



BISNIS BULLETIN

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BISNIS Catalog Show in Moldova Highlights U.S. Products

by Derek Nowek

BISNIS' catalog show at the 5th International Food and Packaging Exhibition in Chisinau, Moldova, May 17–21, 2000, attracted 23 U.S. manufacturers of packaging and processing machinery and components, packaging materials and containers, and marking and labeling equipment. The catalog show was organized by BISNIS in cooperation with the U.S. Embassy Chisinau. BISNIS Washington offered U.S. manufacturers the opportunity to send promotional materials to Moldova for exhibition at the BISNIS booth (see photo). The catalog show gave U.S. companies a convenient and inexpensive way to explore Moldovan market prospects, gather business con-

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RESOURCES FOR BREAKING INTO NIS MARKETS

by Ellen S. House

Several resources are available for U.S. companies that wish to market their products or find a strategic partner in the NIS. Both U.S. Government agencies and private firms offer opportunities to promote your company's products and services and to identify, or network with, NIS companies in your industry area. Private sector services include trade show companies, marketing companies, and online exporters' databases, while government resources include the services offered by U.S. Department of Commerce's Commercial Service, BISNIS, and SABIT.

Trade Shows

Participation in international trade shows and exhibitions in the NIS, or networking with NIS company representatives attending shows in United States or in other parts of world, is a good way to make contacts in your industry sector. A number of NIS and other companies manage trade fairs and exhibitions in the NIS, including Moscow's Expocentr (www.expocentr.ru), St. Petersburg's Restec

(www.restec.ru), Britain's ITE Group (www.ite-exhibitions.com), and U.S. firms Comtek International (www.comtekexpo.com) and TNT (www.tntprod.com). An extensive listing of NIS trade shows is on BISNIS Online at www.bisnis.doc.gov/bisnis/events.htm.

Occasionally, U.S. Embassies abroad will distribute brochures for U.S. companies' products or services at trade shows in the NIS. The Commercial Service (CS) or the commercial section of some U.S. Embassies in the NIS sometimes participate in local trade shows by maintaining a booth that offers U.S. company catalogs. For example, BISNIS recently sponsored such a booth at a food and packaging trade show in Moldova and CS in Ukraine has offered this service at several trade shows this year. Information on these opportunities is available through commercial contacts at U.S. Embassies (see table on p. 5), U.S. Embassy websites, or BISNIS.

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CIS and Eastern Europe Business Forum 2000

November 2-4, 2000
University of Arizona, Tucson

The forum will provide an up-to-date analysis of political, economic, and legal aspects of business ventures in the former Soviet Union, as well as Eastern Europe, and will present case studies of successful U.S. businesses and strategies for success.

If you are interested in being a presenter at the 2000 forum, send an email to Roza Simkhovich at roza@dakotacom.net, or call her at (520) 298-6599.

For last year's conference website, visit <http://russian.arizona.edu>, then click on Business Forum 99.

BISNIS

The Business Information Service for the Newly Independent States

BISNIS is an information center for U.S. companies doing business in the Newly Independent States of the former Soviet Union. Operated by the **Market Access and Compliance** unit of the **International Trade Administration**, BISNIS disseminates information in print form, electronically, and through consultations by its staff of trade specialists. For more information, please contact:

202-482-4655 (phone)

202-482-2293 (fax)

bisnis@ita.doc.gov (email)

To call BISNIS toll free, dial
1-800-USA-TRADE (872-8723)
press 3 and then press 2

or visit the **BISNIS Online** website at
www.bisnis.doc.gov

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Director

Anne Grey

Deputy Director

Trevor Gunn

Managing Editor

Ellen S. House

Assistant Editors

Juliana Kinal, Kelly Raftery

Contributors

Ellen House, Azim Mamanov, Derek Nowek, Ronald Pope, Kelly Raftery, Andrew Reed, Elena Sabirova

Articles by non-U.S. Government employees express the views of the authors and should not be construed as a statement of U.S. Government policy.

BISNIS Assists NIS Delegations at Chicago Trade Show

Delegations of businesspeople from four NIS countries attended the National Restaurant Association's "National Restaurant, Hotel/Motel Show 2000," May 20-23 in Chicago. Companies representing some of the top hotels and restaurants in Armenia, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Ukraine visited the show and met with U.S. company representatives in the area of hotel and restaurant equipment and services. BISNIS Trade Specialist Kelly Raftery accompanied the delegations to the show, arranged for interpretation and other support during the show, and assisted the delegates in making direct contact with U.S. companies from throughout the United States. BISNIS representative in St. Petersburg Alex Kim, along with Commercial Service personnel in Russia, recruited Russian businesspeople from across the country to participate in the Chicago conference.

The Kazakhstani delegation included five representatives of Agropromservice, a major agribusiness, food service, and tourism company, as well as several representatives of private hotels and cafes in Karaganda. Among the

company representatives from Russia were such well known Moscow and St. Petersburg hotel chains as Sheraton Nevski Palace Hotel, Oktyabrskaya Hotel complex, Desson Lagoda Hotel, Chaika Hotel, Meteor Hotel, Pribaltikskaya Hotel, and the fast-food chain Pizza House. Also attending was the editor-in-chief of *Vitrina*, Russia's largest hospitality industry magazine. Ukraine was represented by a number of companies, including Victoria Corporation, Kristall, Polaris, and Market Group, all in the food industry, as well as several companies engaged in the hotel and lodging industries. The Armenian delegation consisted of a travel/tourism and a food service company from Gyumri, the country's second largest city. Altogether, some 30 NIS companies attended the show and met with U.S. companies.

The "National Restaurant, Hotel/Motel Show 2000" is one of the U.S. Department of Commerce's International Buyer Program (IBP) shows, which encourages international delegations to attend trade shows to purchase U.S. goods, equipment, and services (see www.usatrade.gov/ibp).

BUSINESS SUCCESS IN THE NIS: THE ESSENTIAL ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

By Ronald R. Pope

Nine years after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the start of market reforms, a substantial percentage of the public in the former Soviet Union is frequently wary of foreign businessmen. Despite this attitude, and other obstacles, there clearly is tremendous opportunity in this emerging market. However, working successfully in the region requires, among other things, overcoming the population's "greedy capitalist" view of foreign businessmen. To earn the respect of the people they are dealing with and the acceptance of the local population, foreigners must effectively present themselves as "good neighbors," rather than exploitative capitalists who have come to town only to take advantage of cheap labor and bribe-taking officials.

Russian culture, in particular, puts a premium on "personal relationships." Specifically, many Russians are not inclined to do even the jobs they are being paid to do for "just anyone." Embedded in this culture is the view that it is best to "do favors" for those who are known to reciprocate. In other words, in dealing one-on-one with Russians, it helps a great deal to have a reputation for contributing to the welfare of others. That way Russians will not feel they are "wasting their time" when they do something for you.

The Importance of Good PR

Responding effectively to these cultural factors requires a well thought out public relations campaign that takes into account the idiosyncrasies of post-Communist society and the specific needs of each community. The key to long-term success lies in identifying needs and formulating an approach whereby the community as a whole will benefit from your presence, not just those lucky enough to be hired by your firm—or the local businesses that you are working with. In this way, the community will have a vested interest in your success—and it will be much easier to obtain needed assistance when problems inevitably arise. An added, and potentially very valuable, benefit of a positive public image is that local officials will find it more difficult to ignore your legitimate interests or to demand bribes.

An effective public relations campaign does not have to be expensive. For example, linking local doctors and nurses with their Western counterparts can result in improvements in medical care in the host community, in part through a significant boost in morale. You can make an inexpensive direct contribution by including donated medical equipment with any shipments you make. Providing used computers to local schools, especially where no computers currently exist, can also be quite helpful.

Travelers' Advisory for U.S. Embassy in Moscow

The new U.S. Embassy in Moscow Office Building opened on May 12, 2000. The Ambassador and many Embassy officials, which were housed in the familiar mustard and cream-colored building on Novinsky Boulevard, have moved to the new building, located just around the corner on Bolshoi Devyatinsky Pereulok. The Consular Section is still located in the old building. However, telephone numbers for Embassy offices have changed. New telephone numbers, which are meant for use by U.S. citizens residing or traveling in Russia, are as follows (all numbers take the Moscow city code 095):

American Citizen Services: 728-5577

American Citizen Services fax: 728-5084

Consular Warden messages (recording):
728-5552

Consular Section general fax: 728-5358

Questions on adoptions only (hours 12 m.-6 p.m. only): 728-5058

24-hour visa information recording
(in Russian): 728-5554; (in English): 728-5553

Many large companies that have entered the Russian market have already undertaken major public relations programs, but this type of effort is also suitable for small- and medium-sized companies. Since building a model American home in Vladimir (located about 110 miles northeast of Moscow) in 1992, my company, Serendipity, has acquired substantial experience with not-for-profit projects, including a successful American English and culture program and assistance to the local basketball program. For example, Serendipity organized a trip to Vladimir by an experienced U.S. high school basketball coach. More than 50 Russian coaches attended the coach's main clinic, and everyone agreed that it was an excellent program. As a result of these "outreach" efforts, Serendipity has developed a variety of contacts, is given a fair hearing when it needs assistance, and is treated with respect, whether by the city gas company or by the judicial system. In short, people do not feel they are wasting their time when they assist us.

Dr. Ronald R. Pope is the President of Serendipity: Russian Consulting & Development, Ltd., located in Normal, IL, and Associate Professor of Russian Politics at Illinois State University. He can be reached by email at RonPope42@cs.com.

(MOLDOVA, continued from p. 1)

tacts, develop sales leads, and locate potential agents and distributors. Over 300 representatives of local companies from the food, beverage, pharmaceutical, consumer goods, and other industries visited BISNIS' booth, the first of its kind in Moldova. The annual Food and Packaging Exhibition was organized by Moldexpo (www.moldexpo.com).

In addition to displaying product literature, BISNIS Representative in Chisinau Veaceslav Dodonu and U.S. Embassy Economic Specialist Valentina David gathered 75 trade leads, handed out over 200 copies of a bilingual Russian-English directory of U.S. exhibitors, and distributed 50 applications for BISNIS' Search for Partners program, which identifies NIS enterprises looking for U.S. business partners.

According to Ion Casapu, head of the foreign relations department at leading U.S.-owned Moldovan pharmaceuticals producer Farmaco, "The BISNIS catalog show offered our company a convenient opportunity to familiarize ourselves with U.S.-made packaging equipment and technologies."

Derek Nowek covers Moldova for BISNIS in Wash., DC.

(BREAKING IN, continued from p. 1)

Information on NIS companies attending trade shows in the United States through the Commercial Service's International Buyer Program is at www.USATRADE.GOV/IBP/ and information on CS' Trade Fair Certification Program can be found at [HTTP://INFOSERV2.ITA.DOC.GOV/TRADEFAIR](http://INFOSERV2.ITA.DOC.GOV/TRADEFAIR).

Distribute U.S. Trade Proposals to NIS Firms

A new Russian-language email publication, compiled by Marketing Data Research (Tacoma, WA), distributes advertisements for U.S. products or services in the NIS market. The trade leads and business proposals are published in "International Business Express," which is distributed directly to 15,000 companies by email, placed on 10 well-known Internet websites throughout the NIS, and published in a number of printed NIS business periodicals. Marketing Data Research translates the leads into Russian for U.S. companies and publishes them for a fee of \$45. For more information, telephone (253) 588-4149, fax (253) 588-4366, email: mktgres@uswest.net, or visit [HTTP://MKTG.HYPERMART.NET](http://MKTG.HYPERMART.NET).

Exporters Databases

Exporters' databases online offer U.S. companies the opportunity to place information on their company and products on websites where NIS companies can visit to search for goods and services. Although several such online databases exist, the following six resources are highlighted because BISNIS' Russian-language website offers links to them.

The Commercial Service sponsors two online company databases. E-Expo USA (www.E-EXPOUSA.DOC.GOV) is a virtual online trade show that offers companies a virtual booth,

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NOVOSIBIRSK WEB RESOURCES

Novosibirsk is one of the largest cities in Russia and the transportation hub of Siberia. Internet resources for Novosibirsk provide useful information on the business environment of the city and region, the local market, and potential partners among local companies. The following websites include at least some English-language content.

The **FIS** (Financial Information Service) agency (WWW.FIS.NSK.SU), founded in 1994, was the first agency in Siberia to specialize in providing financial and economic information using Internet technologies. On the English version of its site, FIS posts local and regional economic, financial, and political news, and provides information on foreign currency exchanges in Moscow and the major cities in Siberia and on prices for shares in major Siberian companies. On the Russian version of the site, FIS provides access to a database of commercial companies, located in the cities of Novosibirsk and Omsk, displaying their products and prices.

Novosibirsk City Site (WWW.NOVOSIB.RU/ENGL.HTML), which is devoted to the city of Novosibirsk, was created by the FIS agency with the help of the Information-Consulting Center Novinvest and the support of the Novosibirsk Mayor's office. It has both English and Russian versions, which provide information on the latest financial, economic, and political news, and the history, business, and culture of the city. Flight information to/from the local airport, Tolmachevo, the weather forecast, information on hotels and banks, and currency exchange are also available on the site.

Novosibirsk Chamber of Commerce and Industry (WWW.SBCNET.NSK.RU/ENGLISH/INDEX.HTM) was established in 1991 and currently has more than 150 member companies.

Siberian Accord (WWW.SIBACC.NSK.SU), an interregional economic cooperation association, is a nongovernmental grouping of Siberia's 19 regions: republics—Buryatia, Khakassia, and Tyva; krais—Altai and Krasnoyarsk; oblasts—Irkutsk, Chita, Kemerovo, Novosibirsk, Omsk, Tomsk, and Tyumen; and autonomous districts—Aginsk Buryat, Evenk, Khanty-Mansi, Taimyr, Ust-Ordynsk, Buryat, and Yamalo-Nenetsk. The site offers links to the sites of the administrations of several Siberian regions.

Akademgorodok Internet Project (WWW.NSC.RU:8002) of Novosibirsk State University offers numerous links to Internet resources in Siberia, including the scientific research institutes of the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences (WWW.NSC.RU:8002/LANS/RESOURCE.HTML).

*For a longer report on websites and Internet use in Novosibirsk and Siberia, visit **BISNIS Online** at <http://www.bisnis.doc.gov/bisnis/country/000425internetsib.htm>.*

Source: Azim Mamanov, BISNIS representative in Novosibirsk.

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electronic lead collection, targeted promotion at selected international trade events, and profiles of international buyers. Commercial News U.S.A. (www.cnewsusa.com) is an international marketing magazine and website promoting U.S. products and services. It provides information on how to become a buyer, sales representative agent, distributor, licensee, joint-venture partner, etc., with U.S. companies.

Four well-known private directories of U.S. exporting companies are USA Exports (www.usaexports.net), American Export Registry (www.aernet.com), Thomas Registry of Manufacturers (www.thomasregister.com), and USA Export Directory (www.usa-export.com).

The Commercial Service

The Commercial Service (CS) offers three fee-based programs to assist U.S. firms in finding NIS business partners. (1) Gold Key Service, intended for U.S. firms planning a local visit, combines orientation briefings, introductions to potential business partners, up to five meetings a day, and assistance in developing a sound market strategy and effective follow-up. (2) Agent Distributor Service is a customized overseas search for qualified agents, distributors, and representatives for U.S. firms. (3) Customized Market Analysis offers a customized assessment of how a specific product will sell in the local market and identifies qualified businesses most likely to represent or purchase the product, possible marketing and distribution channels, and local regulations.

More information on CS services overseas and other resources for finding strategic partners are on the U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service website at www.usatrade.gov.

BISNIS Resources

BISNIS' Search for Partners program collects and disseminates information on NIS companies seeking a strategic business partner in the United States. U.S. firms can receive Search for Partners leads via email, regular mail, or BISNIS' website (www.bisnis.doc.gov). Industry reports available on BISNIS' website provide contact information for NIS companies and associations in specific industry sectors. Country pages on the BISNIS site offer regional reports with descriptions and contact information for companies in specific NIS regions, as well as for regional chambers of commerce and other business associations, and links to web resources for identifying companies, such as online yellow pages.

The SABIT Program

The Special American Business Internship Training (SABIT) program helps U.S. companies to identify NIS companies or individuals with whom they want to explore a strategic partnership and to train the potential business partner in the United States. SABIT supplies U.S. host firms with qualified applicants from whom to choose, or firms can nominate their own candidate, and awards grants to defray the cost of training NIS managers and scientists in the United

Commercial Contacts at U.S. Embassies in the NIS

| NIS country | Contact Information |
|------------------|---|
| ARMENIA | Mher Aveyan, Commercial Specialist Tel: + 374 (2) 151-551, Fax: 151-550 Email: yerevan.office.box@mail.doc.gov |
| AZERBAIJAN | John Steuber, Acting Sr. Commercial Officer Tel: +994 (12) 98-03-35, Fax: 98-61-17 Email: baku.office.box@mail.doc.gov |
| BELARUS | Dmitriy Semenov, Commercial Specialist Tel: +375 (17) 210-12-83, Fax: 234-78-53 Email: semenovdv@minsk.us-state.gov |
| GEORGIA | Nino Kumsishvili, Sr. Commercial Assistant Tel: +995 (32) 98-99-67, Fax: 93-37-59 Email: nino.kumsishvili@mail.doc.gov |
| MOLDOVA | Vyacheslav Dodonu, BISNIS Representative Tel: +373 (2) 23-37-72, Fax: 23-30-44 Email: bisnis@mdl.net |
| KAZAKHSTAN | Julie Snyder, Sr. Commercial Officer Tel: +7 (3272) 58-79-20, Fax: 58-79-22 Email: almaty.office.box@mail.doc.gov |
| KYRGYZSTAN | Irina Mukambaeva, BISNIS Representative Tel: +996 (312) 55-12-41, Fax: 55-12-64 Email: mukambaevaIBX@state.gov |
| RUSSIA Moscow | Beryl Blecher, Acting Sr. Commercial Officer Tel: + 7 (095) 737-5030, Fax: 737-5033 Email: Moscow.office.box@mail.doc.gov |
| St. Petersburg | Michael Richardson, Principal Comm. Officer Tel: +7 (812) 326-2560, Fax: 326-2561 Email: stpetersburg.office.box@mail.doc.gov |
| Vladivostok | Richard Steffens, Principal Comm. Officer Tel: + 7 (4232) 300-093, Fax: 300-092 Email: csvlad@online.ru |
| Yekaterinburg | Aleksandr Deyanov, Commercial Assistant Tel: +7 (3432) 56-47-36, fax 56-45-15 |

States for 3-6 months. The SABIT program gives priority consideration to U.S. organizations involved in 10 sectors—agribusiness, defense conversion, energy, environment, financial services, health care, housing, product standards and quality control, telecommunications, and transportation.

A Federal Register notice announcing the availability of approximately \$1 million in funding for the SABIT grant program will open in June 2000. For SABIT's 2000-2001 calendar and further information, call (202) 482-0073 or visit www.mac.doc.gov/sabit/sabit.html.

Ellen House is managing editor of the BISNIS Bulletin.

TRICKS OF THE TRADE**Opening an Office on Sakhalin Island, Russia**

by Elena Sabirova

The large-scale development of offshore oil and gas fields in the Sakhalin region of the Russian Far East is the impetus behind numerous foreign contractors and subcontractors getting involved in the region. Branches, subsidiaries, representative offices, and joint ventures are establishing offices in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, the capital of Sakhalin region, to provide services to the oil and gas industry, the local growing expatriate community, and the general population.

Office Rental

The office space options in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk range from rental of a small carrel for a short period of time to construction of new facilities. Western-type facilities are available in the **Sakhincenter**, where the U.S. Government-funded **American Business Center** offers office space and other business support services, and the **Michinoku Bank** buildings. Both are in downtown Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk. The price of one square meter per month is \$42 and \$45, respectively. These buildings have good security systems, guarded parking lots, power generators, and restaurants and cafes. The offices of the major oil developers are located in these buildings.

Another option is to rent an office in a local building. Some are Soviet-style offices, which usually need renovation to reach Western standards. Soviet-style offices can be found for \$6-\$15 per square meter per month. Usually, these buildings have some security (guard available), power generators, parking lots (not guarded), and other features.

Local Labor Market

Sakhalin has a skilled and educated workforce, but salary rates are some of the highest in the Russian Far East. Although there are many people with English-language capabilities, it may be difficult to find employees fluent in English who also have professional expertise in accounting, law, or engineering. Engineers are particularly difficult to find due to the lack of an engineering school in the region. Foreign companies operating on Sakhalin have already hired most of the people who have both technical and English-language skills. Translators and interpreters cost \$800-\$1,500 per month, with per hour interpretation costing \$5-\$20.

Payroll taxes, including payments to various funds and additional hardship differential for living in the Sakhalin region, considered a remote northern territory, can as much as double the pre-tax payments. Therefore, in salary discussions with potential employees, it is important to specify what is included in the salary being negotiated. The main ways to find personnel are to advertise in a local newspaper or use one of the few local recruiting agencies.

Office Equipment

All necessary office equipment is available locally. Various brands of everything from telephones to printers are available in stores, or can be ordered easily. However, due to the region's remoteness, local prices tend to be quite high. For instance, prices for computers in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk may be 1.5 times higher than in Moscow, and some companies find it advantageous to do their office equipment shopping there.

Telecommunications

Sakhalin has only one large local telecommunications company, **Sakhalinsvyaz**. In general, international calls from local hotels cost about \$5 per minute and domestic long distance calls are \$3 per minute. Sakhalinsvyaz is the cheapest provider of international communications. Installation time for a phone line can vary from one week to one month. One of Sakhalinsvyaz's shareholders is Britain's **Cable & Wireless**, which also owns two other companies on the island—**Sakhalin Telecom** and **ST Mobile**. The latter is currently the only company offering mobile phone services, and prices for its services are high. The Russian-American joint venture **Kriljon** and the local company **Vostoktelecom** provide international and long distance communications services, but do not provide access to local phone lines. Five providers offer Internet access, which costs about \$200 per month.

Business Services

Several companies and organizations provide business services for both Russian and foreign legal entities, including such services as accounting, due diligence, registration services, issuing invitation letters for a visa, translations/interpretation or finding an interpreter, and organizing business meetings. The main providers of business services are **PriceWaterhouseCoopers**, **Sakhalin Alaska Consulting Group**, **Interpre-Serve**, **Moore Stephens**, the American Business Center, and the local chamber of commerce.

Express Mail

Timely mailing of documents from the island can be a challenge due to the remoteness of the region and the variable schedules of many air carriers. It can take up to a week to send something to the United States. **DHL** and **GarantPost** are the two major parcel and letter carriers available locally.

*For a longer report on opening an office in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, visit **BISNIS Online** at www.bisnis.doc.gov/bisnis/country/FarEast.htm.*

*Elena Sabirova is the **BISNIS** representative in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, Sakhalin Island.*

REGIONAL CORNER: Cherkasy Oblast, Ukraine

By Andrew Reed

The Cherkasy oblast straddles the Dnipro River in the very center of Ukraine, immediately south of Kiev. The population is nearly 1.5 million, of which 55 percent is urban. The regional capital, Cherkasy, is located on the Dnipro River and has a population of 310,000. The Cherkasy region's three other largest cities are Uman (population 91,000), Smila (population 78,600), and Zolotonosha (population 32,600). In addition to river transport, the region has an airport, a major railway junction, and regional highways linking it to Odessa, Kiev, and Donetsk.

The region is historically famous for stockbreeding and agriculture, both of which are still important to the region's economy. Cherkasy is also rich in brick and ceramic raw materials, sands for building, and clay. The climate in the Cherkasy region is continental.

The Cherkasy region has 1.46 million hectares (3.6 million acres) of land devoted to agriculture, of which 88 percent is arable. The land is noted for its high level of fertility; the main crops are beets and grain. Stockbreeding is also a significant part of the agricultural sector. Industrial output constituted 37.7 percent of regional output in 1997. Cherkasy has more than 300 industrial enterprises. The main sectors are chemical, food processing, power engineering, machine building, metalworking, and light industries.

Opportunities

Revival of the agro-industrial complex is a priority of the Cherkasy Region. Several opportunities exist in food processing and packaging. The food industry includes 123 enterprises. The **Cherkasky Zernopererobny Promyslovy Kompleks** processes cereal. **Juriya** is one of Ukraine's largest

milk processing companies. **Cherkaska Biskvitna Fabryka** is engaged in cake and confectionery production.

Opportunities outside the agro-industrial complex include telecommunications, the manufacture of textiles and furniture, thermal electric power, and sewage purification equipment. The **Cherkasky Zavod Telehrافichnoji Aparatury** manufactures and assembles digital transfer telephone equipment for domestic telephone stations. Many enterprises are interested in purchasing or leasing new equipment.

Local Assistance

The **Cherkasy Chamber of Commerce and Industry** is a nongovernmental association of local businesses and entrepreneurs that helps increase business contacts with companies outside the region and provides information, inspection, and other services. The Cherkasy Chamber can be reached at telephone +380 (472) 479-728, fax +380 (472) 474-325 or email: cci@uch.net or chrkcci1@hotmail.com. Information on the chamber can also be found by visiting its website at www.uch.net/~cci.

Another useful contact is the Cherkasy Regional Administration, which can be reached by telephone +380 (472) 472-954 or fax +380 (472) 47-29-54.

*More information about the above-mentioned and other commercial and investment opportunities in the Cherkasy oblast can be found on **BISNIS Online** at www.bisnis.doc.gov/bisnis/country/000112cher.htm.*

Andrew Reed owns a dairy products business in Georgia and is an occasional contributor to the BISNIS Bulletin.

AGENCY SPOTLIGHT

World Trade Organization (WTO)—The WTO announced on May 16, 2000, that the Republic of Georgia will formally become a member on June 14. The country was approved for WTO membership in October 1999, but the Georgian parliament failed to ratify membership documents prior to a January deadline. Georgia will become the WTO's 137th member. Georgia is the second NIS country to complete accession negotiations and become a member of the WTO. The Kyrgyz Republic became a member of the WTO in October 1998. Armenia and Moldova have nearly completed accession negotiations and are expected to become WTO members before the end of this year. Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Ukraine are also engaged in accession negotiations to join the WTO.

The Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research (MISER)—MISER, an interdisciplinary research institute of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, announces the availability of several new international trade data series and introduces a new web-based international trade software, AXESWeb, now being licensed to the public. The new data series include: State Exports by 2, 4, and 6-digit HS (Harmonized System); Commodity by Country; and State Exports by 3-digit NAICS (North American Industry Classification System), by country. MISER's latest version of Accelerated eXport Enhancement System (AXESWeb) is easy to use and features data drill-downs, graphics, pdf output, and aggregations by U.S. and world areas. For additional information on MISER databases, visit <http://misertrade.org>.

Sender **BISNIS**
USA Trade Center
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Stop R-BISNIS
1401 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

FIRST-CLASS MAIL
PRE-SORTED
POSTAGE & FEES PAID
ITA/DOC
PERMIT No. G-54

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
Penalty for Private Use, \$300

TRADE EVENTS CALENDAR

| | | |
|--|---|------------------------|
| KievBuild, Interiors Kiev | June 20–23, 2000 | Kiev |
| Organized by: | ITE Group | |
| Telephone: | +44 (20) 7596-5000 | |
| Facsimile: | +44 (20) 7596-5111 | |
| Email: | enquiry@ite-exhibitions.com | |
| Website: | www.ite-exhibitions.com | |
| Russia's Small Business | June 21–24, 2000 | Nizhny Novgorod |
| Organized by: | Nizhny Novgorod Trade Fairs | |
| Telephone: | +7 (8312) 34-55-68, 34-56-74 | |
| Email: | yarmarka@yarmarka.ru | |
| Website: | www.yarmarka.ru | |
| Sectors: | Entrepreneurship, handicrafts, art salon | |
| Shipping, Ports & RFE Shelf Development | June 28–30, 2000 | Vladivostok |
| Organized by: | Primorye-Expo | |
| Telephone: | +7(4232) 257-867 | |
| Facsimile: | +7(4232) 250-844 | |
| Sectors: | Shipping, intermodal services, ship building and ship repair, cargo and fishing vessels | |
| Cottage 2000 | July 3–7, 2000 | Moscow |
| Organized by: | Expocentr | |
| Telephone: | +7 (095) 255-3763 | |
| Facsimile: | +7 (095) 205-6055 | |
| Email: | ignoreko@expocentr.ru | |
| Website: | www.expocentr.ru | |
| Sector: | Residential construction | |

*10th Anniversary Open House
of the
Central and Eastern Europe
Business Information Center
(CEEbic)*

July 13, 2000
Open House & Reception, 1:30–5:30 p.m.
Ronald Reagan Bldg. & Intl. Trade Center
Washington, DC

At the open house, you will have the opportunity to meet with Trade Specialists from BISNIS' sister organization, CEEbic, and learn about trade and investment opportunities and U.S. Government programs in Central and Eastern Europe.

For more information, visit CEEbicNet at www.mac.doc.gov/eebic/ceebic.html, call (202) 482-2645, or email ceebic@ita.doc.gov

This notice is provided solely as an informational resource and does not constitute U.S. Department of Commerce endorsement of these events. For a more complete listing of NIS trade events, visit *BISNIS Online* at www.bisnis.doc.gov/bisnis/leads/tradecal.htm. All information published in the *BISNIS Bulletin* regarding trade events is subject to change without notice by the organizers of those events.