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Governor Rhoden Leads Trade Mission to UK and Ireland

Mission will Boost Beef and Ethanol Exports and Strengthen Academic Ties

PIERRE, S.D. – Governor Larry Rhoden is leading a business-driven trade mission to the United Kingdom (U.K.) and Ireland this week, joined by South Dakota Trade President & CEO Jesse L. S. Fonkert, Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) Commissioner Bill Even, and Secretary of Agriculture and Natural Resources (DANR) Hunter Roberts.

"This trade mission will showcase the value of South Dakota's key industries, including our world-class beef and ethanol industries," said **Governor Larry Rhoden**. "By strengthening our economic and academic ties with the U.K. and Ireland, we're keeping South Dakota Open for Opportunity."

The mission aims to capitalize on recently announced trade agreement frameworks between the United States, U.K., and European Union, promoting South Dakota's beef and ethanol industries, which were key elements of the U.K. agreement. Representatives from South Dakota's beef and ethanol sectors will join the delegation to promote expanded trade.

"This mission is about building trust and opening doors for South Dakota businesses," said **Jesse L. S. Fonkert, President and CEO of South Dakota Trade**. "Our beef and ethanol industries are poised for growth, and we're excited to facilitate connections between willing buyers and sellers in the U.K. and Ireland."

GOED Commissioner Bill Even will lead efforts to attract foreign direct investment into South Dakota, hosting "Doing Business in South Dakota" seminars to highlight the state's business-friendly environment.

"South Dakota is the ideal place for investment, and this mission will demonstrate why global businesses should choose our state," said **Commissioner Bill Even**.

"This trade mission is an opportunity to showcase South Dakota's producers and businesses on a global stage," said **Secretary Hunter Roberts**. "Building relationships in the U.K. and Ireland opens possibilities for new partnerships, expanded markets, and helps ensure South Dakota has every chance to grow and succeed in international trade."

Five students from the University of South Dakota (USD) will join the delegation as part of their participation in the USD President's Senior Leadership Institute (PSLI).

"For six years, the President's Senior Leadership Institute has provided students with transformative professional development and leadership training," said **USD President Sheila K. Gestring**. "Thanks to our partnership with South Dakota Trade, that experience will be further elevated through exposure to international affairs and global economic policy."

South Dakota State University (SDSU) President Barry Dunn will also join the delegation to sign an agreement with University College Dublin to foster academic collaboration and research opportunities.

"This partnership with University College Dublin will open new avenues for research and innovation, benefiting our students and faculty while strengthening South Dakota's global presence," said **SDSU President Barry Dunn**.

A group of South Dakota legislators will also be attending the American Irish Legislators Caucus Summit in Dublin, strengthening ties with Irish counterparts.

Trade missions to Canada and other markets are planned for later in 2025. Interested businesses should contact Rachael Weiland at South Dakota Trade at rachael.weiland@southdakotatrade.com.

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

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