



Contact: Stuart Doyle
(407) 956-5689
doyle@eflorida.com

Enterprise Florida, Manufacturers Association of Florida team to help small businesses boost global export sales

ORLANDO, FL (April 6, 2010) – To help smaller manufacturers expand their export sales to international markets offering great potential for Florida products, Enterprise Florida and Manufacturers Association of Florida have launched a program to accomplish this goal.

The Made in Florida Export Expansion Initiative is designed to assist Florida manufacturers at all levels of export readiness with capitalizing on current and emerging international opportunities.

“Florida manufacturers are well-positioned with diverse products, geographic location and export assistance from Enterprise Florida to maximize product offerings to the world,” said Nancy Stephens, executive director, Manufacturers Association of Florida. “Our partnership with Enterprise Florida will help us help our manufacturers excel in global exports. Exporting is the key to growing our Florida manufacturers’ businesses and providing more jobs for Floridians.”

Manny Mencía, who oversees Enterprise Florida’s International Trade division, emphasized that their ultimate objective is to help small and medium-sized companies – those fewer than 500 employees -- become exporters. “They can grow and diversify their export sales to create and retain more jobs in Florida,” Mencía said.

The key components of the program entail first identifying target manufacturers and then supporting them with these services:

- One-to-one counseling
- Export training workshops and webinars
- Target market information
- Development of a business plan model for exporters on cooperation with university partners
- Export finance assistance through in cooperation with trade finance partners
- Marketing support through the Florida Export Directory (www.FloridaExportDirectory.com)
- New client development through customized Gold Key matches in cooperation with the U.S. Commercial Service
- Export sales missions to target markets

– more –



Additionally, Enterprise Florida will help manufacturers pinpoint markets for their products, focusing on western hemisphere nations with economic conditions that make them ideal sites for Florida-made products, said Mencia. “But the program also supports entry into other nations,” he added. “We’re also engaging U.S. government export assistance and trade finance programs to also provide participating manufacturers with the most comprehensive level of support possible.”

Thus far, Enterprise Florida and the Manufacturers Association of Florida have conducted two training webinars and are recruiting Florida manufacturers to participate in Enterprise Florida’s RepCan 2010, an Enterprise Florida-U.S. Commercial Service-sponsored exporter matchmaking event in Toronto in June and a trade mission in Colombia Aug. 9-14. The business plan component in conjunction with state universities also is underway.

Enterprise Florida’s International Trade division staff is available to provide more information about Made in Florida and to work directly with small and medium-sized companies interested in exporting. Contact:

- Jacksonville: Larry Bernaski, (904) 359-9350 or lbernaski@eflorida.com
- Orlando: Michael Schiffhauer, (407) 956-5634 or mschiffhauer@eflorida.com
- Palm Beach: John Diep, (561) 832-8339 or jdiep@eflorida.com
- Pensacola: Andrea Moore, (850) 469-8989 or amoore@eflorida.com
- Miami/Coral Gables: Ivan Barrios, (305) 808-3390 or ibarrios@eflorida.co
- Tampa: Rebecca Torres (813) 276-9430 or rtorres@eflorida.com

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Enterprise Florida, Inc. is a partnership between Florida's business and government leaders and is the principal economic development organization for the state of Florida. Headquartered in Orlando, Enterprise Florida’s mission is to diversify Florida’s economy and create better-paying jobs for its citizens by supporting, attracting and helping to create businesses in innovative, high-growth industries.

In pursuit of its mission, Enterprise Florida works closely with a statewide network of economic development partners and is funded both by the State of Florida and by private-sector businesses.

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