

# Gov. Walker: Celebrates Wisconsin-Japan trade relationship at 50th anniversary of Midwest U.S.-Japan Association Conference in Omaha

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OMAHA – Governor Scott Walker today joined leaders from Japan and ten Midwestern states at the 50th anniversary of the Midwest U.S.- Japan Association Conference to discuss the critical importance of maintaining and growing trade relations.

“Wisconsin’s trade relationship with Japan is critically important as the country is our sixth largest trade partner and is our fifth largest export destination,” said Governor Walker. “Today’s conference is more than an opportunity to celebrate 50 years of the Midwest-U.S. Japan Association, it is also an opportunity to grow our economic relationship. Through expanded trade, and the continued development of companies that are in both Japan and Wisconsin, like Kikkoman, Harley-Davidson, and Johnson Controls, we will see both our countries benefit. This relationship is win-win.”

The Midwest Japan Association Conference is held every year to bring together Japan and 10 Midwestern states: Wisconsin, Ohio, Nebraska, Missouri, Minnesota, Michigan, Kansas, Iowa, Indiana, and Illinois. The goal of the conference is to bring together business and government leaders to discuss ways to enhance the economic relationship between Midwestern states and Japan.

In 2017, Wisconsin exported more than \$789 million in products, ranging from scientific and medical instruments to dairy products, to Japan.

Another major component of the Wisconsin-Japan economic relationship is foreign direct investment. There are 33 Japanese businesses with operations in Wisconsin, and 27 Wisconsin businesses with operations in Japan.

Kikkoman Corporation is one of the many Japanese companies with operations in Wisconsin. Kikkoman has been operating in Wisconsin for 45 years with their first production plant opening in Walworth in 1973. The company has continued to invest in Wisconsin since its first brewery opened, including in 2007 when the company established a research and development laboratory at the University of Wisconsin Research Park in Madison and in 2013 when it announced a \$1 million grant to the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee School of Freshwater Science.