

Press release: Welsh Secretary announces trade and investment visit to New York, New Jersey and Philadelphia

A three-day trade mission to New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, led by Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns, will begin today.

With the aim of attracting American businesses to invest in Wales and build on a trading relationship already worth more than £33.5 billion, Mr Cairns will meet with companies operating in sectors from cyber security to pharmaceuticals.

He will be joined by two Board of Trade Advisers: former Chairman of Cardiff Airport and Welsh Development Agency, Lord Rowe-Beddoe and Chief of Staff for Manchester Airport Group Collette Roche.

Secretary of State for Wales and Board of Trade Adviser, Alun Cairns, said:

Wales and the United States are close trading partners – and I want to ensure that we continue to build on this important relationship by creating more investment and exporting opportunities for companies from both countries.

US firms invest more than £30 billion in the UK and our commercial relationship is stronger than ever. We want to see that partnership continue to grow and flourish, making Wales the place of choice for investors.

In the year 2016-17, the Department for International Trade (DIT) supported 85 investment projects in Wales, generating 2,581 jobs. In the same year, Welsh companies exported more than £16 billion to the world's largest economy, up 18.8% on the previous year.

International Trade Secretary and President of the Board of Trade, Dr Liam Fox, said:

I'm delighted to see this Board of Trade delegation head across the Atlantic, seeking to attract investment into Wales – bringing prosperity, jobs and growth.

As our largest trading partner, the US remains an enormously important market for Wales as well as the rest of the UK, with

exports of Welsh goods to the US increasing by almost 19% last year.

The Department for International Trade's expert advisers stand ready in 108 countries across the world, to support British companies to export and help overseas investors find the right partners in the UK.

Just one of the Welsh companies taking advantage of the huge opportunities offered by the United States is Halen Môn – Anglesey Sea Salt.

The ambitious North Wales company first sent their product abroad in 2001, finding an American distributor shortly after. Their sea salt is now enjoyed in 22 countries around the world.

Used by chefs and food lovers, it has been served at the London 2012 Olympics, political summits and royal weddings and the US market continues to be one of the most important to the company.

Co-Founder of Halen Môn, Alison Lea-Wilson, said:

We have found exporting to the US an extremely positive process, and would urge other Welsh businesses to look to the market for the range of opportunities it offers.

Minister for Investment Graham Stuart will also be heading to Boston and Miami later this month to conduct a series of bilateral meetings with business leaders to discuss investment opportunities.