



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 21, 2008

CONTACT: Pat Lockard
850.623.0174

**EXPORT SALES MISSION TO LIMA, PERU
APPLICATION DEADLINE SEPTEMBER 1, 2008**

Positions, scholarships still available to businesses in Northwest Florida.

MILTON, FL – The deadline for businesses to register for the upcoming Export Sales Mission to Lima, Peru, scheduled for October 19 – 22, 2008, is fast approaching. With spots still available, as well as scholarship money, it is not too late for additional companies to join an emerging crowd of successful international exporters. For example, companies that participated in the recent Mexico trade mission have over \$30 million in actual and expected sales so far as a result of the trip, according to Enterprise Florida, Inc. (EFI), the state's primary economic development arm.

One of those companies was MeltPro, Inc. The Milton-based company, which manufactures a full line of hot-melt adhesive dispensing equipment, experienced a windfall of new business as a result of its participation in the Mexico trade mission that included stops in Monterrey and Vera Cruz. Steve Wages, MeltPro's Sales Manager, said that the trip allowed him to meet face-to-face with prospective clients that he had previously communicated with solely through email. Wages also met with a number of newly-identified prospects.

"There was no time for sightseeing," said Wages. "From the time we got up, until about seven or eight o'clock at night, we interviewed." In fact, Wages' first interview was conducted "on the fly" during a layover at the airport in Mexico City while the group was en route to Monterrey.

MeltPro's experience is just one story among many successes. Separation Systems, Inc., a manufacturer of gas chromatography equipment located in Gulf Breeze, recently traveled to the White House to receive the prestigious President's "E" Award for exporting excellence. Adela Fernandez, Separation Systems' Vice President, praises the value of trade missions.

"For a small company, there are many obstacles to overcome in the international market, but we have been very fortunate to have the support of various agencies and organizations, such as the Department of Commerce, Enterprise Florida and TEAM Santa Rosa, to help us achieve our goals," she said.

Fernandez cites trade missions as a key in identifying new markets and expanding their clientele. "After many unsuccessful attempts to export on our

own, we were introduced to trade missions and immediately became firm believers in their value. They have enabled us to strengthen our relationships with our current customers, while broadening our reach to new markets.”

The upcoming trade mission to Peru presents another great opportunity for local businesses to grow their clientele. The program includes two full days of personalized appointments with Peruvian companies – pre-screened according to each participating company’s objectives – and one more day for follow-up appointments. Companies will also participate in a breakfast briefing with the U.S. Commercial Service in Peru and an Ambassadorial cocktail reception.

Some important facts to consider when evaluating whether to register for the trip:

1. Peru is among the state’s top 20 markets with over \$1.4 billion worth of merchandise exported from Florida last year.
2. Later this year, the U.S.–Peru Trade Promotion Agreement is expected to be implemented. Among its benefits, 80 percent of U.S. exports of consumer and industrial goods to Peru and more than two-thirds of current U.S. farm exports to Peru will be *duty-free immediately* as part of the agreement.
3. The benefits to Florida’s small- and medium-sized exporters should be substantial, considering that U.S. exports to Peru have doubled in the past four years.

Additionally, there is still scholarship money available to help Santa Rosa County businesses with the expenses associated with trade missions. TEAM Santa Rosa is providing financial assistance, through a grant provided by EFI, for registration fees, travel and lodging. These scholarships can help businesses open new markets at a very low cost. To apply for a scholarship or for more information, please contact Pat Lockard at (850) 623-0174.

TEAM Santa Rosa Economic Development Council, Inc. is the central facilitator for attracting, retaining, and expanding industry, as well as for recruiting and retaining skilled employees. Located at 6491 Caroline Street, Suite 4, Milton, FL 32570, our doors are always to open for prospective clients who would like to better position their business for success. You can also visit our website, www.teamsantarosa.com, or call us at (850) 623-0174.

###