

‘Opening the way for exports for small and medium-sized enterprises’

Local buyers flock to corporate exhibition

400 companies in K-beauty, bio, food, health, etc. focus on business meetings

The Corporate Exhibition, which helps small and medium-sized businesses develop overseas markets and exports, was held from April 17-19 as the flagship program of the World Korean Business Convention (WKBC) held at the Georgia World Convention Center in Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.

About 400 small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) from Korea set up booths at this corporate exhibition. Major categories included K-beauty, K-food, K-bio, K-health care and IT.

The opening ceremony was attended by Minister of SMEs and Startups Oh Young-joo, OKA Commissioner Lee Sang-duk, Chair of the Korea Federation of SMEs Kim Ki-moon, North Chungcheong Province Gov. Kim Young-hwan, Deputy Governor of Economic Affairs Park Chang-hwan of South Jeolla Province and Consul General of Houston Jeong Young-ho.

“The economic network of compatriots through the establishment of the ‘Hansang Economic Zone’ will contribute to expanding exchanges between the home country and the country of residence,” OKA Commissioner Lee Sang-duk said in a press conference before the opening ceremony. “I hope that this convention will serve as a venue for strengthening Korea-U.S. relations and as an opportunity to overcome the global economic crisis.

“We expect to achieve good results because we organized the exhibition centered on K-food, beauty and bio, which are attracting attention overseas due to the Korean Wave.”

Lee Kyung-chul, the president of the co-hosting organization Korean American Chamber of Commerce USA, said: “About 500 Korean businesses and local buyers interested in excellent Korean SME products visited the exhibition hall. We will focus on supporting Korean companies with their entry into the U.S. market and their partnerships.”

Local government booths were set up for the corporate exhibition, including Incheon metropolitan city, Daegu metropolitan city, South Jeolla Province and North Chungcheong Province, and the SME Administration and Small Business Corp. (organizations under the Ministry of SMEs and Startups) also opened booths to promote their member companies.



Key figures taste products at the SME product exhibition booth after the opening of the Corporate Exhibition, the flagship program of the World Korean Business Convention held in Atlanta, U.S., on April 17. From left to right are North Chungcheong Province Gov. Kim Young-hwan, actor Jung Joon-ho, SMEs and Startups Minister Oh Young-joo, OKA Commissioner Lee Sang-duk and Korea Federation of SMEs Chairman Kim Ki-moon.

Incheon, which has set out to promote itself as a city friendly to overseas Koreans, had 24 companies participate, and companies affiliated with the Korea Federation of SMEs and the National Agricultural Cooperative Federation also set up booths.

SMEs and Startups Minister Oh and Commissioner Lee, as well as other key figures, toured the exhibition hall, listening to explanations about products from SMEs and even tasting food at the food booth.

Actor Jung Joon-ho, who participated in the event as a public relations ambassador, said, “I will do my best to promote Korean products through good movies and dramas. Please show a lot of interest in the World Korean Business Convention.”

The organizers also set up a 1:1 business meeting space at the very back of the corporate exhibition hall for efficient consultations between participating companies and buyers.

“Most of the buyers who participated in the convention were those with actual purchasing decision-making capabilities, and they expressed their interest by making inquiries even before the convention started,” Organizing Committee Chairman Noh Sang-il said. “Furthermore, with the Korean Wave, the interest of mainstream consumers is higher than ever, so export contracts worth \$1 billion will be signed at the convention.” 장