

UK government unlocks international deal for Scottish potato industry

- A £2.2 million package backed by the UK government helps Central Plains Group (CPG) export specialist agricultural equipment to its operations in Ukraine
- The financing is supporting the Scottish firm to harvest 40,000 tonnes of potatoes and fulfil multimillion-pound crisping potato contracts across Europe
- This agricultural shipment opens up new opportunities for Scottish firms in the second largest potato market in the world, supporting UK jobs and trade

Central Plains Group (CPG), a Scottish-based farming company, has boosted exports of specialist agricultural equipment and potato seeds after receiving a £2.2 million package from UK Export Finance (UKEF) and Credit Agricole.

CPG is now harvesting 40,000 tonnes of potatoes in its operations in Ukraine thanks to the deal and can fulfil several multimillion-pound contracts across Eastern Europe. This is an important deal for the seed potato industry, which is worth approximately £113 million to UK farmers every year and employs more than 11,740 people.

Today at the National Farmers' Union conference, the Environment Secretary highlighted how the UK government is supporting farmers and the agricultural industry.

Ukraine is a major potential export market for UK suppliers of agri-tech, equipment and potato-seeds. The country produces 20 million tonnes per year and is the second largest consumer of potatoes in the world.

As one of the top British companies operating in Ukraine, CPG is an innovator in the potato industry, supplying seed, table and crisping potatoes to businesses across the country as well as developing a state-of-the-art potato starch plant.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan, Secretary of State for International Trade, said:

The level of investment into Scottish exports is at an all-time high and there are fantastic opportunities for our agricultural producers to export around the world. The UK agricultural industry should be proud of the standard of goods it develops, which are in demand globally.

This deal is an example of what international collaboration can deliver: helping the Scottish potato sector to thrive, support production and jobs in Ukraine, and showcase the best of UK

agricultural equipment. I hope that farmers and food producers alike recognise the huge potential.

Mark Laird, CEO, Central Plains Group said:

This deal is a real game-changer, and will do a significant amount to open up Ukraine for the Scottish seed potato industry. It's been fantastic working with UK Export Finance and Credit Agricole to support bringing UK equipment to our farming operations in Ukraine and uphold our highest standards for premium potato production.

The deal was made possible through UKEF's Standard Buyer Loan Guarantee, which covers loans to an overseas buyer to finance the purchase of goods from a UK supplier and is the first of its kind in Scotland.

UKEF support for markets in Scotland has dramatically increased over the past six years, from c. £36m in 2016/17 to c. £416m in 2021/2022. It remains a high priority and in September, UKEF opened new Trade and Investment offices in the country to help level up export growth and support local jobs.

UK Government Minister for Scotland Malcolm Offord said:

Backed by the UK Government, this export deal is great news for the Scottish seed potato sector, offering a boost to business and supporting agricultural jobs in Scotland.

Financial support from UK Export Finance is supporting Scottish businesses in a range of sectors to export internationally. As the UK Government continues to strike new trade deals around the world, this will further help our businesses expand into global markets.

Contact