



A Pennsylvania Local Development District

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Exporting Opportunity Available to Local Businesses

In spite of the current economic downturn, Pennsylvania's exports provide a ray of hope and may prove to be a saving grace for many Pennsylvania businesses. In 2008, Pennsylvania exports increased 18% compared to 2007 and have surpassed \$34.4 billion for the first time in history. Meanwhile, total U.S. exports are up 12%. Pennsylvania companies continue to get their products and service out there-around the world.

The Center for Trade Development (CTD) is the export arm of the Office of International Business Development within the Department of Community and Economic Development. CTD provides the Pennsylvania business community with international market intelligence, export counseling, compliance support, business contacts and trade promotion programs to expand its clients' reach, capacity, and global competitiveness. CTD works closely with 10 in-state Regional Export partners and 24 Authorized Trade Representatives around the globe. Last year, the office assisted 1,250 clients, resulting in \$364.8 million in facilitated export sales for Pennsylvania businesses.

To increase Pennsylvania companies' access to new international markets, CTD has scheduled three export promotion events for spring 2009. In cooperation with the Northwest Commission, CTD's regional Export Network Partner in Northwest Pennsylvania, these three visits will make a stop in Erie, Clarion, and Mercer counties so that regional businesses can meet with the foreign-based trade representatives that will be traveling throughout the Commonwealth. Business leaders, in northwest Pennsylvania will have the opportunity to discuss their export strategies and receive assistance with identifying export opportunities from the foreign trade representatives.

The first visit by the foreign trade representatives will be held March 24, at Knowledge Center, 5240 Knowledge Park, on the Penn State Behrend Campus. Australia/New Zealand, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Israel (Eastern Mediterranean Region), Saudi Arabia, Africa, and the United Kingdom will be represented at this event. The Power Generation and Energy Industry sector has been identified as most opportune in respective markets; however, meeting appointments for all three mentioned events are available for Pennsylvania companies from any industry.

The second visit will focus on the Building and Hardwoods Industry, and will be held April 29, at the Holiday Inn located in Clarion, Clarion County. China, Russia, Singapore, Vietnam, and the United Arab Emirates (Gulf Region) will have representation at this event.

The third visit will focus on the Metals and Machinery, Electronics and IT Industries. This visitation will be held May 13, at the Radisson Hotel in West Middlesex, Mercer County. Germany, India, Japan, South Korea, Mexico and Taiwan will have representation at the event.



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The Northwest Commission will also be offering a “Breakfast with the Pros,” event the morning of each of the visits from the trade representatives. This will offer regional business leaders the opportunity to sit down in an informal roundtable discussion to get answers to their exporting questions or gain more information on exporting to specific markets. One foreign trade representative will be at each table to facilitate an open forum discussion with the business leaders. Companies from other business sectors interested in any of these foreign markets are also welcome to come and meet with Pennsylvania’s trade representatives to discuss export opportunities for their products or services.

Dorte Heffernan, Manager of the International Program for the Northwest Commission, said, “Pennsylvania companies are very fortunate to be able to tap into the export marketing program of the Commonwealth, the most heavily funded and marketed export promotion program in the United States. Pennsylvania companies can apply for funding to help offset expenses of their international travel, they can obtain foreign company background checks which are needed more now than ever before because of the financial instability of global customers. They can utilize the 24 foreign trade offices as their in-country link to find partners overseas and to receive logistical assistance while traveling.”

For more information contact **Dorte Heffernan**, Manager International Trade for the Northwest Commission, at dorteh@nwcommission.org or by telephone at **814.677.4800 Ext. 110**. For additional information check the Calendar of Events on the Northwest Commission’s website at www.nwcommission.org.

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Established in 1967, the Northwest Commission is a regional resource for business and economic development as well as community development and planning. The non-profit agency is composed of a team of skilled professionals dedicated to sustaining economic vitality and growth in the northwest Pennsylvania region by fostering local, state, and federal partnerships across public and private sector lines. The Northwest Commission provides programs such as business financing, government contracting, international marketing, grants, transportation, and technology assistance to eight counties in northwest Pennsylvania including: Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Lawrence, Mercer, Venango, and Warren.

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