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ND Energy Exporters Seek to Access Asian Markets

Crude Oil and Ethanol Exports Highlighted

US diplomats from 4 Asian countries visited Fargo, Casselton and Arthur, ND on Wednesday, July 11 to discuss how to increase in ND's energy exports, specifically crude oil, liquefied natural gas and ethanol. The Access Asia program, organized by the U.S. Commercial Service, is part of a nationwide tour of 25 locations across the country, highlighting opportunities for increased US exports in countries where the US has a large trade deficit. Oil, gas and ethanol producers, led by the ND Ethanol Council and the ND Petroleum Council, were invited to meet one-on-one with the diplomats to discuss their unique business needs and opportunities in the 4 markets of focus. SB Shin of CS Korea, Yuri Arthur of CS Philippines, Dinah McDoughall of CS India, and Keith Kirkham of CS Japan led the discussions. From Washington, DC, visitors included Acting Director General of the US Commercial Service Ian Steff, Assistant United States Trade Representative Greg Walters, U.S. Commercial Service Director of Operations for Asia Molly Costa and CS Advocacy Asia Office Director Xiaobing Feng.

The group toured the Tharaldson Ethanol Plant in Casselton, hosted by the CEO of the plant and the North Dakota Ethanol Council, followed by a visit to the farm of Kevin Skunes, who is President of the US Corn Growers Association. The delegation also spoke at the Fargo Rotary Club, and then the visiting diplomats met with fourteen ethanol and petroleum companies and associations gathered to learn about different opportunities in Japan, India, the Philippines and Korea. Other major topics of discussion included a North Dakota Trade Mission to Asia (facilitated by the ND Trade Office and the ND Department of Commerce) and Trade Policy (facilitated by the ND District Export Council). Representatives from Senator Hoeven, Senator Heitkamp, Senator Klobuchar and Congressman Cramer's office participated in the discussions. Issues such as finding buyers for ethanol and natural gas in foreign markets, transporting fuel from ND to Asia and the use of US Commercial Service resources were explored. Outcomes of the discussion include a likely ND Trade Mission to Asia, new relationships between key partners who can facilitate trade deals, and an awareness of key opportunities and obstacles for both ethanol and petroleum industries. Delegation members also joined an ND District Export Council meeting.



Delegation visiting the Tharaldson Ethanol Plant, Casselton, North Dakota.



Farm Visit in Arthur, ND (Kevin Skunes Farm)



1-on-1 Asia Export Meetings