

[News story: British chocolate going down a treat in Japan](#)

Established in 2004, Cambridge-based [Cocoda](#) works with small luxury brands to help market and sell their products internationally.

The business recently secured a new contract with a Japanese distributor after attending a Global Food Forum meet the buyer event in Newmarket last year.

The contract will see products from Holdsworth Chocolates and Duncan's of Deeside delivered to Japan, to be sold in department stores, delicatessens and gourmet food stores nationally. Its success proves the growing global appetite for British chocolate, with over £680 million being snapped up by overseas consumers last year.

The company currently works with 6 premium brands across the UK including Prestat, Simply Delicious, Summerdown Mint and Pulsetta. They export to 25 countries including North America, Europe, Asia, the Middle East and Australasia.

David Hill, Managing Director at Cocoda, said:

As you can imagine, taste is the most important factor when selling luxury chocolate, biscuits and confectionery. Attending DIT-hosted events and trade missions enabled me to meet potential buyers face-to-face, and treat them to our delicious range of biscuits, confectionery and chocolate, which helped secure further sales.

The global appetite for British food and drink is growing all the time, so it's an amazing opportunity for home-grown producers, but there are certain regulations around packaging and ingredients that vary from country to country.

Working with DIT helped Cocoda to navigate these with ease, and prepared the business and its brands for what to expect when exporting to a new market for the first time. For example, when selling to buyers in the Middle East products like our champagne truffles were removed from the tasting lists because they contain alcohol, which is only available for purchase at licensed venues.

Exporting has been fundamental to the business success, and helped to expand the global customer base for all the brands in Cocoda's portfolio. If these brands can capitalise on the demand for luxury British products across the globe, so can other East of England businesses.



Cocoda's range of chocolate and confectionery.

As part of its commitment to encouraging local businesses to export, Department for International Trade (DIT) hosts regular networking events where companies can meet distributors and partners from across the globe.

Alan Pain, Head of Exports for the East of England at DIT, said:

There are growing opportunities for premium confectionery brands like Holdsworth Chocolates and Duncan's of Deeside across the globe, particularly in Asia, where consumers are quickly developing a new appetite for dairy products. It's rewarding to see businesses like Cocoda tapping into this potential.

Food and drink exports generated more than £22 billion of income for the UK in 2017, and this looks set to increase as growing numbers of consumers look for British-branded produce.

We have a team of International Trade Advisers located across the East of England alongside our calendar of events including opportunities to meet face-to-face with prospective buyers and build relationships. We urge local businesses of all sizes and sectors to come along as it's a great opportunity to learn more about exporting and can lead to new contracts, as shown by Cocoda.

Firms looking for support should visit www.great.gov.uk, which has

information on live export opportunities and includes general information on exporting and events.