

Welsh Food and Drink to be promoted in Ireland, London and Wales on St David's Day

Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs Lesley Griffiths will lead a Trade Development Visit of food and drink companies to Dublin between 28 February and 2 March.

Thirteen food and drink companies, ranging from brewers to preserves, will have the opportunity to raise the profile of their quality products and look to secure new business by meeting national buyers from across Ireland.

During the trade visit, the Cabinet Secretary will attend a business breakfast, hold a business roundtable with leading food and drink companies and investors on the challenges and opportunities of Brexit and attend a St David's day reception at the British Ambassador's residence.

Speaking ahead of the trade visit, the Cabinet Secretary said:

"There has never been a better time for Welsh food and drink – the sector is thriving and is emblematic of our nation. Sales are soaring and we are already very near to meeting our 2020 target of increasing sales to £7 billion.

"With 20% of Wales' food and drink exports already going to Ireland, this trade visit is an ideal time for businesses to build on this and secure new contacts in overseas markets. It is part of our drive to support Welsh exports, which is vital for the Welsh economy through creating and safeguarding jobs.

"With its strong economy, food-loving countries like Ireland are an essential target for our producers and contribute to our target of growing the industry by 30% to £7 billion by 2020 – a target we are very close to meeting early. Our food and drink is world-class and I am confident that the Irish market will agree."

On St David's Day producers from across Wales will also come together to challenge consumers to buy Welsh this March by taking part in the largest celebration of Welsh food and drink ever held on a UK wide level. They will take part in a series of events across the UK to highlight that Welsh food and drink is amongst the best in the world in terms of quality and value.

For Londoners and those visiting the capital, there will be a chance to taste the many delights of Wales's excellent produce. Waitrose customers in Oxford Street and Canary Wharf will be able to sample fine Welsh produce such as traditional cheese and Welsh cakes, yoghurt and waffles, accompanied by Welsh beer or whiskey. Borough Market and rail travellers at Paddington will also

offer customers Welsh food samples to taste and take away with them.

Lesley Griffiths added:

“The interest in our wonderful Welsh food and drink has never been greater. Wales’ food and drink industry is a huge asset – Wales has a winner. I’m pleased so many producers are coming together to invite consumers across Wales to sample our quality produce and buy Welsh.”

On St David’s Day, Hannah Blythyn the Environment Minister will visit Dylans Restaurant in Llandudno to hear about their plans to expand their award winning Products.