

Trade turns out in force for QPMA's 24th annual Oyster Party

By JOEL GEBET

ST.-LEONARD, QC — Over 500 members of the produce industry turned out for the Quebec Produce Marketing Association's 24th annual Oyster Party, held here Nov. 6 at Le Rizz reception hall.

The event is the Quebec produce industry's fall get-together and offers attendees the opportunity to mingle with customers, suppliers and friends.

The original Oyster Party was the brainchild of Ghislain

Perron of Metro Inc., and in its early days, the event was intended strictly for serious oyster lovers, with 50 or 60 people attending. The event was ultimately changed to include more participants, and a gourmet buffet and open bar were added.

Peter Fogarty of Metro Fogarty took over the job of organizing the event in 1995 and passed the mantle 10 years later to Pat Calabretta of Sobeys Quebec Inc., who is still the chairman of the event.



Ghislain Perron, Metro Inc.'s director of special projects for produce, stopped to chat with Marc-Andre Chenail, Leon Galizia and Steven Lemelin of Les Fermes du Soleil Inc. Mr. Perron is credited with founding the event 24 years ago.



Sebastien Alix (second from right), general manager of Pommes Ma-gic, and his girlfriend, Melissa Lavoie (right), chatted with Sophie Perreault, the QPMA's executive director, and Julie Des-Groseilliers, the spokesperson for the QPMA's I Love 5 To 10 A Day campaign.



Pierre Gagnon (sitting left) of Sobeys Quebec's produce SAP integration team, stopped to visit with Mike Orsini, president of Les Aliments Bercy, and the Bercy team, which included Audrey Menard, Lidia Cortez, Jinan Al-Douri and Vanessa Palumbo.



Bernadette Hamel, Metro Inc.'s vice president of national procurement and merchandising for Quebec for produce, and Jim DiMenna, president of Jem-D International Partners LP and J-D Marketing (Leamington) Inc.



Stephan Dolbec (right), president and general director of Patates Dolbec and the QPMA's president, with his girlfriend, Josee Petitclerc (second from right); Anne-Emilie Thibault, the QPMA's communications director; Pascal Primiano (center) of Metro Inc.; and his girlfriend, Chantal Clement (second from left).



Gerard Trudeau (center) of Marvini Herbes Fraiches Inc. shared a laugh with Denis Fiset and Sylvain Terrault of Groupe HydroSerre Inc.



Representing Les Serres du St.-Laurent, which is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, were Marie Gosselin, Valerie Grenier, Andre-Anne Matte, Isabelle Parent and Robert Boudreau.



Guy Lariviere of Belmont Powell Ltd. stopped to speak with Francis Berube of Sobeys Quebec.