

South Dakota Trade Embarks on Second Trade Mission to Mexico to Increase Export Sales of Agriculture, Manufacturing, and Biotech Products and Promote Investment in South Dakota

SIOUX FALLS, SD – Joe Fiala, Deputy Commissioner of The Governor’s Office of Economic Development (GOED), and Jesse Fonkert, incoming President & CEO of South Dakota Trade are jointly leading a delegation of businesses and industry associations to Mexico this week aimed at increasing export sales of agriculture, manufacturing, and biotech products. The trade mission, which departed on May 4th, will also promote foreign direct investment opportunities in South Dakota and facilitate meetings with high-level government officials in Mexico.

Business and industry participants on the mission will meet with potential buyers, gain insights into maximizing access to the Mexican market, and promote South Dakota’s message that the state is *Open for Opportunity*. South Dakota Trade’s inaugural trade mission was also to Mexico in 2023 and was led by then-Lieutenant Governor Larry Rhoden.

“Strong trade missions show global partners that South Dakota is Open for Opportunity,” said Governor Larry Rhoden. “We are proving that our products are the best in the world, and this puts them in high demand in other markets. In fact, the trade mission that I led to Mexico in 2023 has generated a 65-to-1 return on investment.”

Incoming President & CEO, Jesse Fonkert previously participated on a South Dakota Trade mission to Japan & Taiwan, and is co-leading this mission with Deputy Commissioner Joe Fiala.

“We know from experience that South Dakota companies are very competitive when they connect directly with international buyers in their own markets,” said Fonkert. “Trade missions are targeted opportunities to build trust, open doors, and drive real results for South Dakota exporters. We’re proud to continue building on that momentum with this mission to Mexico.”

Deputy Commissioner Fiala with GOED will be hosting several seminars about “Doing Business in South Dakota”.

“Governor Rhoden’s leadership has helped position South Dakota as the best place to invest and do business,” said Fiala. “This mission gives us the opportunity to demonstrate all that South Dakota has to offer.”

Participating companies can apply for STEP grant funding from South Dakota Trade to offset the cost of registration, travel, and translation services. The package also includes access to local consultants who pre-arrange business-to-business matchmaking meetings with foreign buyers in each market to expedite sales opportunities.

Trade missions to Ireland and Canada are currently being planned for later in 2025. Interested business should reach out to Rachael Weiland, at South Dakota Trade, at rachael.weiland@southdakotatrade.com.

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South Dakota Trade is a 501(c)(6) association that navigates international trade for South Dakota. The Association has offices in Sioux Falls and Rapid City. For additional information, please visit www.southdakotatrade.com.