



**Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity**

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Illinois Celebrates World Trade Month

CHICAGO - Governor Bruce Rauner proclaimed May as World Trade Month across Illinois, acknowledging Illinois companies that continue to stimulate economic growth and job creation through exporting.

“The global market poses significant potential for Illinois businesses and the state economy as a whole,” said Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner. “Illinois export growth has greatly outpaced the national average, and I am proud of the work our team has done to cultivate that success. We will continue to market Illinois goods and services abroad and help our businesses expand their international presence.”

Illinois’ export industry helps create high paying jobs here at home and contributes millions to the state’s economy. The State of Illinois is the number one exporting state in the Midwest and fifth in the United States. Last year alone, \$65 billion worth of Illinois manufactured products were sold all around the world. Illinois’ exporting growth outpaced the national average by nearly 31 percent.

During the month of May, the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity’s Office of International Trade (OTI) will celebrate World Trade Month with events highlighting the importance of international trade to the Illinois economy. OTI will partner with the Illinois Small Business Development Center- International Trade Center network to promote and support export trainings and seminars that provide Illinois small businesses with the knowledge and tools to expand their international reach.

Also in May, the Illinois Department of Commerce will announce the 2018 Governor’s Export Award recipients. The Awards will be given to companies in the following categories: Exporter of the Year, New Exporter, Exporter Continuing Excellence, Agricultural Business Exporter, Service Exporter, and Export Awareness and Development.

Exports represent a significant opportunity for Illinois businesses. Over 95 percent of the world’s consumers live outside of the United States; however, currently less than one percent of U.S. companies currently export. OTI remains proactive in promoting the importance of international exporting and ensuring Illinois export growth continues. Four trade missions are scheduled in May to Canada, China, Nigeria, and South Africa to assist Illinois small businesses connect with international distributors, agents, and buyers.

For more information about Illinois export assistance please visit www.exports.illinois.gov or contact the Illinois Office of Trade and Investment at 312.814.2828.

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