers may choose to include supporting documents in their communications with foreign meeting participants. Such documents, most commonly in the form of letters of invitation, though not required in the instructions for the visa application, should be presented to the consular officer during the visa interview. The letter of invitation should provide information about the conference or meeting, including the purpose and itinerary of the intended travel, including an explanation of any funding provided for the applicant. **This letter does not guarantee the issuance of a visa.** Applicants for nonimmigrant visas must show that they qualify individually on their own merit per provisions of U.S. immigration law.

The Department of State recommends their web site as the primary source for current visitor visa information. Information about visitor visas is available on our web site at <http://travel.state.gov>.

Please note that Consular Sections overseas have sole responsibility for issuance of visas, and they generally are the first point of contact for visa processing status. Events posted on the Department of State's intranet are maintained on list that is purely a communications tool Visa Services provides for the benefit of consular officers overseas. Inclusion on this list does not guarantee visa issuance or earlier appointment/interview times. Visa Services at the Department of State is neither able to expedite nor monitor the processing of visa applications.