

ACCESS

SASKATCHEWAN

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The Li'l Saskatchewan Company That Can

by Diane Abernethy

A small Saskatchewan export company is setting a big example when it comes to entering new markets.

In February 2001, **Canada Livestock Services Ltd. (CLS)**, a cattle genetics exporter, hired University of Guelph graduate Chris Slade through the **International Trade Personnel Program (ITPP)**. Slade's role as the manager of the Beijing, China, office is to promote CLS products to China and help further a three-year goal to increase sales to \$5 million.

In less than a year, Slade has already inked a \$3 million deal with a private investor in Beijing. The investor owns several dairy farms and was looking to improve production by introducing Canadian genetics. Slade made contact with the firm through sales contacts and trade shows, and convinced the investor that CLS was the company to help him achieve his goals.

CLS is not alone in their success. Over 70 Saskatchewan companies have increased their success in export markets through graduates recruited through ITPP.

The ITPP is a unique funding program designed by Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) for growing western

Canadian export-oriented businesses. It enables small businesses to employ eligible post-secondary graduates to help implement export marketing strategies by sharing some of the costs involved in hiring recent graduates to work on international trade projects. Whether your export business has one employee or one hundred, the ITPP can help you expand into new markets the world over.

WD offers a range of services, from a one-stop source of information on industry export and trade, government programs, regulations and services, to practical information and business counselling. Its network of professionals can help you find what you need to establish a business or make your business grow. If you would like more information about ITPP or other programs offered by WD, call us at 1-888-338-WEST (9378).*

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Trade Mission a Success for Synchrotron

by Brinley Werrett

Accompanied by the four western premiers, three territorial leaders and more than 190 delegates, Prime Minister Jean Chrétien embarked on a four-day Team Canada West Trade Mission to Texas and California in late November 2001. Its purpose was to build stronger, reliable business relationships with our neighbours to the south. This was the first Team Canada West Trade Mission.

The mission resulted in the signing of 19 agreements valued at \$92.8 million. One of these agreements involved the **Canadian Light Source (CLS)**. The CLS is a \$173.5 million synchrotron light facility being constructed at the University of Saskatchewan (U of S) in Saskatoon. It will be a national scientific facility to provide synchrotron light for academic, government and industrial research. The synchrotron is often described as a "super microscope" capable of generating light millions of times brighter than sunlight, allowing scientists to observe the structure of matter and chemical reactions in unprecedented detail in a Canadian facility. This provides a new tool for solving challenges in areas such as health, environment and new product development.

The U of S, owner of the CLS, signed a contract with Electronic Data Systems (EDS) for the design and production of a computer and communications infrastructure to support the information technology needs of the synchrotron facility. During the mission, U of S Chancellor Tom Molloy and EDS CEO Richard Brown took part in a ceremonial signing of the \$2.23 million contract originally negotiated in June 2001.



Descending to the ground level along the outside wall of the booster ring. From the booster ring the beam is transferred to the storage ring where electrons are accumulated. Radial acceleration of the beam through the storage ring magnets produces synchrotron light.

The CLS project is a unique partnership among the Government of Canada, the U of S, provincial and municipal governments, industry and 19 other Canadian universities. Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) invested and is administering more than \$20 million in the CLS. It is an excellent example of a WD investment creating local impact with global implications.

For more information on Canadian Light Source, please visit www.lightsource.ca or contact Kathryn Warden at the University of Saskatchewan, (306) 966-2506. ♣

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One-Stop Access to the World

by Brinley Werrett

Trained information officers at the **Canada-Saskatchewan Business Service Centre (CSBSC)** help entrepreneurs find the facts they need to start or grow a business in Saskatchewan. The CSBSC offers **business infosource**, a gateway to a world of business information, and also acts as the “front line” for **Trade Team Saskatchewan (TTS)**.

TTS is a partnership between various federal and provincial agencies that offer trade-related services, including Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD), Saskatchewan Economic and Co-operative Development (SECD) and the CSBSC. The CSBSC supports this partnership as a single access point for export information on trade shows, market intelligence and government programs and services.

“Many Saskatchewan companies have taken advantage of what Trade Team Saskatchewan has to offer,” says CSBSC Senior Information Officer Carol Tanner. “Many of them gained very valuable skills and knowledge of what it takes to export.”

CSBSC manages and hosts the Trade Team Saskatchewan Web site. The site was established to provide businesses with information on exporting, as well as TTS and its members. Access to this information is very useful for both potential and active exporters. The site also provides links to country specific information for exporters searching for facts on certain regions.

TTS has recently launched an upcoming events calendar. The calendar will highlight events offering potential opportunities for exporters to develop their capabilities and to promote their products or services internationally. Each event will identify an industry sector and have a geographical focus. Users will also have the capability to submit event information.

TTS is a member of a national trade development project called Team Canada Inc. For more information on exporting or Trade Team Saskatchewan, please call 1-888-811-1119 or visit their Web site at: www.tradeteam.sk.ca. ♦

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business
infosource
Canada - Saskatchewan
Business Service Centre

Driving Through to Success

by Heather Waldern Hinds

Gary Ecklund returned home to his family's ranch near Broadview in the early 1980s. Frustration with opening and closing the ranch gates resulted in a business idea for a drive-through gate.

After three years of testing and making improvements, Ecklund took his new product to the 1986 Canada Farm Progress Show. Ecklund's gate is a single-arm design, adjustable in length. He also designed an electrically conductive rubber bumper sleeve, which provides a cushion while staying electrified. Patented release and locking mechanisms let the gate pop open and lock shut without touching the vehicle. Manufactured locally in Broadview, it is used for small cow/calf operations, major feedlots, community pastures, gravel pits and oil leases.

Early marketing of the gate involved driving from farm to farm, selling and installing gates. Two sales teams also crisscrossed North America attending trade shows. Now Ecklund handles the sales himself, spending up to 120 days each year on the road visiting Midwestern U.S. trade shows.

His perseverance has paid off. **Ecklund Drive Thru Gates**, with four employees, has sold more than 17,000 gates, with \$2.5 million in sales. The company reports that 60 per cent of its sales are to the U.S., but they have also been exported to

Sweden, Ireland, Scotland, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Argentina, Chile and Uruguay. Most sales are generated through trade shows and via the Internet.



Sandra and Gary Ecklund accept the Best Booth Award at the Lethbridge Ag Expo from an Expo executive (L).

When Ecklund wanted to build a new shop and purchase a converted Greyhound bus for sales trips, he visited the **East Central Development Corporation (ECDC)** in Broadview, which supported his expansion. Traditional financial institutions weren't interested in helping a self-employed business owner with long-term debt.

"The ECDC is the best thing going," says Ecklund, who credits the hard work and knowledge of ECDC manager Elroy Trithardt for some of the organization's local success.

Ecklund also recommends entrepreneurs interested in exporting attend as many trade missions as they can and become members of export organizations such as the Saskatchewan Trade Export Partnership.

Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) provides funding to Saskatchewan's 13 Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs) for business counselling, information resources and access to capital in rural areas. If you would like more information about CFDCs and their programs or those offered by WD, call us at 1-888-338-WEST (9378).☘