



**U.S.  
COMMERCIAL  
SERVICE**

United States of America  
Department of Commerce

# U.S. COMMERCIAL SERVICE

## AMERICA'S EXPORT EXPERTS

# RURAL EXPORT CENTER



## ANNUAL REPORT

# FY23



INTERNATIONAL  
**TRADE**  
ADMINISTRATION



**U.S.  
COMMERCIAL  
SERVICE**  
United States of America  
Department of Commerce

**Rural  
Export  
Center**

## OUR VALUE

The Rural Export Center (REC) was created in 2020 to provide timely and differentiated research, with unique tools and analysis for actionable recommendations that help rural exporters identify new buyers, markets, and strategies in international markets. [Learn more about the REC.](#)

## WHY A RURAL EXPORT CENTER?

Rural U.S. companies overall are located great distances from information, contacts, gateways, and services that facilitate export success, so they are often less proactive in pursuing exporting.

What keeps so many capable US firms from aspiring to exports?

**Knowledge • Confidence • Connections**

## HOW WE ASSIST RURAL EXPORTERS

The REC empowers rural exporters by reducing the cost and complexity of growing international sales. Its **RAISE** (Rural America's Intelligence Service for Exporters) market research delivers actionable market intelligence and its WGR (Website Globalization Review) delivers proven digital analytics and e-commerce strategies.

With this customized market intelligence in hand, rural exporters can approach the world with data-driven strategies, confidently expanding into new global export markets.

An increase in the FY23 budget by Congress led to the creation of eight regional Rural Export Center offices for rural outreach.

The **National REC**, located in **Fargo, North Dakota**, continues to specialize in conducting customized market research designed to guide rural U.S. companies toward the most opportune export markets.



**Enybe Diaz**  
Charleston, West Virginia



**Joseph Doyle**  
Louisville, Kentucky



**Maryse Holly**  
Jackson, Mississippi



**Jose Maciel**  
Des Moines, Iowa



**Alexander Hall**  
Fargo, North Dakota



**Mayra De La Canal**  
Midland, Texas



**Dijana Mitrovic**  
Las Vegas, Nevada



**Jennifer Verdon**  
Boise, Idaho



The National Rural Export Center (REC), located in Fargo, North Dakota, was created in 2020 to help rural U.S. companies overcome barriers to exporting.



The U.S. Commercial Service leverages its unique global network, both in the U.S. and overseas, to help rural companies expand into new markets.

## OUR TEAM



Heather Ranck  
Director



Joshua Erickson  
Program Manager



Kate Best  
Research Analyst



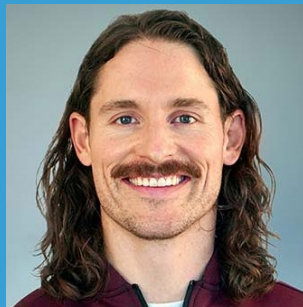
Summer Kersick  
Research Analyst



Elizabeth Krekel  
Research Analyst



Darin Stromstad  
Research Analyst



Brock Gion  
Research Assistant



Andrea Nisely  
Research Assistant



Ashley Wills  
Research Assistant

## MISSION

"To empower rural U.S. companies to thrive in international markets through actionable market intelligence and global connections."



412

Reports Paid



358

Reports Delivered

**Most Popular Option = Matrix + 3 Country Reports**



200

Matrix + 3 Country Reports



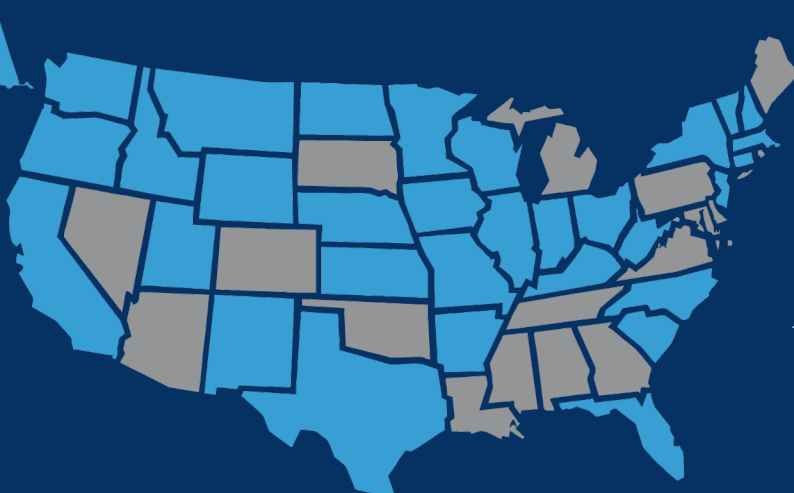
6,545

Companies Assisted Through  
Education & Research



149

Unique Companies Assisted  
Through RAISE Research



32

States Served



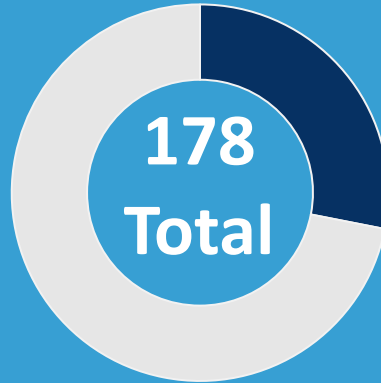
The RAISE Matrix has helped Tribal Tea Company identify markets across the world that we otherwise would not have been able to tap into. The Rural Export Center's research has created new opportunities for our business and will help guide our future export decision-making efforts. It has been exciting to learn about the top countries for Tribal Tea to partner with and how we can be part of those markets.

- Molly Roe, Account and Brand Manager, Tribal Tea Company,  
Winnebago, NE

## REC Research Reports

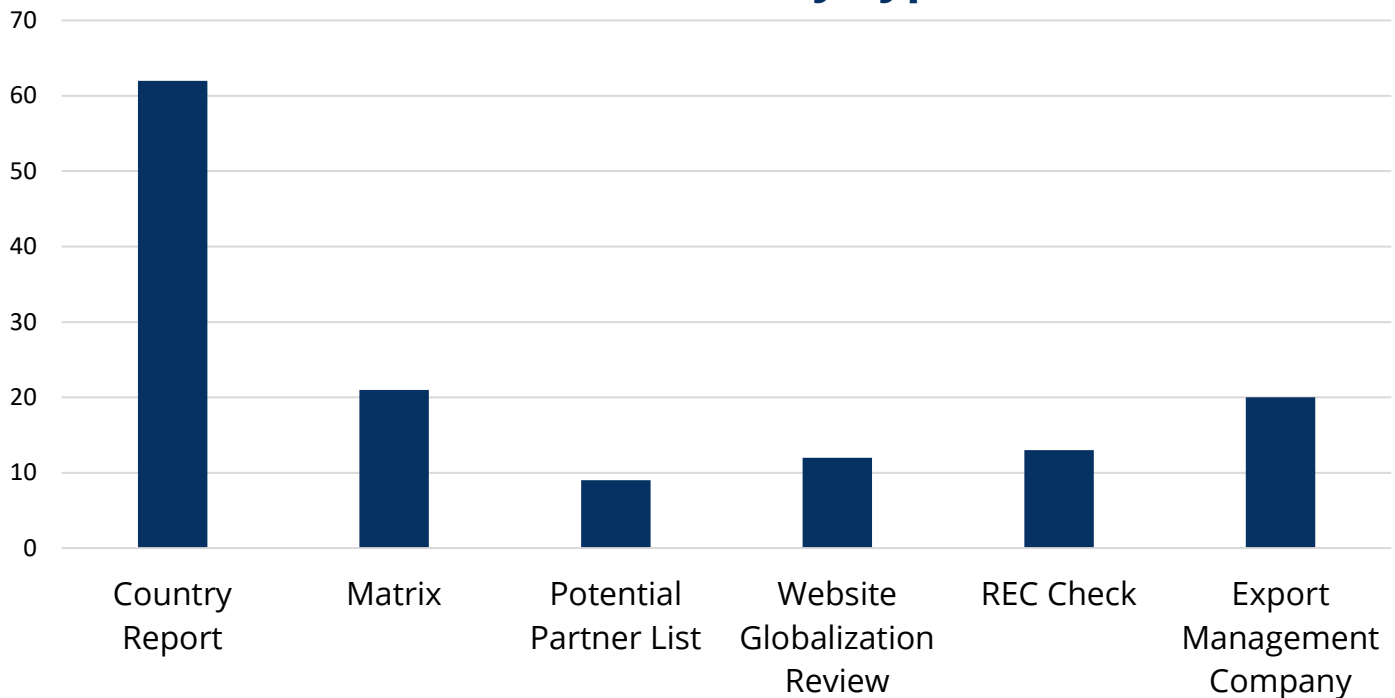


Completed  
128



In Progress  
50

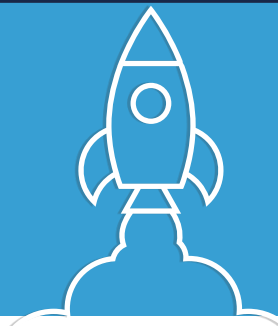
## REC Research by Type



## Launched 2 NEW Services

### REC Check

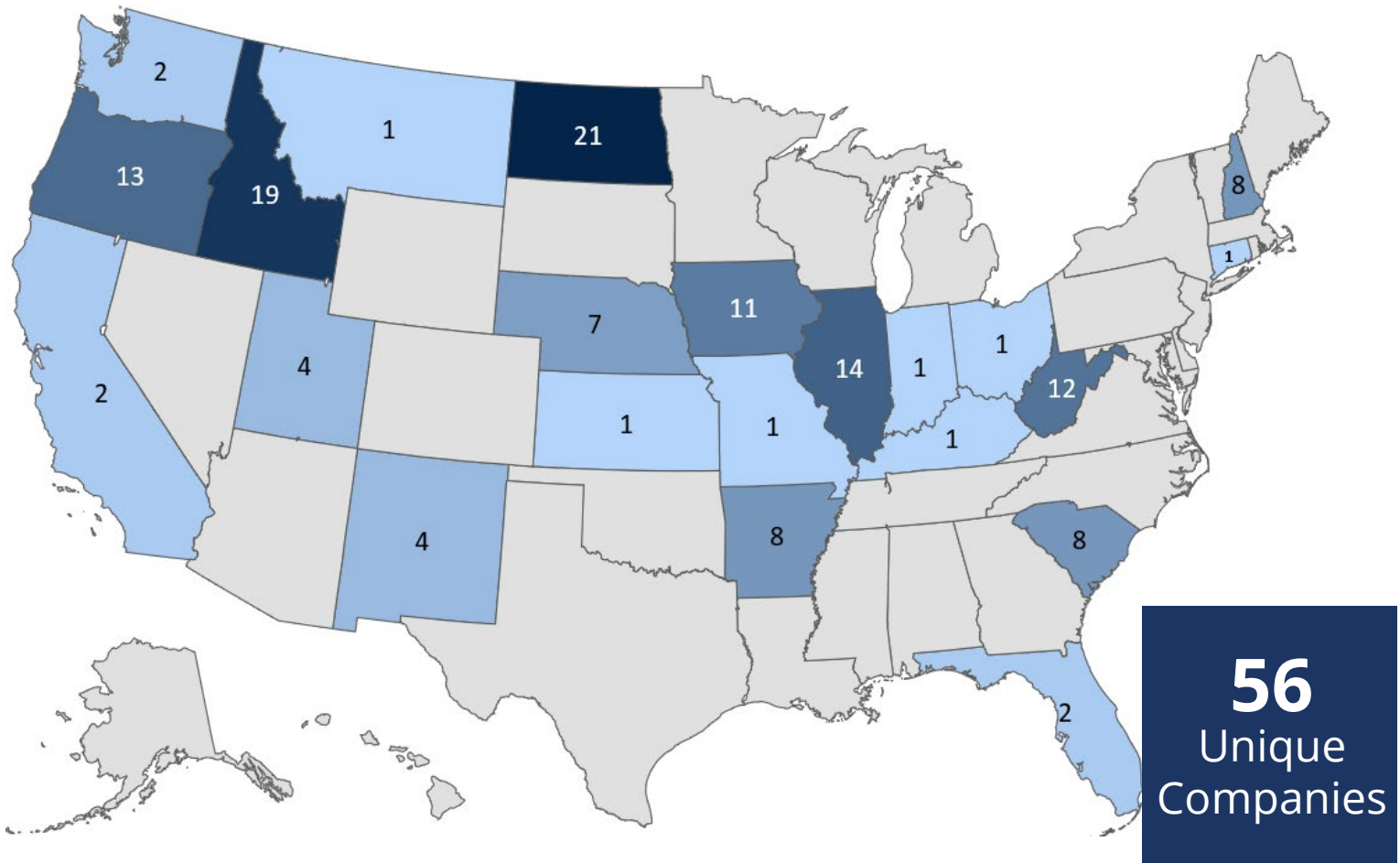
A quick background report on a potential partner to highlight any red flags or concerns.



### EMC Directory

A list of U.S. companies that can help develop overseas distribution channels for companies.

**142 Reports Ordered Across 22 States In FY 23**



## FY23 INDUSTRIES REPRESENTED

Aerospace  
Agribusiness  
Agricultural Equipment  
Apparel  
Beverages  
Building Products

Construction Equipment  
Consumer Goods  
Cosmetics  
Defense  
Education  
Electronics

Furniture  
Information and Communications Technology  
Machinery and Tools  
Oil and Gas  
Software

### Working with USCS Staff Around the World

**Polling** is a step between the Matrix and Country Report research where overseas U.S. Commercial Service (CS) offices share quick feedback about the market potential for the company. **Companies make better decisions** about exporting when pairing customized research with on-the-ground insights.



# 67

Number of Countries Polled



# 323

The Number of Times CS Offices  
Have Been Polled

### Top Countries Selected for Polling

Germany  
and the UK  
(tie)

France

Mexico

Australia

### How The REC Leverages Foreign Commercial Service (FCS) Offices



Pre-research feedback  
(Polling)



Background on potential  
partners for U.S. companies



Read-through of research  
reports

Increased integration means companies  
can easily progress to in-country action.



# 2

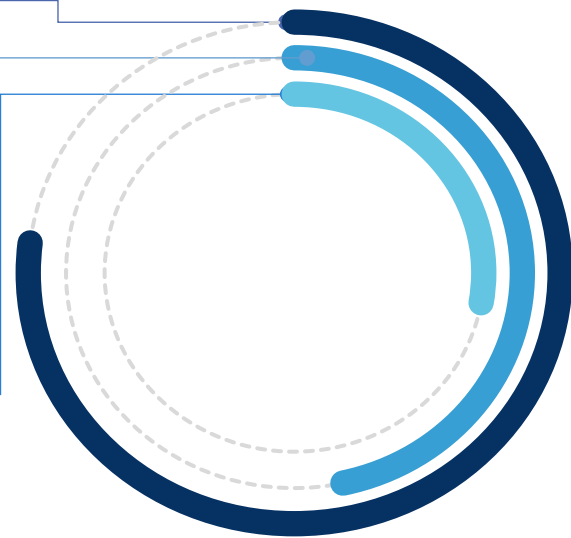
The Average Number of Additional  
CS Services After RAISE per Company



**72** REC REPORTS  
SUPPORTED BY STEP FUNDS<sup>1</sup>

**42** REC REPORTS  
SELF-FUNDED BY RURAL COMPANIES

**28** REC REPORTS  
\*FREE OF CHARGE



\*New services – REC Check and EMC Directory – were provided for free during their trial phase.

”

I have to say that this is the best research that I have ever seen regarding exporting our products. Your team did an excellent job explaining the Matrix and how you came to your recommendations. ASI will come back to have this updated in the future as this is the best tool for looking at future markets. This is the only tool that I have seen where you have clear, concise data along with explanations of the data and scores.

- Jonathan Szucs, President, Advanced Superabrasives, Inc.,  
Mars Hill, NC



Read more about our clients' success at  
[www.trade.gov/rural-successes](http://www.trade.gov/rural-successes)



<sup>1</sup>The Small Business Administration's State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) provides financial awards to state and territory governments to assist small businesses with export development.



# Rural Export Center

## CONNECT WITH THE REC



**Contact Us at**  
[Rural@trade.gov](mailto:Rural@trade.gov)



**Learn More About Us at**  
[Trade.gov/rural-export-center](https://Trade.gov/rural-export-center)



**Connect with Us at**  
[www.linkedin.com/company/rural-export-center/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/rural-export-center/)

”

If there is a shred of interest in exporting, trust that the team at the Rural Export Center will help provide you with the information needed to make the best decision for your company. I feel like we now have a true partner that's invested in our exporting success!

- Jennifer Lastra, Co-Founder & CEO, 360 Immersive,  
Boise, ID



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