

WEDC: Governor Evers will lead trade mission to Japan in September

Posted on Wednesday, Jul 17, 2019

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MADISON, WI. JULY 17, 2019 - Governor Tony Evers will lead a trade mission to Japan from Sept. 6-14 as part of the state's efforts to expand exports by Wisconsin companies. This will be the first trade mission of his new administration.

"This mission provides an excellent opportunity to establish the personal relationships that are so important to doing business in Japan," Governor Evers said. "Japan is Wisconsin's sixth-highest export destination, and our exports continue to grow. In just the first quarter of this year, exports from our state to Japan rose by 11% over the same period last year."

The mission will be coordinated by the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), the state's lead economic development organization. The trip will include visits to Tokyo, Yokohama and Chiba City. Governor Evers will also attend the Midwest U.S.-Japan Conference.

The destinations for WEDC's trade missions and global trade ventures are chosen based on the markets that hold the best opportunities for Wisconsin companies. In each city, WEDC schedules participating companies for customized business meetings with potential local partners by Wisconsin's authorized trade representatives in the markets, based on the company's needs.

State trade missions offer companies a way to make connections in markets that lead to new exports. The trips represent an excellent value since they are offered at a subsidized rate, and with logistics taken care of, participants can focus on business.

"Japan represents a market that cannot be ignored for Wisconsin, especially in the

areas of medical and scientific instruments, industrial machinery and electrical machinery,” said Katy Sinnott, vice president of international business development for WEDC. “Wisconsin’s leadership in these areas and our well-known manufacturing and research capabilities create exciting export opportunities for globally minded companies in our state.”

The trade mission begins Sept. 6 with a departure from the U.S. to Tokyo. Participants will be scheduled for one-on-one meetings with potential partners in the market in Tokyo, Yokohama and Chiba City.

With a population of 35 million, the Tokyo-Yokohama metro area is the world’s most populous megacity. While Japan is not a typical first export market due to its complexities and distance from Wisconsin, new-to-export companies may want to consider participating to help develop a long-term strategy for entering the Japanese market.

Wisconsin exported \$734.3 million worth of goods to Japan in 2018. Top Wisconsin exports to Japan include industrial machinery, which grew 44% alone in the first quarter of this year; medical and scientific instruments; electrical machinery; and prepared meat and seafood products.

The program will also include a visit to Chiba City for group meetings with partners in Wisconsin’s sister state of Chiba Prefecture. The trade venture is scheduled to coincide with the Midwest U.S.-Japan Conference, and participants will be able to join the governor in attending portions of the conference program as appropriate for their companies and business goals.

Each participant in the trade mission will also receive a customized Japan market assessment specific to their company from WEDC, detailing considerations to keep in mind when introducing the company’s product or service into the market. WEDC also has an authorized trade representative in Japan who can make it easier for Wisconsin companies to find local partners and can take some of the guesswork out of launching in a new market.

The venture includes seven nights in Tokyo, with business appointments in both Tokyo and Yokohama and a group day trip to Chiba City. The cost to attend for a Wisconsin exporter of goods or services is \$2,200, which includes the market assessment, hotel accommodations, interpreter services and scheduled ground transportation, but does not include international airfare or most meals. WEDC is

able to offer this venture at a low price for Wisconsin exporters thanks in part to a grant from the U.S. Small Business Administration.

The registration deadline is July 26. To learn more or register, please visit <https://wedc.org/japan19>.