

News story: From Scotland to Canada: Burns night boost for haggis exports

Tonight (Friday 25 January), Scots in Canada will be celebrating Burns Night with a hearty serving of haggis, thanks to the rise in exports from Scotland's largest producer of the iconic meat pudding.

Burns Night celebrations often include a supper with Scotland's national dish haggis, which Burns himself referred to as the 'great chieftain o the puddin'-race'. This is usually washed down with a wee dram of Scotch Whisky – 21.1% of all UK food and drink exports in the year ending November 2018.

Macsween made history in 2017 when it became the first company to export the dish to Canada since 1971, after developing a new recipe that meets the country's food safety regulations.

Canada is Macsween's biggest foreign export market, where the company shipped £25,000 worth of haggis this January. With 4.7 million Scots living in the country, Macsween haggis is available in new English and French language packaging for Canada.

International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox MP said:

Macsween's success in Canada is great news at a time when UK exports are at a record high. In the year ending September 2018, exports from Scotland increased by 6.2% to £29.6 billion, the highest rise in the UK. The company's international success is a testament to the high-quality produce in the UK and is showcasing the best of Scottish food and entrepreneurial success this Burns Night.

I encourage other UK food and drink companies to consider exporting their products and reach out to leading trade advisers in my international economic department who are providing support to businesses as they enter the global marketplace for the first time.

Secretary of State for Scotland David Mundell MP said:

Haggis is the centrepiece of every Burns Night celebration, and I am proud to see Scotland's own Macsween Haggis contributing to the UK's ever-growing food and drink industry, which is a global success.

I urge more companies to take advantage of the opportunities available to enter new markets and meet the demand for high-quality Scottish produce both at home and internationally.

Macsween produces a range of haggis products including gluten-free, vegan and vegetarian haggis, so there's a seat at the table for everyone this Burns Night no matter your dietary requirements.

With 60 employees in its Loanhead factory, Macsween manufactures 1,900 tonnes of haggis yearly for countries including Singapore, Dubai, France, Germany and the USA.

The company has seen a 30% increase in sales and is forecast to reach a turnover of £1.7 million in January alone due to the global demand for high quality haggis.

James Macsween, Managing Director of Macsween Haggis, said:

We always wanted to enter the Canadian market given the population of Scottish expats living there. Luckily, we were able to develop a new recipe to meet Canadian regulations in 2017. Since then, we've had great success and now have customers in Canada sending us photos of Macsween haggis in their local supermarkets.

I would advise other Scottish food and drink businesses to consider exporting their products, no matter how small your company is. We've always been one to punch above our weight and we've seen numerous benefits of this. There is support out there, and our contacts in the UK Government have been brilliant in opening doors for us.