



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Erin Butler
p. 504-589-6730

Louisiana Companies Head to Colombia in Search of New Sales

U.S. Commercial Service Mission Promotes Small and Mid-sized Firms

Twelve U.S. companies will explore business opportunities in Colombia on a business development trade mission led by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Commercial Service New Orleans office. The March 8-15 mission includes stops in Bogotá, Cartagena and Barranquilla. The participants represent port associations, manufacturers, oil and gas equipment, dredging, transportation, and engineering.

American entrepreneurs support jobs and economic growth here at home by offering some of the best and most innovative products and services in the global economy," said Don van de Werken, director of the U.S. Commercial Service New Orleans. "We look forward to putting U.S. companies in touch with Colombian buyers on this trade mission, and have high expectations for participants' export potential."

Mission participants will benefit from pre-arranged one-on-one business meetings arranged by the U.S. Embassy with Colombian business leaders and other representatives.

In 2008, Louisiana export sales to Colombia topped \$1.4 billion – a 65 percent increase over the previous year – making Colombia Louisiana's seventh largest export market. Colombia's diversified economy and well-educated labor force makes it an attractive market for Louisiana companies looking to increase their export sales. Key Louisiana exports to Colombia include crop production, chemicals, processed foods, and petroleum and coal products. Louisiana ranked third among 50 states in exports to Colombia last year.

The trade mission is sponsored by Louisiana Economic Development and the Louisiana District Export Council, as well as Textron Marine & Land Systems, which is sponsoring the Ambassador's reception in Bogota.

With its network of offices across the U.S. and in more than 80 countries, the U.S. Commercial Service utilizes its global presence and international marketing expertise to help U.S. companies sell their products and services worldwide. For more information, visit www.export.gov

Colombia Trade Mission Participants

Agrico Sales

Bob Rieck, vice president sales

Anvil Attachments

David LeFleur, sales manager

CAD Control Systems

Andre' Vige', technical sales

Canal Barge

Sean Smith, project manager

Cashman Equipment Co.

Barton Folsie, international sales

Dredging Supply Company

Bob Wetta, president

Neola Wetta, part sales manager

M & L Engine

Marvin Marmande, president

Petrex

Byron Johnson, vice president

Port of South Louisiana

Joel Chaisson, executive director

Buddy Amedee, director

J.Raymond Fryoux, secretary

Alexandra Hernandez, research analyst

Rig-Up Services

Roy Johnson, chief financial officer

Kevin Laird, chief operating officer

United Tugs

L.J. Falgout, operations

Winward

Fulton Hicks, marketing

Steve Gaspard, engineering