



U.S.
COMMERCIAL
SERVICE

United States of America
Department of Commerce

U.S. COMMERCIAL SERVICE

AMERICA'S EXPORT EXPERTS

RURAL EXPORT CENTER



ANNUAL REPORT

2021



INTERNATIONAL
TRADE
ADMINISTRATION



U.S.
COMMERCIAL
SERVICE

United States of America
Department of Commerce

Deputy Assistant Secretary Message

Made in Rural America. Delivered Worldwide.

Greetings,

The Rural Export Center reflects the U.S. Department of Commerce's commitment to enable rural companies to grow U.S. export sales abroad and increase jobs in rural America. As we mark the one-year milestone since the opening of the Center, we are proud of the work we have accomplished on behalf of rural America and recognize the increased importance of the Center in helping rural companies recover from the pandemic and restore jobs through new export sales.

Historically, rural companies have faced steeper challenges to grow their business through new export sales. The challenges include lack of access to resources to support trade, perception of risk, and distance from service providers that would otherwise help to facilitate an export transaction. Moreover, small companies from rural communities have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and require - now more than ever - dedicated resources to survive and grow.

As we set out in March 2020 to establish the Rural Export Center, the COVID-19 global pandemic arrived. Knowing that small rural companies would be hit hardest by the ensuing economic downturn, we quickly pivoted to establish a virtual Rural Export Center, and within a few months we were successfully ensuring equitable access to international trade resources.

After operating virtually for the first year, we have seen demand for the Center's signature "RAISE" market research report rapidly grow across the country. As we turn the corner from the pandemic and move into the second year of service to rural America, we are committed to building on our initial success and ensuring equity of access to more rural clients across the country.

Sincerely,

Joseph Hanley

Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary – U.S. Field Operations
U.S. Commercial Service, International Trade Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce



WHAT IS THE RURAL EXPORT CENTER

OUR VALUE

The Rural Export Center (REC) was created in 2020 to provide timely and differentiated research, with unique tools and analysis for actionable recommendations that help rural exporters identify new buyers, markets and strategies in international markets. [Learn more about the REC.](#)

WHY A RURAL EXPORT CENTER?

Rural American companies are located great distances from information, contacts, gateways and services that facilitate export success, so they are often less apt to pro-actively pursue exporting. What keeps so many capable US firms from exporting more pro-actively? Three key ingredients – knowledge, confidence and connections.

HOW WE ASSIST RURAL EXPORTERS

The REC removes these three barriers and empowers rural exporters by reducing the cost and complexity of growing international sales. Their RAISE (Rural America's Intelligence Service for Exporters) market research delivers actionable market intelligence and their WGR (Website Globalization Review) delivers proven digital analytics and ecommerce strategies. With this customized market intelligence in hand, rural exporters approach the world with knowledge and data-driven strategies, propelling their expansion into new global export markets.

ABOUT US



The Rural Export Center (REC), located in Fargo, North Dakota, was created in 2020 to assist rural companies overcome barriers to export.



The U.S. Commercial Service leverages its unique global network, both in the U.S. and overseas, to help rural companies expand into new markets.

OUR STAFF



Heather Ranck
Director



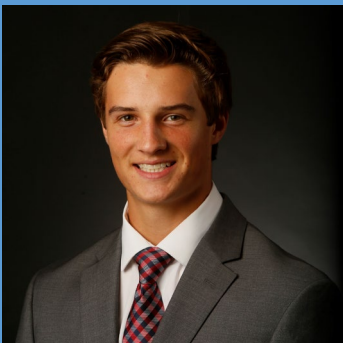
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NOTE FROM THE REC DIRECTOR

"Do you wish you could speed up market selection and reduce faulty decision making on market selection, partner identification and entry strategies? The U.S. Commercial Service's new RAISE market research service leverages powerful databases, proven processes and our unparalleled global network to provide rural American exporters with customized market intelligence that will rank countries, identify potential partners and provide actionable recommendations to help you enter new markets faster and more cost effectively."

- Heather Ranck, Director, U.S. Commercial Service & Rural Team Leader, Fargo North Dakota

YEAR-AT-A-GLANCE



1,828

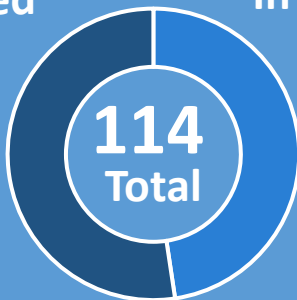
of Clients Assisted

Completed

46

In Progress

68

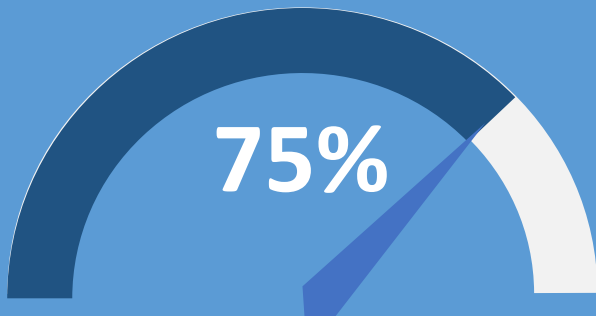


RAISE Research Reports

In Progress 1

Completed 16

Website Globalization Reports



Inquiry Conversion Rate

32 Hours

Matrix

32 Hours

One Country Report

27 Hours

Buyer List

126 Hours

Matrix + 3 Country + Buyer List

Average Hours Per Report



18

of States With Clients Served



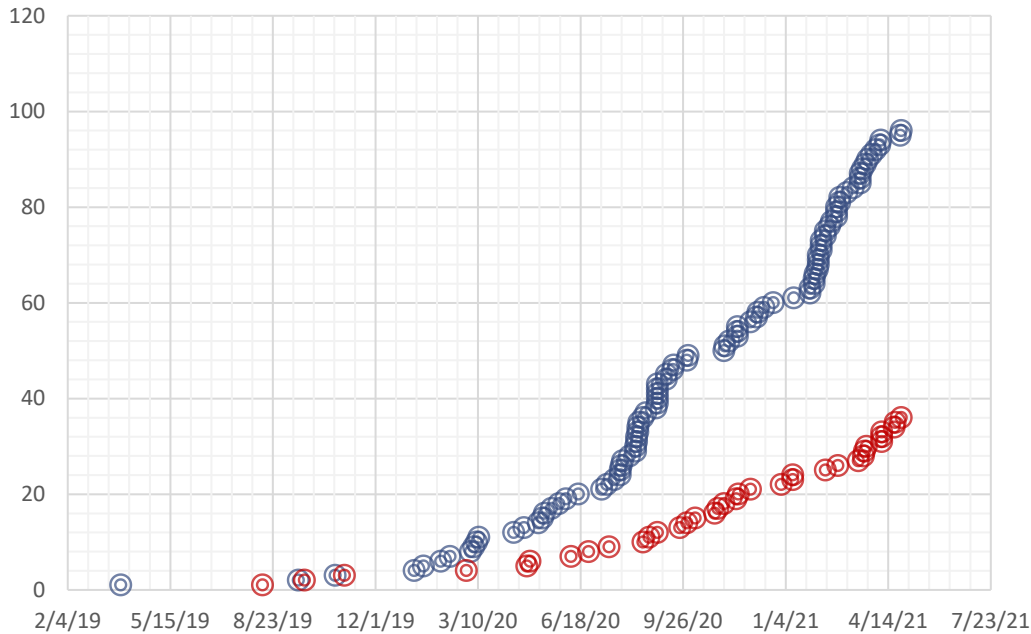
28

of Industries Represented



INCREASING INQUIRIES

◎ Initial Inquiries ◎ Paid Inquiries



As a small business owner, I cannot express how helpful, insightful, professional, and accommodating the U.S. Commercial Service has been. The thought of exporting and the perceived trials and tribulations associated with such seemed too daunting for a small company based in rural West Virginia. However, USCS uses a pragmatic, logical, “small step” based approach to make the process far less intimidating.

- Jason Diwik – P3 Carbon (Hurricane, WV)

INDUSTRIES REPRESENTED

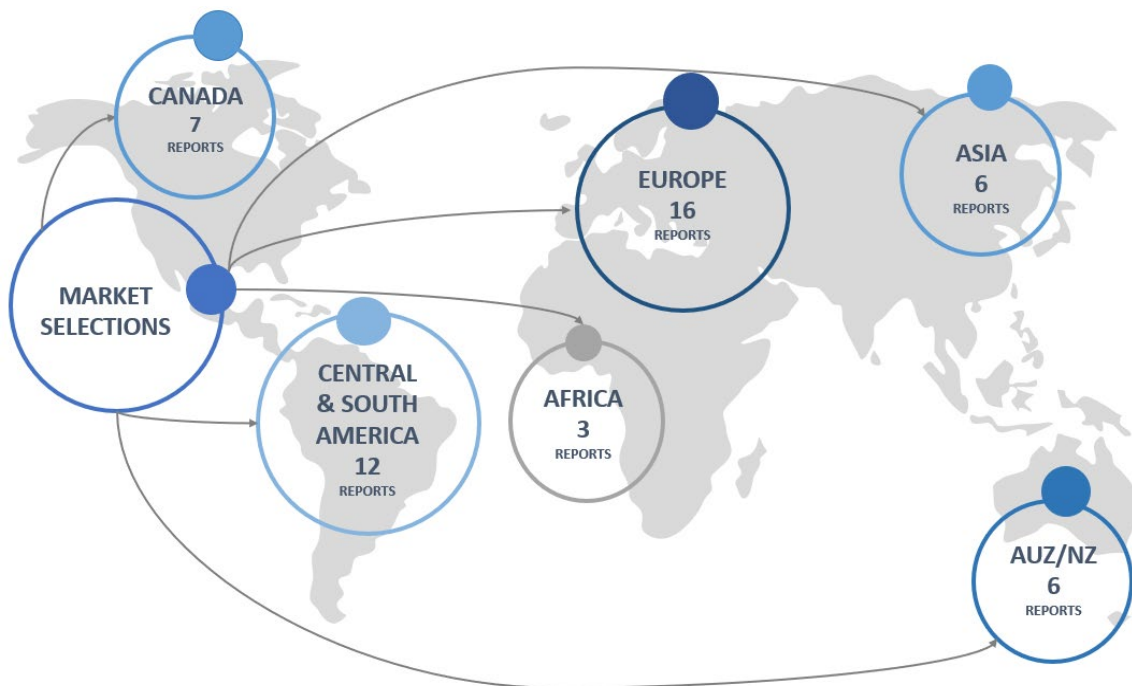
Aerospace and Defense
Agricultural Chemicals
Agricultural Machinery
Building Products
Coatings
Education Publishing
Electrical Systems and Lighting
Fabrics
Food
Glass
Insurance Services
Lawn and Garden Equipment
Machinery and Tools
Medical Devices
Plastic Products
Plumbing
Police Equipment
Process Controls
Pumps, Valves and Compressors
Recreational Vehicles
Scientific Laboratory Equipment
Specialty Vehicles
Telecommunications Equipment
Unmanned Aircraft Systems
Vitamins and Supplements
Water and Wastewater
Water Monitoring
Weapons and Accessories

CLIENT ENGAGEMENT

”

The REC is an economic research service that you can use to find partners, or you can use the information to help your in-country partners expand. Getting a comprehensive contact list was invaluable; and being able to share that with our new distributor allows us to hit the ground running.

- Jim Hamel, CFO, Swanson Health Products, Fargo, ND



RURAL EXPORTERS REACH FOR NEW MARKETS

Rural exporters leverage RAISE market intelligence to develop new export markets globally.

”

This is my second time turning to the U.S. Commercial Service to help my team and I map out an effective and efficient international go-to-market strategy. Their experience steered us away from mistakes made by others and their research allowed us to eliminate a lot of the guesswork and stay hyper focused. With the results they provided via their RAISE program, we selected the top three viable countries and were provided the nuances needed for a streamlined execution. We recommend them without reservation to anyone planning to expand their market globally.

- Brian Brasch, PRx Performance, Fargo, ND

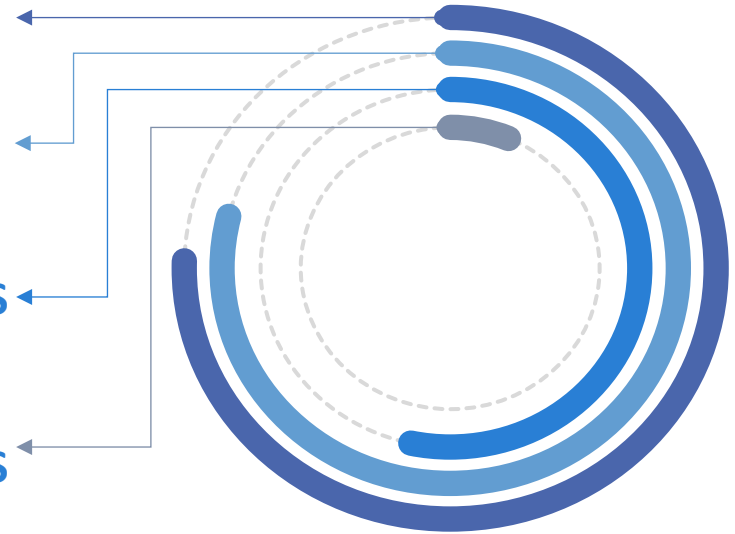
FINANCIAL & PROGRAM OVERVIEW

46 RAISE REPORTS COMPLETED

68 RAISE REPORTS IN PROGRESS

16 WEBSITE GLOBALIZATION REVIEWS COMPLETED

1 WEBSITE GLOBALIZATION REVIEWS IN PROGRESS



PARTICIPATING STATES



PARTICIPATING STATES

REACHING 17 STATES IN YEAR ONE

Totaling 114 Reports (Completed & In Progress)

California
Connecticut
Iowa
Kansas
Kentucky
Montana
New Hampshire
New Jersey
New Mexico
New York
North Carolina
North Dakota
South Carolina
Vermont
West Virginia
Wisconsin
Wyoming

