

Daily Overview: Our first stop today was downtown Shanghai. We caught a glimpse of the World Financial Tower on our bus ride and, for the second day in a row, we were hosted by Joy from the ATO (American Trade Office). CitySuper is the name of a high-end grocery store located within a luxury shopping mall. It was interesting to see the difference in products and prices at CitySuper compared with those in our U.S. meat counters. Our next stop was at Preferred Freezer Services, a cold storage company/warehouse. Company president Tim McLellen gave us an overview of the company history and a tour of the facility. We were able to find frozen turkey that originated from Jenni-O Turkeys in Willmar Minnesota!

We arrived at the headquarters of the Yangshan trading area and were briefed by Mr. Wu, the director of operations. Mr. Wu gave an overview of container shipments into China, construction of the port area, and future plans for continued development. The bus ride to the Yangshan Deep Water Port took us across a bridge that was 32.5 kilometers in length. Words cannot describe the enormity of the bridge that lead to a beautiful island that was covered with shipping containers and loading cranes. It was a beautiful contrast of ocean island scenery and colossal international trade. The view from the port observation area was breathtaking and eye opening and many of us had thoughts about the potential of the human spirit and global cooperation.

This trip has been an opportunity of a lifetime. There are no words to describe what this trip means to us and there is no way to quantify the knowledge we have gained. We know this experience will carry with us throughout our lifetimes and we hope that others will benefit from the dissemination of our trip experiences. We would also like to thank everyone who made this opportunity possible. Faculty from North Dakota State University, financial supporters, parents, and many others all worked together to support this effort. Tomorrow we will spend our last whole day in China and then it's back to the United States of America.

Until next time,

Courtney Johnson and Jodi Boe.

Courtney Johnson reflection: Seeing the largest deep-water seaport in the world (Yangshan sea port) and the city of Shanghai was amazing. There is no doubt that I have had a blast in China and that the knowledge that I have acquired will last with me throughout my life. It has also raised some serious questions about food safety and security for our growing population. I would like to take this time to say how I am incredibly grateful for the opportunities we had in China and all the wonderful people we have met along the way. I wouldn't trade this trip for the world. So as one of the last writers for the trip I would like to thank everyone who made it possible! USA here we come!!!

Jodi Boe's reflection: describe it in a quote made by Henry David Thoreau: “it's not what you look at that matters, it's what you see.” This whole trip is designed to broaden our perspectives on global food production systems and it has done that and much more. Everything that we have seen here in China has multiple sides to it. The dominant side, and the message that we take home, depends wholly on what we decide to see.

Take, for instance, the slum that we can view from outside of our hotel window, contrasted with the tall, glittering buildings of downtown Shanghai. It can be looked at and seen as a poor, disgusting waste of expensive real estate, or seen as a marvel of a symbiotic relationship that has occurred among a multitude of citizens living in the same place. The same goes for the Yangshen Deep Water port we toured today. It can be seen as an eyesore that ruined the beauty of an offshore island, or seen and recognized as an unparalleled engineering feat.

Everything that we've seen and experienced here on our trip follows along these same lines. We can choose to point out what we see as wrong or we can choose to point out the wonders and workings that have made markets and production systems work here for thousands of years. It truly is all about perspective, and I believe that all of us will come back changed persons because of this.

A quote that stuck in my head today that will be my take home message is that China will always be a consumer when it comes to foreign agricultural products. Because of this, we can choose to look at the agricultural relationship between China and the USA and see a political nightmare, or see the opportunity of a lifetime that will drive agricultural production in the US for the extent of our lives. What we see is dependent on how much work we are willing to put into the opportunity, and the perspective in which we view it.