

Grand Traverse Distillery Generates Sales with Food Export and MDARD



Grand Traverse Distillery (GTD), a premium spirits company located in Traverse City, Michigan, in the 1st Congressional District, participated in Food Export - Midwest's Beer, Wine, & Spirits Buyers Mission at the National Restaurant Association (NRA) Show in 2017, 2018, and 2019. GTD also participated in the 2019 Market Builder Program for Southeast Asia.

The Beer, Wine, & Spirits Buyers Missions connected GTD with buyers from countries around the world. During the mission, the company participated in a special culinary event in which their spirits were incorporated in professionally prepared drinks and served to the buyers. From the 2019 mission, GTD saw interest from buyers from El Salvador, Colombia, and Bulgaria, and projected \$150,000 in future sales. GTD was also able to gain invaluable insight into the Southeast Asian market through Food Export's Market Builder Program, which provided the company with customized market research, including distributor referrals, importer feedback, and importation analysis for their product.

GTD also exhibited in the BAR Michigan Pavilion at the NRA Show, organized by the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's (MDARD) International Marketing Program. In 2018 and 2019, Grand Traverse Distillery made \$135,000 in on-site sales from both domestic and international buyers and projected future sales of \$300,000 from the 243 buyer leads made at the show. Kent Rabish, President of GTD, said that this event "connected GTD with many buyers and has helped [GTD] find a distributor to handle our spirits in Chicago. In 2019, [GTD] sold about \$75,000 to this new market, and this is just the beginning."

With the help of Food Export's and MDARD's programs, the company increased its operations, installed a second still in 2018, and hired three new employees.

Grand Traverse Distillery produces high quality and award-winning spirits such as vodka, bourbon, whiskey, gin, and rum. Their spirits are certified Craft Distilled and certified kosher. To learn more about Grand Traverse Distillery, visit their website [here](#).

Food Export uses funding from the Agricultural Trade Promotion Program (ATP) and the Market Access Program (MAP) to help America's small businesses increase their exports of food and agricultural products. As these exports increase, these small businesses are creating jobs and improving the strength and stability of our agricultural economy. Food Export - Midwest and Food Export - Northeast are non-profit organizations that work in collaboration with their member state departments of agriculture and the USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service. They offer a wide range of programs and services that help boost America's agricultural exports.

