

SW KS ag company participates in trade mission to Ukraine

In June, the Kansas Department of Agriculture participated in a trade mission to Ukraine, where the team attended the AGRO 2018 Expo. AGRO is the leading exhibition for agriculture, services and related topics in Ukraine.

The team representing Kansas on the trade mission included Mike Bergmeier of Shield Agricultural Equipment; Alan VanNahmen of Kopper Kutter, LLC in Cimarron; Harley Adams and Joe Minihan of CTI John Deere; and Suzanne Ryan-Numrich and Shirley Acedo from KDA's agriculture advocacy, marketing, and outreach team.



Kansas company representatives share information with the U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine at the USA Pavilion at the AGRO 2018 show in Kyiv, Ukraine, in June.

(from left) Suzanne Ryan-Numrich, Kansas Department of Agriculture; Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch; Shirley Acedo, KDA; Alan VanNahmen, Kopper Kutter; Dee McKee, Kopper Kutter; and Mike Bergmeier, Shield Agricultural Equipment.

The trade mission served to identify potential new markets for agricultural machinery which translates to new opportunities for Kansas agribusinesses. "Ukraine has comparable crop production to Kansas, so many of their farm implements are similar to what is used throughout the Midwest," said Ryan-Numrich, "Because of this, Ukraine is a potentially huge market for Kansas agricultural equipment manufacturers and retailers."

Over the past five years, Kansas has exported roughly \$8 million in agricultural commodities to Ukraine, with the top exports being beef and pork. By exploring new opportunities, Kansas companies can expand their exports, develop new relationships, create new markets and continue to build a partnership between Kansas and Ukraine.

"Traveling to Ukraine was essential to take our business to the next level. Customers were able to see that ShieldAG products were a high-quality, made in the USA product," said Bergmeier, who expanded his sales because of his participation in the trade mission.

The trade mission was organized by KDA and the U.S. Commercial Service. It was funded through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration using a State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) grant.

KDA strives to encourage and enhance economic growth of the agriculture industry and the Kansas economy by exploring and expanding both domestic and international marketing opportunities. The Kansas Ag Growth Project identified agriculture equipment manufacturing and sales as a key component for state growth. For information on this or other international trade missions, please contact Suzanne Ryan-Numrich at suzanne.numrich@ks.gov or call 785-564-6704.

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