

State popcorn maker signs deal with Chinese theater chain

Indiana popcorn maker signs agreement to supply growing Chinese theater chain

By Richard Gootee

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Coming soon to more movie theaters in the Far East: Hoosier popcorn.

Noblesville-based Weaver Popcorn Co. signed a deal sealing the relationship with the Stellar Cinema Group as part of the group's celebration marking the Chinese theater chain's 100th location.

The agreement was announced during Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman's ongoing 10-day agriculture trade mission to China.

"This is great news for Weaver, which already has a booming international business," Skillman said Tuesday in a news release.

Weaver popcorn is already served in some Stellar theaters, but officials trumpeted the occasion as a commitment to an ongoing "strategic partnership."

Chinese movie stars, celebrities and Skillman's delegation, which included Weaver Chief Operating Officer Will Weaver, attended the ceremony.

Weaver said the prospect of growth for his snack in China is "quite exciting."

"In the next year, they're going to go to 300 screens, so you can imagine how much popcorn that is," Weaver said in a news release.

Details of the deal were not released.

He called the country an obvious opportunity for American companies to capitalize on because of consumer demand.

Weaver Popcorn makes about 30 percent of the world's popcorn, second only to ConAgra Foods. It sells popcorn in all 50 states and more than 90 countries.



Popular the world over: Will Weaver (right), of Noblesville-based Weaver Popcorn, signed a partnership deal with Stellar Cinema Group of Beijing on Tuesday in China. The theater chain's plans for rapid growth promise a surge in demand for Weaver's Indiana popcorn. - Photo provided by Weaver Popcorn