

ACCESS

BRITISH COLUMBIA

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International Export Opportunities Expand for B.C. Industry Associations

by Jillian Glover

Flights from Japan, Korea, China, Europe and the United States landed in Penticton last fall when the BC Wood Specialities Group organized their annual international trade mission.

"The BC Wood Global Buyers Mission was a huge success," says Randi Walker, manager of member services at BC Wood. "The \$4 million in export sales resulting from the trade mission were double what we had initially hoped to achieve."

The BC Wood Specialities Group is an organization dedicated to promoting British Columbia's secondary wood-products manufacturing industry. Every year, they organize the BC Wood Global Buyers Mission in order to promote B.C. wood exports and build business alliances internationally. The 2005 event is scheduled for September in Whistler.

In addition to supporting the trade mission, Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) helped enhance and promote BC Wood's Worldwide Inquiry System, a web-based system that makes it easier for international buyers to acquire products from B.C.'s value-added wood products industry.

"Western Economic Diversification Canada's partnership with BC Wood was critical to the success of the trade mission and will continue to be significant in the success of our upgraded online product sourcing system," says Walker.

WD has formed partnerships with Canadian industry associations and many others to help expand their exports beyond national borders.

The BC Yacht Builders Association also received support from WD. During the 2004 Ft. Lauderdale International Boat Show, the world's largest boat show, WD helped enhance the association's presence with a new display booth and marketing materials.

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The BC Yacht Builders Association proudly displays their new exhibit booth at the 2004 Ft. Lauderdale International Boat Show.



SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

WD Helps B.C. Industry Associations Expand International Opportunities

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"Our first year as an industry association was an outstanding success, based in no small measure on the support we received from Western Economic Diversification Canada," said Ken Roueche, association executive director. "It allowed us to purchase quality booth furnishing that will serve us well for years to come."

Over one and a half billion dollars worth of boats are displayed at the boat show, which draws the attendance of major yacht builders from around the world including the U.S., the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy and Australia.

Industry associations, such as the B.C. Guangdong Business Council, are travelling even further than the U.S. to expand export opportunities for Canadian businesses.

This year marks the 35th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Canada and China. In celebration

of this unique relationship, the Business Council organized a Sustainability Forum in Guangzhou in January 2005. During that time, a VIP delegation of B.C. business, health and cultural leaders, including Vancouver Mayor Larry Campbell, traveled to China for the forum. There will be a second follow-up forum in fall of 2005, where a Chinese delegation will travel to Vancouver.

The 2005 Sustainability Forum in the city of Guangzhou focused on the planning and technology for creating sustainable cities. Discussions revolved around how to make cities more energy-efficient, and covered the specifics of urban planning, green buildings and new technologies promoting sustainability.

The goal of the forum was to demonstrate the federal, regional and municipal efforts in the area of urban sustainability while introducing selected industries to the Chinese market. It brought together professionals and businesses involved in urban sustainability from Guangdong and British Columbia.

WD contributed \$45,000 toward this important trade mission.

"All of this is possible because of Western Economic Diversification Canada's support," said Colleen McGuinness, coordinator of the Sustainability Forum, from her hotel room during the delegation's trip to Guangzhou.

For more information on how Western Economic Diversification Canada can help exporters, visit www.wd.gc.ca/export. 🍁

Yachts line up in Florida during the 2004 Ft. Lauderdale International Boat Show, the world's largest show of its kind.

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New Program Helps Immigrants Start a Business

by Jillian Glover

Moving to a new country is never easy and, for new Canadians, establishing a business can be especially challenging.

"Many new immigrants face language, cultural and lack of credit history barriers in accessing business financing to start and run a business," says Thomas Tam, director of the Business and Economic Development Service Centre at Vancouver's S.U.C.C.E.S.S. (United Chinese Community Enrichment Services Society).

S.U.C.C.E.S.S. is a not-for-profit organization that has spent over 30 years providing services to help new immigrants effectively settle in the Greater Vancouver area.

Tam helped launch the new Business Links for New Immigrants program last fall, which is the result of a unique partnership with Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) and Coast Capital Savings. It links new entrepreneurs with an experienced business advisor to provide advice on preparing a business plan and applying for a loan. Participants can also receive ongoing support for their business activities.

"With the help of Western Economic Diversification Canada and Coast Capital Savings, we hope to assist new immigrants to remove barriers

and become contributive members to the local economy," adds Tam.

"More than ever, new immigrants are the driving force behind small business and local economies," said Industry Minister David Emerson at the announcement of \$186,660 in WD funding for the program. "The Government of Canada is committed to turning entrepreneurial ideas into dynamic businesses, great jobs and export opportunities."

Entrepreneur Peng Wang speaks strongly about how the S.U.C.C.E.S.S. program could help new immigrants establish viable companies in Canada. Wang, a Chinese immigrant, set up a software development company two years ago in B.C., but says it was difficult to obtain bank financing because of a lack of credit history. "The Business Links for New Immigrants program is exactly what I need," he says.

S.U.C.C.E.S.S. has also partnered with WD in the Gateway to Asia project, which is uniting Chinese Canadian exporters with Canadian manufacturers and suppliers. The goal is to provide information and services, as well as organize events and trade missions that will help expand export markets in China.

For more information about S.U.C.C.E.S.S., visit www.success.bc.ca. 🍁



Industry Minister David Emerson announces WD funding for the Business Links for New Immigrants program.

Columbia

Timberline's Chilean Odyssey

by Tom Wakefield

What is a Vancouver-based forestry consulting firm doing in Chile, and why is it helping Mapuche farmers plant Eucalyptus trees?

Timberline Forest Inventory Consultants is an industry leader, specializing in inventory and offering a full range of forestry and Geographic Information Systems expertise.

Economic difficulties within the Canadian forestry sector prompted the company to explore new export opportunities in 2001. "The general conclusion was, since everybody else was chasing things in Asia, perhaps we should be looking somewhere else," says Chris Hermansen, vice-president of Timberline.

That "somewhere else" was Chile, a country with which Canada has a free trade agreement. The Chilean government looks to forestry as one of the key sectors for creating sustainable local economic opportunities and reducing poverty in its remote south.

To help get a foothold, Timberline needed someone familiar with doing business in Chile. Western Economic Diversification Canada's (WD) assistance helped the company hire Chilean-native Magdalena Edwards in 2002. Edwards, a geographer, was studying at the University of British Columbia and working part-time.

"Magdalena was instrumental in getting us connected with people," says Hermansen, noting Edwards' efforts went a long way to establishing business links in Chile.

A market study, funded in part by WD, further confirmed the market potential of Chile and Latin America.


"Support from Western Economic Diversification Canada was really the difference between moving forward and not," says Hermansen. "It allowed us to meet the people who defined the market for us."

Today, Timberline acts as a catalyst for Chile's forestry sector through such programs as the Plantation Project. A for-profit joint venture between Timberline and Corporación Mapuche Lonko Kilapang, it assists Mapuche — an indigenous culture in Chile — farmers in re-establishing forests on their degraded lands.

Timberline is also proposing to manage 150,000 hectares of public forest lands in southern Chile.

"The goal is to balance the economic, social and environmental aspects of the project," says Hermansen, "and create sustainable business opportunities for the people there."

For more information about Timberline, visit www.timberline.ca.

For more information on how Western Economic Diversification Canada can help exporters, visit www.wd.gc.ca/export. 



Timberline Vice-President Chris Hermansen stands next to a eucalyptus field planted through its Plantation Project in 2004.

Photo courtesy of Timberline.