

[News story: Whitley Bay seaweed business eyes new international markets](#)

- a Whitley Bay-based brand of edible seaweed products has found success overseas after encountering strong global demand for its unique products
- founded by marine biologist and wild-seaweed harvester Dr Craig Rose in 2014, Seaweed & Co. harvests and mills Hebridean seaweed for the industrial food and drink sector
- it also produces a range of seaweed-infused cooking oils and nutritional supplements, under its 'Weed & Wonderful' brand

Its products have also been a success in celebrity circles, with Kaiser Chiefs frontman Ricky Wilson using Seaweed & Co.'s PureSea smoked Scottish seaweed in his savoury scones on this year's The Great Celebrity Bake Off.

Milled Hebridean seaweed for the industrial food and drink sector.

Since it started exporting three years ago, the company's overseas sales now account for 15% of its turnover, and it sells its milled seaweed ingredients to customers as far afield as South Korea, Australia, Canada, Israel and the United States, as well as across the European Union. Most recently, the company secured a £10,000 order for its 'PureSea' brand milled seaweed from a food manufacturer in Spain.

The business is now working with International Trade Advisers from the Department for International Trade (DIT) to boost its presence in the Scandinavian and US markets.

Ongoing support for the company comes as part of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and DIT's Food is GREAT campaign, which aims to get more food and drink producers into key overseas markets.

Seaweed from Whitley Bay.

Later this month, the business will be showcasing its Weed & Wonderful range to Danish buyers as part of a DIT-sponsored trade 'Meet the buyer' mission to Copenhagen, Denmark.

Dr Craig Rose, Founder and CEO, Seaweed & Co., said:

Exporting has been part of our business strategy from the very beginning. There is a huge market out there, and by working with distributors and partners overseas we've been able to increase our profitability and boost our resilience.

There is an increasing awareness of the health benefits from eating seaweed, and there's a growing demand for our products as a direct

result. Although people still raise their eyebrows when they find out we sell seaweed, markets such as Scandinavia, where consumers are relatively health conscious, hold potential for serious growth. Although exporting has been a huge boost to the business, it's not without its challenges. Thankfully DIT has been on hand to help with guidance in completing the right export paperwork and navigating international regulations. They even were able to help us avoid being scammed after we were contacted by what looked like a genuine overseas customer.

I'd encourage anyone thinking about exporting to get in touch with DIT at the earliest possibility. David Coppock, DIT North East Regional Head, said: "Seaweed & Co. is an example of a local firm that has been quick to capitalise on a growing international trend with health-conscious consumers, with its highly versatile product.

We know that exporting can sometimes present hurdles, which is why DIT is on hand to offer our support. Our network of International Trade Advisers based on the ground across the North East can offer firms of all sizes advice on everything from logistics and tax to language and intellectual property, as well as help businesses access funding for missions abroad. I'd encourage anyone interested in exporting to get in touch.