

Press release: Essential oils business drops in on UAE

It's Aromatherapy Awareness Week (10-16 June) and thanks to modern-day life becoming even more fast-paced and hectic, holistic therapies, and more specifically aromatherapy is seeing a resurgence in interest and demand.

UK industry exports of essential oils totalled £179.5 million in 2018, with exports to the United States alone reaching £34.8 million.

One West-Sussex based company benefitting from the global demand for the revived wellbeing trend is First Natural Brands. With support from the Department for International Trade (DIT), the company recently secured a contract with the Lifestyle, based in the United Arab Emirates and launched 20 lines across five new territories.

First Natural Brands has been producing essential oils for over 40 years for this burgeoning industry and now exports to over 40 countries including the United States, Australia, Hong Kong, Ireland and France. The company creates and manufactures natural, therapeutic products to balance the mind and body, and enhance wellbeing.

In the last five years, the business has seen a boost in sales in the wellbeing and natural cosmetics market, with sales rising by 40% in the last 12 months, owing to an increased awareness of the importance of wellness, and the benefits of essential oils.

Representatives from the company attended a cosmetics trade show where they met with country representatives that specialise in helping businesses grow in specific markets. Since then, the business has kept in regular contact with its International Trade Advisor (ITA) at DIT, who has offered advice, further contacts, and resolved any export challenges that have arisen.

Currently employing 60 people across two sites, the business expects to continue its rapid growth from a £6.9 million turnover to £9 million by next year.

Due to increased demand for its products, First Natural Brands has since invested in a second manufacturing site in Market Rasen, Lincolnshire which has allowed it to bring a lot of the manufacturing in house and have better control on labelling for specific international markets.

Sarah Lannin, Head of international Sales at First Natural Brands said:

Exporting has its challenges and can seem daunting, however it is achievable with the resources that are available.

There is a lot of support for businesses that export, and we used a variety of services including trade finance, international invoice finance and credit insurance to manage our risks.

By exporting our brand visibility has increased substantially and this has also led to new product developments specifically for international markets where the trends may be slightly different.

Ben Raby, Head of Region – South East at DIT said:

We're delighted to see First Natural Brands make its mark by helping to meet the demand for quality UK essential oils across the world.

We have a network of expert International Trade Advisers on hand to help more South East retail businesses respond to this demand and navigate the entire exporting process.

Many businesses have already benefited from the service that we offer, and we aim to inspire many more to explore new markets overseas.