

## NorthWoods Group Ltd.

NorthWoods Group Ltd. is a merchandiser of agricultural ingredients to leading food, industrial and animal feed companies around the world. Founded in 2000 and headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota, NorthWoods Group serves clients by managing the major aspects of commodity exporting.

The company specializes in commodity and customized dairy ingredients, including cheese, butter and dairy powders. In the United States, about half of its business is in bulk cheeses sold to processors including food manufacturers, cheese processors and cut-and-wrap facilities.

NorthWoods helps clients manage storage, transportation, purchasing, sales and risk management. NorthWoods does not manufacture products however, a portion of its business involves working with third party co-packers to meet the needs of their clients.

NorthWoods was founded by Scott Moarn, a 30-year veteran of food and feed ingredient merchandising. While the business was initially focused on domestic sales, in the last few years exports have played an increasingly important role, and last year accounted for about 25% of the firm's sales, according to Justin Kapsen, vice president and director of sales.

"2008 was a good year for our export business," Kapsen says. "We exported cheese to the Far East, along with dairy powders to various markets around the world. Our exports are down slightly this year because of overall market conditions, but we expect exports to continue to be an important part of our business and future growth strategy."

NorthWoods Group's services include sales, logistics and risk management. The company's sales staff works at

sourcing ingredients across different food and feed industries, both in the United States and internationally. Through its international shipping contacts NorthWoods offers door-to-door logistics services, providing assurance to customers that their dairy products order will arrive on time and in specification.

NorthWoods Group offers customized risk management solutions including forward pricing and over-the-counter commodity swap programs on many products. This allows their customers to fix costs and limit ingredient price exposure, the company says.

NorthWoods Group says its chief goal is to build long term business partnerships. The company works closely with clients to meet supply chain and quality standards.

"We want our clients to be successful," NorthWoods states on its website. "This means going beyond our customers' expectations and truly understanding each of our client's needs. Through insightful market analysis we're able to create new opportunities for customers, opportunities which build the foundation for trusted, long term relationships."

### Working with USDEC

While the company's principals have a wealth of experience in the dairy commodities business, USDEC has provided them with added resources to help navigate the dairy export business.

"It's really been instrumental for us as we are a small group," Kapsen says. "USDEC provides a variety of key documentation and tools on its website and our affiliation with USDEC adds to the credibility of the company."

Countries in the Far East, including China and Korea, have become important markets for NorthWoods



Group, but exported cheese and powders are making their way to food and feed manufacturers in many markets, both near and far, Kapsen says. "Right now our primary export markets are Oceania, Asia and Mexico. We have also worked with the Philippines and Caribbean markets. We are currently working to increase our presence in Europe and South America."

NorthWoods Group says most of its products are available as Kosher, Halal and/or EU certified.

### Export Products

- **Buttermilk Powder:** sweet cream and blends
- **Butter and Cheese Powder**
- **Cheese:** cheddar, gouda and mozzarella
- **Lactose**
- **Milk Protein Concentrates**
- **Nonfat Dry Milk/Skimmed Milk Powder**
- **Sweet Whey Powder**
- **Whey Protein Concentrates:** WPC 34 & WPC 80
- **Whole Milk Powder**

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