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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation

### **Trade pros reach out to firms seeking overseas markets**

VICTORIA – The Province is bringing its nine trade and investment representatives, who work in seven countries around the world, to communities throughout B.C. where they will help businesses wanting to expand into overseas markets.

This is the first time government has sent all its trade representatives into the regions to work with companies, regional economic development agencies and communities. Communities and businesses in the North, Thompson-Okanagan, Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland will learn about the trade representatives' services and how to tap into new markets. Increasing exports and attracting investment expands B.C.'s economy and creates jobs.

The trade and investment representatives are on contract with the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation. They will outline their overseas services, offer advice on building networks in foreign markets, and meet one-on-one with as many companies as time allows. The government is partnering with economic development agencies and municipalities to organize meetings and forums. The representatives have come from Japan, Korea, China, India, Europe and the U.S. West Coast. Their experience spans all industry sectors, including forestry, mining, tourism and international education.

Peter Aylen of Absorbent Products Ltd., a Kamloops exporter is an example of a businessman who will use the trade and investment representatives visit to explore ways to expand his company's sales in Europe. Aylen's cat litter and other agricultural and industrial absorbent products, created from material from a unique mine in the Thompson-Okanagan region, are also on shelves in the U.S. and throughout Canada.

The trade and investment representatives will be in B.C. from May 23 to June 5. They will visit Penticton, Vernon, Kelowna, Kamloops, Prince George, the Comox Valley, Nanaimo, Victoria, Langley and Vancouver.

#### **Quote:**

Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation Pat Bell –

“Exporting is vital to the economic health of British Columbia, and helping businesses learn how to expand their markets overseas is one way to create jobs for families. We want businesses in all parts of British Columbia to have access to our services, and by sending the trade reps to the regions, we're making it easier for those businesses to learn about new opportunities and services.”

## Quick Facts:

- The provincial government has trade and investment professionals here in British Columbia as well as a network of nine international trade and investment representatives based in China, Japan, Korea, India, the European Union and the western U.S.
- Trade and investment representatives can make local introductions to potential buyers, investors and other in-market partners. They help companies identify opportunities and offer assistance in making the right investment decisions.
- Other services include:
  - International market intelligence and trade leads to help companies sell products and services overseas.
  - Advice on developing marketing strategy and cross-cultural business practices.
  - Connecting with key industry, government and community influencers.
  - Seminars and training on exporting and international markets.
  - Organizing and supporting trade missions, exhibitions and conferences in B.C. and abroad.
- Agencies hosting businesses participating in the trade and investment tour include: Venture Kamloops, Initiatives Prince George, Penticton Economic Development Services, the City of Vernon, the Regional District Central Okanagan Economic Development Commission, Salmon Arm Economic Development Society, the Comox Valley Economic Development Society, the Vancouver Island Coast Economic Developers Association, the Greater Victoria Development Agency and the Economic Development Association of B.C.

## Learn More:

<https://trade.britishcolumbia.ca/Pages/Home.aspx>

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