

DEAR FELLOW NEBRASKANS: Bringing the world to Nebraska

Written by Wauneta Breeze
Thursday, 07 July 2011 20:13 -

By Nebraska Governor

Dave Heineman

In two months, Nebraska will be hosting international business leaders and trade partners from several nations as they travel to our state for Nebraska's second Reverse Trade Mission. This event presents an opportunity to bring the world to Nebraska.

We first held this event in 2008 and it was a big success in establishing a new range of business contacts for our state. More than 130 business and government leaders from 10 countries attended, including representatives from: Brazil, Colombia, Nicaragua, Canada, Spain, South Africa, China, Hong Kong, Japan, and South Korea.

We are now planning for Nebraska's second Reverse Trade Mission, scheduled to be held Sept. 7-10 in conjunction with the annual Nebraska Diplomats' Passport to Nebraska Weekend. The Passport event brings business leaders from across the country to our state to demonstrate what Nebraska has to offer in economic development potential.

Nebraska has remained in much better economic shape than most countries, in part to our continued efforts in trade and jobs creation. The Reverse Trade Mission will highlight opportunities for investment in some of Nebraska's fastest growing and economically competitive industries, including food, energy and water related industries. We are particularly focused on attracting business from China and several European nations.

The State is focused on foreign direct investment and the creation of new export opportunities. From 2005 to 2010, exports increased from \$3 billion to \$5.8 billion. Exports to China grew nearly 150 percent in five years, from \$111 million in 2005 to \$279 million in 2010. China now ranks as Nebraska's fourth largest trading partner behind Canada, Mexico and Japan.

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The Reverse Trade Mission is expected to involve CEOs and company executives with business expertise matched to specific goals and opportunities available with Nebraska-based companies. For many 2008 participants, the Reverse Trade Mission was their first visit to Nebraska.

International trade and investment are crucial to our state's economy. More than 350 businesses in Nebraska are foreign-owned and employ more than 19,000 workers. The Reverse Trade Mission provides an opportunity for our international partners to observe Nebraska's business potential up close and in person, while meeting local business and development contacts ready to pursue expansion opportunities and new partnership opportunities.

As we look forward to this event, I want to thank those who've volunteered to host one of the tours connected with the reverse trade mission. The opportunity for international visitors to see for themselves the work and research being done in our state is what will make this event a personable and memorable experience.

The Reverse Trade Mission is sponsored by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, the Nebraska Diplomats and the University of Nebraska. We are also grateful for the support of another dozen Nebraska businesses, partnering organizations and communities involved in this event.

The goal is to market Nebraska's stable economic position, strong workforce and business-friendly climate to potential investors. Nebraska is an excellent place to do business. The Reverse Trade Mission provides an opportunity to showcase what Nebraska has to offer.