

Thailand SA Trade Show 2012 aims to grow trade with SA

Over the past decade, bilateral trade between Thailand and South Africa has demonstrated steady growth. In 2011, combined trade between the countries reached an all time high of USD 3.5-billion - a significant increase over the USD 2.2-billion of 2010.



Dr Chakarin Komolsiri, head of the Office of Commercial Affairs at the Royal Thai Embassy in South Africa

South East Asia's second largest economy is looking to strengthen and grow its trade relations with South Africa, with the announcement of the Thailand Trade Show, which will take place from 21-23 June 2012 at the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC).

The trade show is the 14th of its kind to be hosted by Thailand in South Africa's major provinces over the past 11 years, and is organised by the Department of International Trade Promotion (DITP), Ministry of Commerce, Royal Thai Government. The success of these trade shows and the resulting bilateral trade relationships developed over the past decade are evident in the significant growth in trade between the countries.

Thailand, SA's 12th largest trading partner

Dr Chakarin Komolsiri, the head of the Office of Commercial Affairs at the Royal Thai Embassy in South Africa, comments: "Thailand and South Africa are strategic partners and key players in our respective regional economies. In 2011, Thailand's exports to South Africa increased by 24% and South African exports to Thailand increased by 160% over 2010. This trend continues into 2012, when Thailand's exports to South Africa increased by 27% and South African exports to Thailand by 276% in the period January to February 2012, as compared to the same period in 2011.

"Thailand is South Africa's 12th largest trading partner, while South Africa is Thailand's 34th largest trading partner and our largest trading partner in Africa. We have always regarded South Africa as a strategic trading partner. Its importance in SADC and SACU is well recognised and the country is both the gateway to Southern Africa and an important market for Thailand, and we remain committed to further strengthening trade with South Africa and the African continent and to growing sustainable long-term relationships. Thailand has similarly established itself as the gateway to ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), which includes 10 countries in the region and will in 2015 become a common economic zone, with 600 million people and a combined GDP of USD 1.1-trillion."

Via the Thailand Trade Show, Thailand hopes to reinforce its existing ties and create new relationships with

buyers, traders, importers and re-exporters across a selection of several key trade sectors. The major trade sectors that will come under the spotlight include automotive; beauty, health and spa products; fashion accessories & home décor; food & beverages; household & kitchenware products; pet products; and plastics. These sectors will be represented by some 50 exhibitors from Thailand.

Trading With Thailand

Constant research and the use of advanced technology to produce quality export products to specification on time and at a fair market price have enabled Thailand to maintain its competitiveness in world markets. In 2011 the top three importers of Thai exports were China, Japan and the United States, in that order. South Africa ranked 24th on this scale.

Dr Komolsiri adds: "Trading with Thailand has many advantages for businesses that are looking for reliable trade partners with quality products that are competitively priced. Thailand's Department of International Trade Promotion (DITP) supports Thai exporters and their trade partners on many levels. Trading partners have the assurance of dealing with companies that have access to rich natural resources, a skilled workforce and who employ advanced technology in their manufacturing processes.

"Thai companies are renowned for their flexibility in responding to and finding ways to meet customers' needs, and for their well-integrated logistics systems that allow them to fulfil orders quickly and efficiently."

Thailand's DITP representatives will be at the Thailand Trade Show to assist buyers, importers and re-exporters with trade enquiries as well as sourcing appropriate Thai trading partners and facilitating partnerships and communication between the parties.

Open to members of trade and public

The Thailand Trade Show is open to members of the trade exclusively on Thursday, 21 June 2012, from 9.30am to 6pm and open to both the trade and the public on Friday, 22 June 2012, from 9.30am to 6pm and on Saturday, 23 June 2012 from 9.30am to 4pm.

Members of the trade are invited to attend the show and explore Thailand's offerings, compare products and pricing, meet exporters face-to-face, network, obtain leads and source partners to help grow their business and participate in Thai cooking demonstrations.

For more information on the Thailand Trade Show, go to www.tradeprojects.co.za.