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 MONTANA
 United States Senator Max Baucus

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Expanding Montana's Trade Opportunities
Bringing Montana's Producers to the World

Ninety-six percent of the world's consumers are outside the United States, and I've been working to introduce them to Montana's products. Over the past few years alone, I've led trade missions with Montanans to Thailand, New Zealand, Australia, China, India, and Cuba. I will keep leading these delegations, because each trip reveals new opportunities and new markets for Montana business and agriculture. Following a recent visit to Cuba, I helped Montana producers secure a \$7.8 million deal for Montana peas and lentils.

Bringing the World's Buyers to Montana

I also want the world's consumers and businesses to know about opportunities in Montana, which is why I've hosted foreign delegations in Big Sky country. I convinced this Administration to hold its formal trade negotiations with Thailand and Korea not in Washington, D.C., but in Montana. I've hosted several ambassadors' tours of Montana, and almost twenty ambassadors have seen all that Montana has to offer. This year, I welcomed a delegation of ambassadors from New Zealand, Peru, Colombia, Vietnam, and Morocco, introducing them to folks in Helena, Butte, Missoula and Kalispell. As a follow up to that trip, the Colombian Trade Minister is planning to bring a delegation of interested buyers to see Montana's world class products for themselves.

Meeting face-to-face with the world's political and economic leadership helps me make Montana priorities loud and clear. This is why I've built relationships with government leaders around the world - to help get things done for Montana. Before I supported a free trade agreement with Australia, I met one-on-one with Australian Prime Minister John Howard to strike the best deal for Montanans. I've made clear to Korea's leadership - from the President on down - that I will hold up the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement until their market is open to Montana beef.

Expanding Trade Adjustment Assistance

As Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, I'm also setting the nation's international trade agenda for today and years to come. My top priority is reforming and expanding Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), a program that helps Montana workers and farmers hurt by international trade. This year, I will fight to put a program in place that expands the number of workers eligible for TAA, doubles worker retraining funds, and makes health insurance more affordable.

Enforcing Trade Laws

I will also work to beef up enforcement of our trade laws with more resources and know how to make sure our trading partners live up to their obligations. This includes making sure our trading partners abide by international standards and accept our agriculture products, including Montana beef. It means keeping undervalued imports of softwood lumber from Canada from distorting our markets and threatening the livelihood of Montana's timber workers. It also means keeping countries like China from stealing our innovators' intellectual property, and keeping unsafe food and product imports off our store shelves.

Improving Free Trade Agreements For Workers

As Chairman of the Finance Committee, I will work to craft trade tools that open the markets the right way on a consensus basis. These tools -- including free trade agreements -- must be as innovative and up to date as our economy. They need to reflect a broad coalition of American interests and priorities, including American workers' priorities. Last year, I helped craft a breakthrough deal that required the United States and its pending FTA partners to implement the five core International Labor Organization standards. These labor obligations will be enforceable through the same dispute settlement mechanism that applies to all other trade agreement obligations.

Standing Up For Our Outdoor Heritage
Related Links

- ✶ [United States Trade Representative](#)
- ✶ [United States International Trade Commission](#)
- ✶ [World Trade Organization](#)
- ✶ [Montana World Trade Center](#)
- ✶ [USDA Foreign Agriculture Service](#)
- ✶ [U.S. Foreign Commercial Service](#)
- ✶ [U.S. Department of State](#)
- ✶ [International Trade Administration \(ITA\)](#)
- ✶ [SBA Office of International Trade](#)

Montana's exports top \$1 billion

By JOHN HARRINGTON - IR Business Editor - 04/19/07

For the second straight year — and the second time ever — the value of Montana's exports to foreign countries topped \$1 billion in 2006. A record \$1.3 billion in goods left Montana for foreign shores last year.

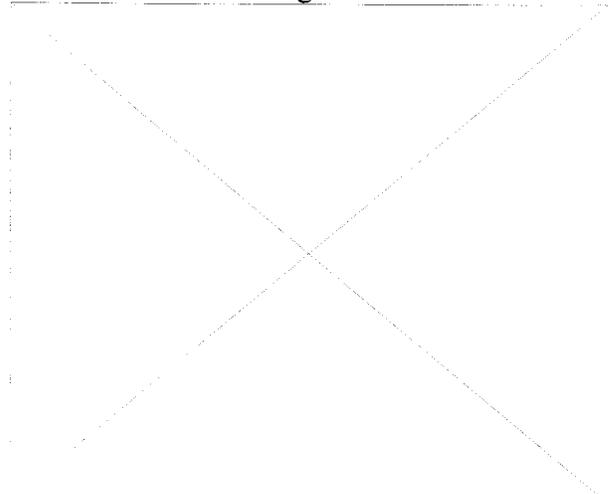
"In the last three-year period, the state has effectively doubled its exports," said Carey Hester, senior international trade officer in the Department of Commerce.

Hester attributed the gains to several factors, including a booming global economy, strong prices for base metals and other commodities and a weak U.S. dollar that means foreign currency buys more than it used to.

As the state's exports have risen, their composition has changed. In the late 1990s, when total exports ranged between \$600 and \$900 million annually, 60 percent of the total was non-manufactured exports (primarily wheat, cattle and other agricultural products along with minerals, oil and gas).

The remaining 40 percent consisted of manufactured exports, including chemicals, industrial machinery and primary metals.

Last year, that blend was nearly reversed, with close to 60 percent of exports coming from the manufacturing sector.



"In the long run, we're in a transitional phase where we have an economic structural change where manufactured (exports) will surpass non-manufactured, and that historically has not been the case," Hester said.

While manufactured goods led the way, wheat was the state's top single export in 2006, bringing in \$410 million.

Overall wheat production was up only slightly from 2005, but the price per bushel was up some 25 percent, resulting in the higher export figure.

Economists would say Montana's wheat growers are "price takers," meaning they must accept whatever the world market determines to be the price for wheat at a given time.

Several manufactured products had record years. Shipments of inorganic chemicals nearly doubled to \$192 million in exports and displaced industrial machinery as the state's top manufactured export. Vehicles and parts, mineral fuels and organic chemicals all soared as well.

Excluding wheat shipped through ports in the Pacific Northwest, Canada remained the state's top trading partner, taking in \$433.5 million in Montana products. The \$85 million in exports to Japan made it the state's No. 2 destination, with a 58 percent increase credited largely to shipments of silicon to the country.

Shipments to Pacific Rim countries accounted for a full half of Montana exports, while NAFTA partners Canada and Mexico made up nearly 37 percent.

Lingering weakness in U.S. currency is good for exporters, Hester said.

"If foreign currencies appreciate vis a vis the dollar, it in essence cheapens exports from the U.S. It makes them more affordable to foreign buyers, so yes, exchange rates play a significant role," he said.