

Georgia G.R.O.W. Step by Step program

The Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD) is implementing a new, year-long program to increase the number of Georgia's small businesses that are exporting, as well as the value of exports for those small businesses that are currently exporting. This program, G.R.O.W. (Georgia Reaching Out Worldwide) Step by Step, is funded by \$973,429 from the U.S. Small Business Administration State Trade and Export Promotion (STEP) Grant Program, part of a three-year trade and export promotion pilot initiative authorized by the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010. Georgia's program runs from September 30, 2011 through Sept. 29, 2012, and is administered by the state's International Trade Division, a part of the Georgia Department of Economic Development.

While the STEP program does not provide financial assistance directly to companies, it will help Georgia companies export by providing the following programs or services:

- Approximately sixty qualified companies will be able to participate in one of six pre-selected international trade shows at significantly reduced booth costs.
- Four international buying delegations will be recruited to Georgia for appointments with Georgia suppliers.
- International experts will make four trips to rural Georgia to discuss country-specific export opportunities and for one-on-one meetings with Georgia exporters and potential exporters.
- An on-line export directory will be created with contact information on Georgia exporters. Companies will be listed in the directory free-of-charge.
- The participation fee will be waived for 50 qualified companies to participate in the Gold Key service or similar services. Gold Key is a service offered by the U.S. Department of Commerce which provides in-country appointments with potential representatives.
- The participation fee will be waived for 50 qualified companies to participate in the International Partner Search service or similar services. The International Partner Search is a service offered by the U.S. Department of Commerce which provides customized matches with potential representatives in a targeted country or region.
- A list of Georgia-based Export Management /Export Trading Companies will be created to assist companies who may choose to use the services of an export intermediary to facilitate their exports.
- To assist small businesses in exporting to China, two new initiatives will provide translation of a brief company profile or product description.
- Community leaders will be made more aware of export assistance resources available for companies in their communities.
- Outreach efforts will be increased to raise awareness of the benefits of exporting and services available to assist exporters.

GDEcD's International Trade staff will work with its trade partners such as the **Small Business Administration, the U.S. Commercial Service, Small Business Development Center, Georgia Chamber, local Chambers of Commerce, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Georgia Economic Developers Associations and other organizations** to implement these services.

If you are part of a small business interested in learning more about the STEP program, contact Taube Ponce at 404-962-4118 or tponce@georgia.org.

Georgia Global Appalachia Export Development program

GDEcD has received a \$100,000 Global Appalachia Export Development grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) to increase exports in the ARC region of Georgia. Georgia's grant will provide resources to leverage local community assets, community leadership and the private sector to help increase exports from infrequent exporters. The initiative will also raise awareness of existing federal and state international trade promotion and export finance programs and services. Companies are provided with trade opportunities to help them successfully engage, compete, and succeed in the global economy.

The ARC Export Grant Program, which runs from January 1, 2012 – December 31, 2012, includes the following initiatives:

- Business to business mentoring program. Seasoned Appalachia exporters will offer expertise and advice to less frequent exporters. Export professionals will facilitate several business-to-business roundtable sessions throughout the Appalachia region.
- Two international briefings will be organized in Georgia's Appalachia region to feature presentations and appointments with in-country trade experts.
- Registration fees provided for a limited number of qualified companies to participate in a trade mission to Singapore and participate in TradeWinds 2012. Mission participants will also have appointments in one additional Southeast Asian country.

If you are part of a small business located in the Appalachia region of Georgia and would like to find out more about the ARC program, contact Alice Carson at 404-962-4112 or acarson@georgia.org.