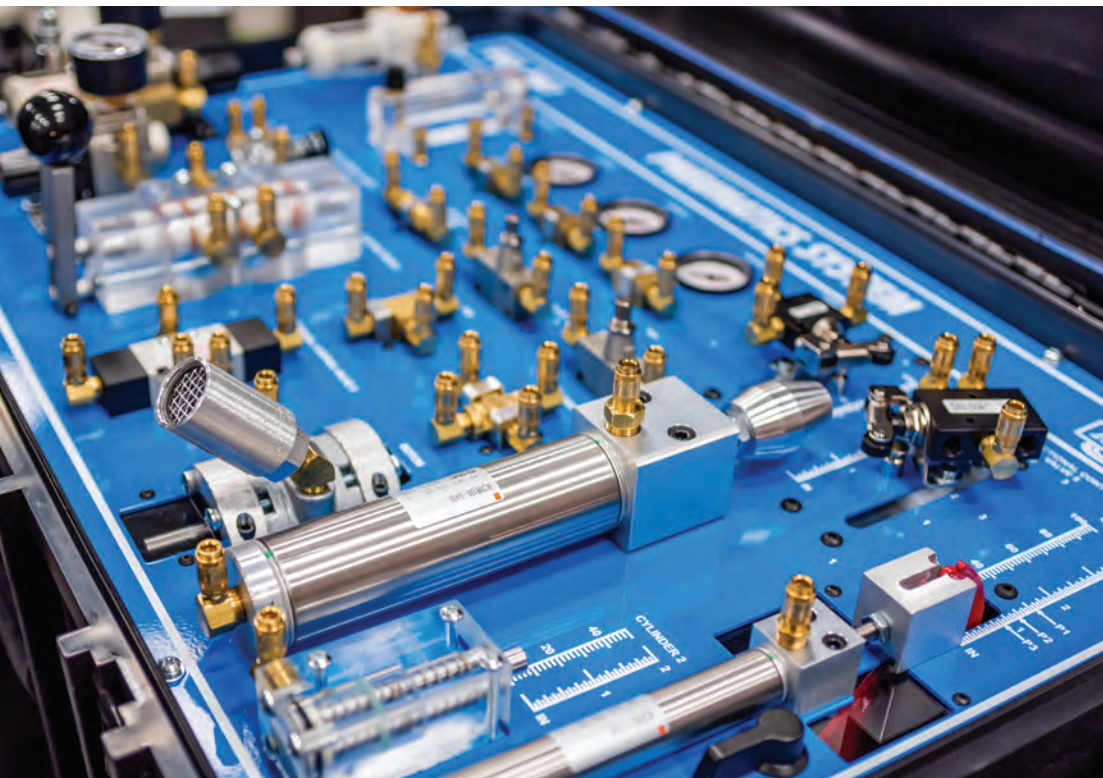




# CALIFORNIA CENTRAL VALLEY EXPORT PLAN







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FRESNO • KERN • KINGS • MADERA • MERCED  
SAN JOAQUIN • STANISLAUS • TULARE

A part of The Global Cities Initiative,  
a joint project of Brookings Institution and JPMorgan Chase

CALIFORNIA  
CENTRAL VALLEY  
EXPORT PLAN





## Introduction

International trade is responsible for approximately 13% of all economic activity in the United States. American cities that have been associated with economic hardship, loss of jobs, and widespread home foreclosures in the wake of the 2008 Recession—places like Detroit and Las Vegas—have seen several consecutive years of economic growth *attributable solely to export expansion*. A full 30% of the export activity driving U.S. economic growth is coming from the nation’s top 100 metros alone, and many of those are utilizing export plans like this one.

The California Central Valley Export Plan is the result of the research and planning collaboration between the U.S. Export Assistance Center, the Center of International Trade Development, the City of Fresno, the Fresno Chamber of Commerce, California State University Fresno, the Fresno County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) with the other seven county EDCs comprising the California Central Valley EDC (CCVEDC), and the San Joaquin Valley Regional Association of California Counties (SJVACC), with the extensive support of the Brookings Institution and JPMorgan Chase. Our region includes the eight inland counties of Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Tulare and two of California’s ten largest cities.

Already a stand-out with \$6 billion per year in export revenue from agricultural commodities, the Central Valley is poised to utilize the same export resources that have benefited the agribusiness sector to spur export growth in threshold industries like food processing, small machinery manufacturing, and freight and port services. We also see surprisingly strong trends in management consulting services and royalties for information technology, film, and music.

With the Strategies and Tactics described in this plan, supported by Key Findings from Valley-wide research and best practices exchanged with metros from across the United States and abroad, economic developers and business leaders throughout the Central Valley now have a blueprint for a proactive and hands-on concierge approach to export education and expansion in our region. Our strong history of collaboration between municipalities and economic development partners and with business and civic leadership is now our greatest asset in helping our industries grow globally and support the high-wage employment that will improve the standard of living in all our communities.

**Ashley Swearengen**  
Mayor  
City of Fresno

**Lee Ann Eager**  
President/CEO  
Fresno County EDC  
Also representing:  
CCVEDC & SJVACC

**Al Solis**  
Board Chair, Executive Committee  
Fresno Chamber of Commerce

**Antonio Avalos, PhD**  
Department of Economics Chairman  
Craig School of Business  
California State University, Fresno



A glowing yellow vertical bar is positioned on the right side of the page, set against a dark, industrial background with red and orange lighting. The bar is bright and appears to be part of a larger structure, possibly a machine or a pipe. The background shows various mechanical components and a textured surface.

## Export Development as a Critical Economic Strategy For Establishing Sustained and Competitive Growth

For the last decade, the fastest growing segment of the U.S. economy has been exports.

95% of all consumers live outside the United States, where 83% of all economic growth is occurring. American manufacturers engaged in exporting from 2005 to 2009 saw their revenues increase 37%, while their non-exporting competition saw a decrease in revenue of 7% over the same period. For exportable services, the revenue of companies that did business globally was 100% higher than companies that maintained only domestic clients. Capitalizing on the fact that 57% of GDP growth in U.S. metro regions stems from export, economic developers across the country have been able to introduce export as a viable way to sustain and even expand businesses in industries otherwise stagnant or in contraction in domestic markets.

Recognizing the crucial role export plays in the post-recession economy, the non-profit think tank Brookings Institution and global financial services firm JPMorgan Chase launched the Global Cities Initiative as a five-year collaborative project aimed at helping leaders strengthen the global competitiveness of their regional economies. The eight-county California Central Valley joined the initiative in 2015 to build on best practices and strategy innovations from around the U.S. and the world. This plan is the result of that groundbreaking collaboration.



## Export as a Tool for Job Creation and Retention

The U.S. government, like many others, has seen the effects of export growth on the national economy and on the creation of higher-paying jobs. Federal leaders have responded with strategies like the National Export Initiative (NEI) and NEI/NEXT. These programs improve data and assistance available to American companies moving into foreign markets, inform U.S. businesses of export opportunities, and enhance state and community efforts to orient their local economies to the global market. The U.S. International Trade Commission and the U.S. Trade Representative's sustained effort in negotiating beneficial trade agreements, like the Trans Pacific Partnership, to eliminate trade barriers is an illustration of how critical a sector exports are to the national economy.

### HERE ARE SOME REASONS WHY

- \$1 billion in exports supports 5,590 domestic jobs.
- 1 new job in a “tradeable” or export sector business supports 3 more jobs elsewhere in the supply chain.
- In 2013, U.S. exports of \$1.4 trillion in goods and services were responsible for an estimated 11.3 million American jobs.
- In 2014, the 8-county California Central Valley exported more than \$18 billion in goods and services, enough to support approximately 100,000 domestic jobs.
- U.S. exporters are able to achieve 100% higher sales, maintain 70% greater employment, and pay 20% higher wages than their non-exporting competition.
- The limited number of metro regions engaged in the implementation of export plans account for 30% of job, production, and export growth in the U.S.
- Estimates suggest as much as 70% of the world's disposable income resides outside the United States.
- 97% of the 250,000 U.S. companies engaged in export are small and medium-sized businesses which are also the enterprises providing most of the jobs in the nation.



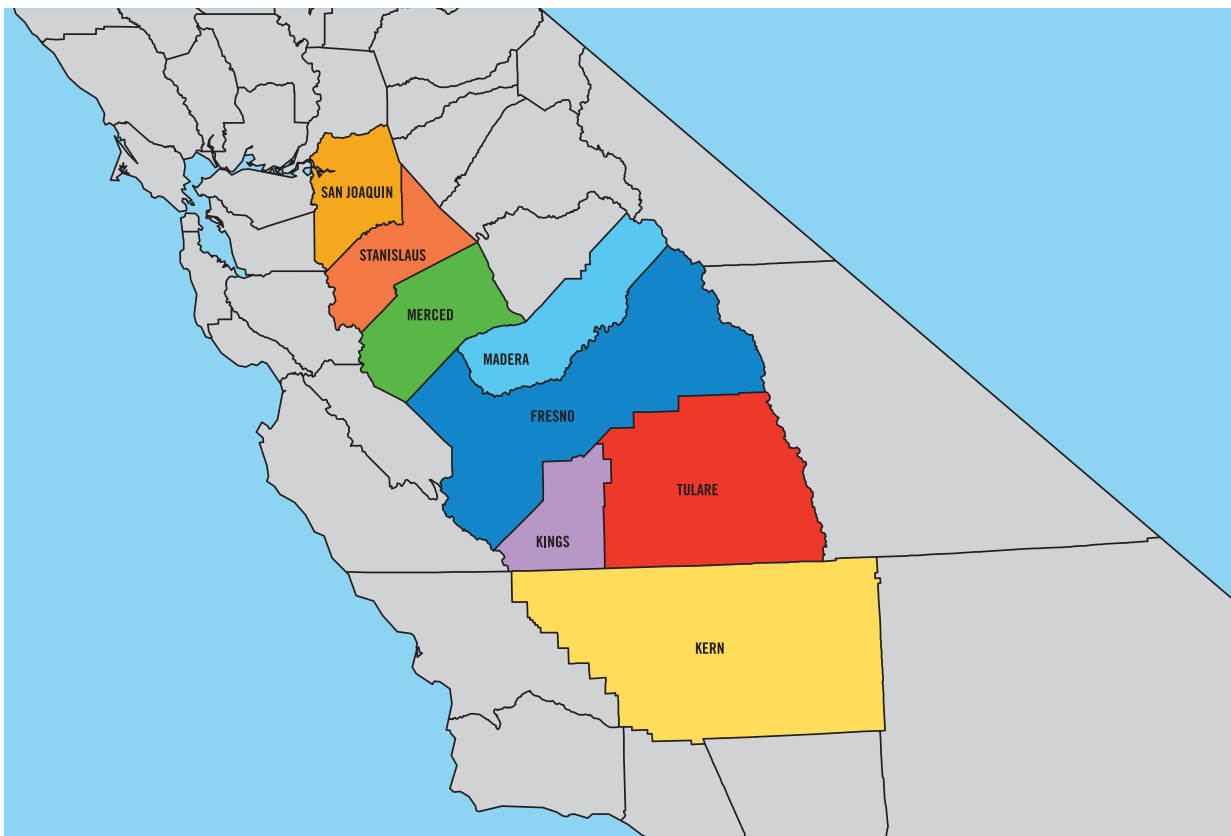
## Export as an Economic Development Strategy for the California Central Valley

California's Central Valley region is comprised of eight counties: Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Tulare. Together these counties include almost 27,500 square miles of inland California, from Stockton in the north to Bakersfield in the south, and more than four million people, or roughly ten percent of the state's population as of 2014. Taken on its own, the region would qualify as the country's 25th largest state by population and rank as the 25th largest exporting community, tied with Phoenix, Az.

The Central Valley, despite being home to the state's fifth and ninth largest cities (Fresno and Bakersfield, respectively), is predominantly rural and agricultural in character. Several of its counties vie with one another

each year for the number one agricultural county in the nation, producing almost \$40 billion regionally in annual agriculture commodities.

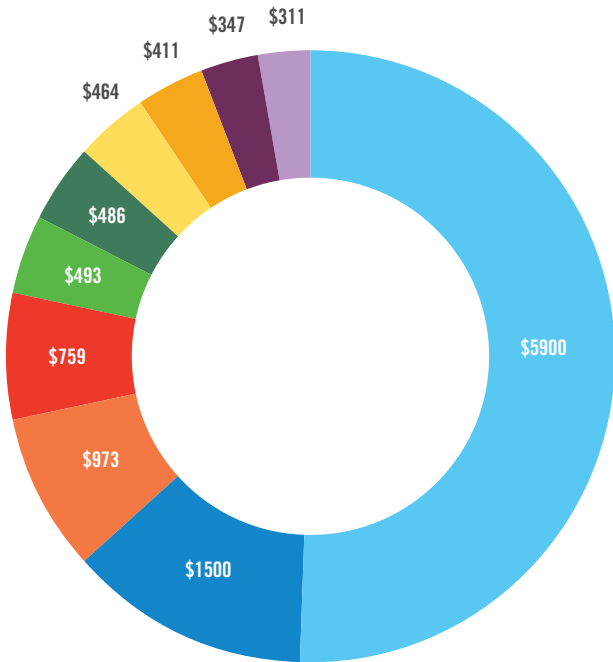
Early data provided by the Brookings Institution confirmed that Central Valley agribusiness, as a whole, is actively and profitably engaged in export, generating \$6 billion in revenue in 2014. This single industry was responsible for 32% of all export revenue in the region. No other industry in the Central Valley has achieved that level of global competitiveness. Brookings data for 2014 indicated that the next most profitable export industry for the region, forestry and fishing, brought in \$1.46 billion or only 25% as much revenue as agriculture, and other industries declined from there. Excepting the manufacture of petroleum



# Leading Export Industries in the Central Valley

(by 2014 export revenue in \$ millions)

- Agricultural Produce
- Forestry & Fishing
- Petroleum Products
- Oil & Gas Extraction
- Meat & Poultry
- Frozen & Canned Foods
- Freight & Port Services
- Dairy Foods
- Aircraft Parts & Products
- Travel & Tourism: Snacks, Coffee, Condiments



products (\$972 million) and oil and gas extraction (\$759 million) that are heavily concentrated in the county of Kern, the next largest region-wide export was meat & poultry with revenue of \$493 million. The manufacture of frozen and canned foods and the provision of freight and port services rounded out the top five Valley-wide export industries with \$486 million and \$464 million respectively.

Why focus on exports for economic development? If the lag of export activity within the region's non-agricultural growth industries can be addressed, so can Central California's high level of unemployment and low per capita income. The task of economic developers then is to understand the obstacles to export among local businesses and develop a plan to overcome those challenges.

Surveys from 228 local companies and interviews with 27 business leaders across 11 key industries seem to support the supposition that the agriculture industry's longstanding familiarity with and use of export resources and assistance has led to its success, while other industries have lagged in making use of those same resources. Noting that 80% of research respondents indicated that at least half of their operational costs took place within the Central Valley, export expansion provides the opportunity to benefit not just exporters but also their locally owned and operated suppliers.



## The California Central Valley: A Current Export Assessment

Compared nationwide with regions of similar size and characteristics, the intensity of the Central Valley's export activity is "middle of the pack," neither exceeding nor falling behind its peers. While local agricultural commodities have made inroads and generated interest in our region's products all over the world, other industries that seem poised to break out into the global market do very little exporting, citing a number of erroneous assumptions for their lack of an international business plan and active export engagement.

Those businesses that have a product and infrastructure ready for export or have dabbled in exporting but have yet to maximize their activity are considered "threshold exporters." Engaging this group is the particular focus of the California Central Valley export plan. They represent the greatest opportunity for export growth and the most efficient use of export development resources during the early stages of plan implementation.

The aforementioned surveys and interviews with Central Valley businesses were conducted over several months in mid-2015. Interviewees included non-exporters, threshold exporters, and seasoned exporters with a decade or more of experience to draw upon. The following Key Findings from those research results have guided the project's Core Team in selecting a focus and several primary strategies for the development of this export plan.

### KEY FINDING

#### **Central Valley Threshold Exporters Don't Know About the Existing Export Assistance Available to Them**

Despite the availability of extensive export assistance through local offices like the Fresno Export Assistance Center and the Center for International Trade Development (CITD), almost 60% of respondents reported having made no use of government and non-profit assistance to begin or develop their export activities. None had used these resources to obtain export financing. Tellingly, the assistance that businesses most commonly indicated they wished could be made available to them—Gold Key business matchmaking with vetted foreign partners—is already widely provided by the United States Commercial Service via the Fresno Export Assistance Center.

### KEY FINDING

#### **These Threshold Exporters are Reluctant to Export Without Trusted Foreign Contacts Already Established**

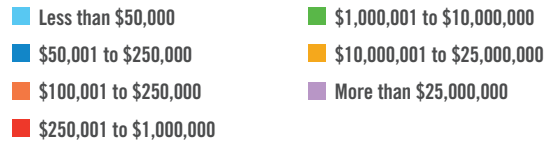
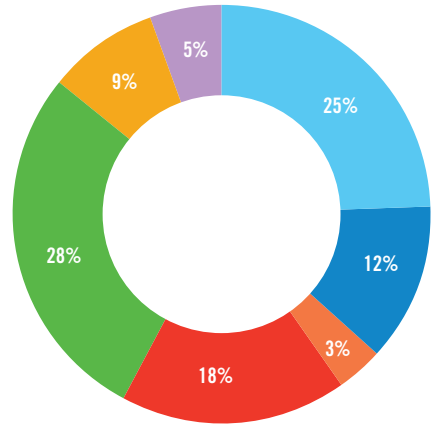
Central Valley companies share the same concerns familiar among all exporters that a foreign business partner or distributor will prove unreliable or fraudulent, hence the interest in gaining introductions to pre-vetted trade partners. In choosing which regions to enter via export, 80% of Valley companies made that decision based not on "best-fit" market considerations but on the existence of pre-existing partnerships.

**KEY FINDING**

**Central Valley Businesses are Largely Unaware of the Economic Potential of Exporting or the Economic Growth That Export Already Represents**

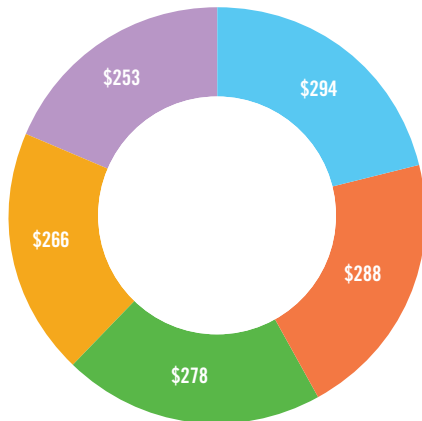
Many Valley companies, unaware of or despite economic indicators stressing the importance of global market share, are not looking at exporting at all. One-quarter of respondents had no plans to move beyond the domestic market. Some, unaware of the rise of the global middle class consumer, think there is no foreign market for their products while their direct local competition establishes themselves profitably in South America or Asia. Even among Central Valley companies that do export, one-third do so on only a very small scale, deriving less than 5% of their overall revenue from foreign markets.

**Annual Export Revenue for Survey Respondents**

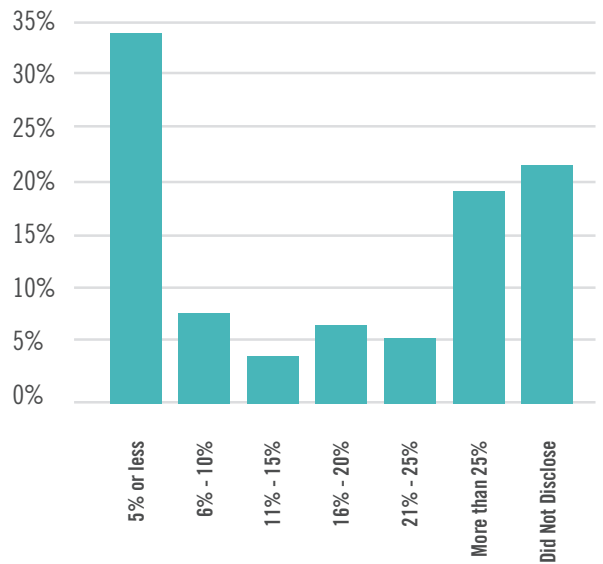


**Additional Valley Industries with Export Growth Opportunities**

(by 2014 export revenue in \$ millions)



**Export as Percent of Total Company Revenue for Central Valley Exporters**





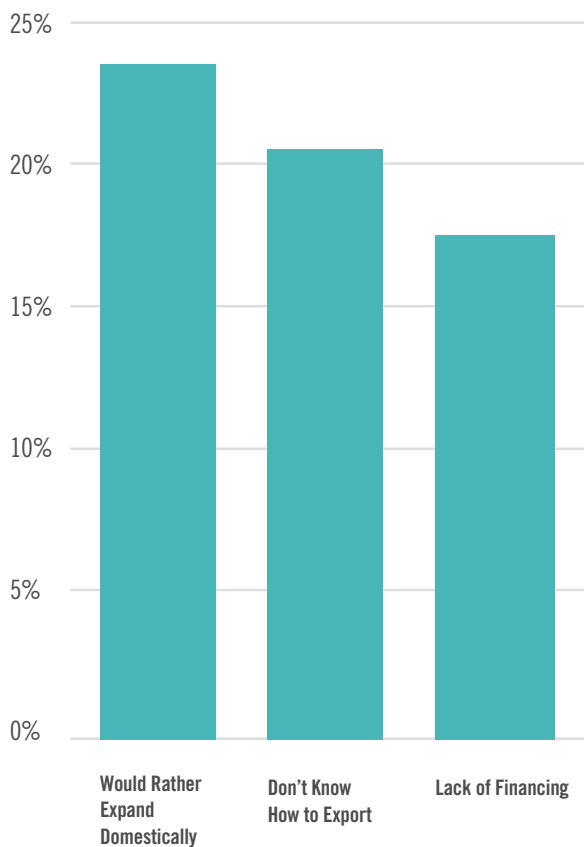


**KEY FINDING**

**Export Financing Assistance Available to Businesses in the Region is Underutilized, While Central Valley Businesses are Under the Impression There is no Such Assistance**

The Western United States Agricultural Trade Association (WUSATA), which works with agricultural product producers but also with related products, reports unused funding year upon year that companies in the western region of the U.S. could be using to develop their presence in foreign markets as a dollar-for-dollar match for eligible activities. The State Trade and Export Promotion (STEP) Program pilot export initiative makes match-funding available to small businesses, with the average award to a business being \$435,000 for the fourth round of funding in FY 2015. Yet Central Valley companies cited lack of export and/or capital financing as a challenge to exporting. Among respondents, 17% cited lack of available export financing as the key reason their companies did not export. This finding correlates with the local bank branches' lack of export knowledge. Notably, there is a knowledge gap regarding the credit insurance program provided by the Export Import Bank of the U.S., which provides a 95% government guarantee on open account and foreign receivables.

**Top Reasons Central Valley Companies Do Not Export**



**KEY FINDING**

**Most Local Exporters Enter the Global Marketplace Reactively, Even Haphazardly, Rather Than Proactively**

Research respondents rarely included export implementation in their businesses plans. Central Valley businesses commonly indicated they thought they were too small to export when they actually began to ship to foreign markets and that they had entered the export market only after being approached by a prospective foreign partner or distributor. At the time, the local businesses did not already have market studies or data to guide their decisions. For almost a quarter of local exporters, contact from a foreign partner with an export or distribution proposal or a request for a private label manufacturing run was the main reason they began exporting, not because market analysis indicated that region was the best choice for their product.

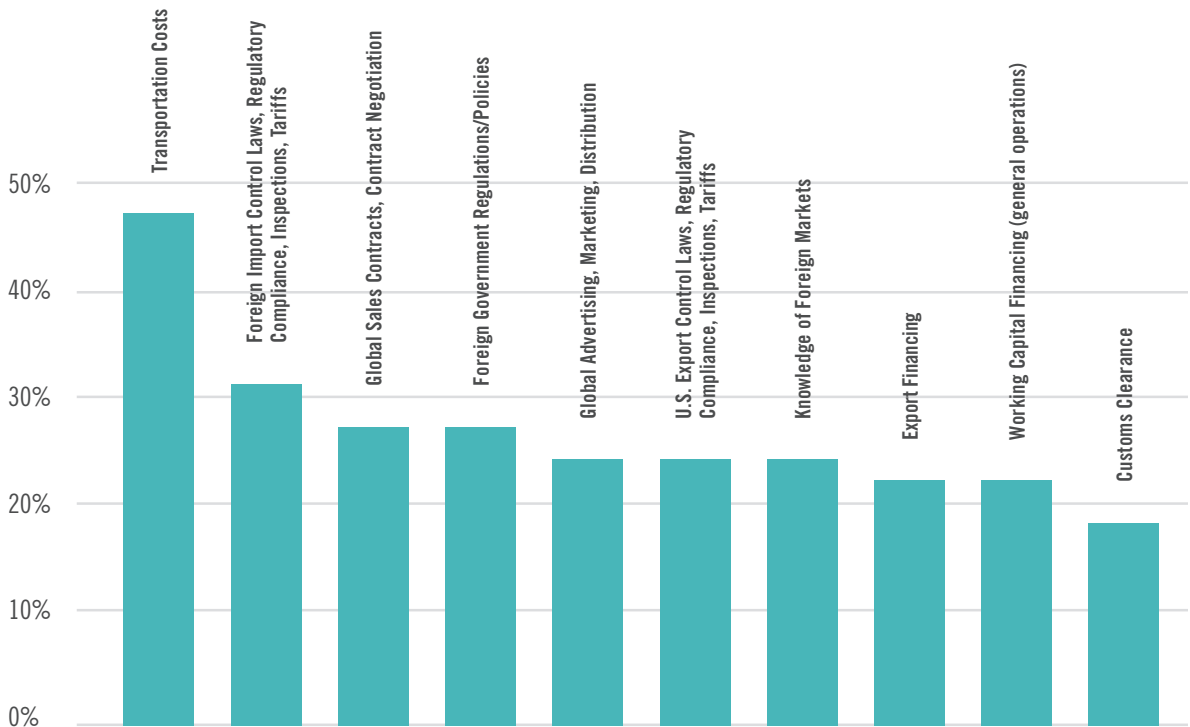
**KEY FINDING**

**The Confusion of Dealing With Foreign Regulations, Cultures, and Differences in Marketing Deters Central Valley Businesses From Starting or Further Developing Their Export Activities**

The difficulties of foreign contracts, global marketing and distribution, and knowledge of foreign markets were all among the five most common challenges listed by respondents. Interviewees expressed concerns about making costly mistakes in labeling and marketing in foreign countries, and some described the false starts and wasted investment of trying to enter an inappropriate market for their product due to a lack of understanding the foreign customer base there.

**Five Most Significant Challenges Reported by Current Central Valley Exporters**

(respondents chose up to five)







Together, these findings capture an image of a business culture in the Central Valley that is hesitant to expand globally because it is largely unaware of the economic potential of exporting and of the resources available to guide local companies into appropriate foreign markets while easing the cost of exporting. This hesitancy is the key consideration for the Core Team in developing this export plan as a tool specifically for the implementation of

**a proactive, hands-on export concierge service for Central Valley business.**





## Central Valley Export: The Threshold of Greatness

While the tools and educational initiatives conceived within this plan can and should be applied to a wide spectrum of businesses in various stages of export development, *the target audience is “the threshold exporter,”* the established and stable business that is ready to export for the first time or ready to transition from small-scale export to concerted, targeted export expansion.

### Export Plan Goal

*Actively engage Central Valley threshold exporters in proactive international business planning and exporting.*

For assessing whether a company might be considered a threshold exporter, the Core Team will develop a basic set of criteria such as those identified by the Export Import Bank of the United States (Ex-Im Bank), the U.S. Commercial Service, and the Center for International Trade Development as common to successful export starts and expansions.

To accomplish this goal, the Core Team sought to define objectives that were measurable within a defined period of time while recognizing that the findings of previous metros involved in the Global Cities Initiative had been that successes built over time rather than transforming the economic landscape instantly.

#### Objectives

- Increase number of threshold exporters receiving export assistance by 25% in five years
- Increase number of threshold exporters receiving export education by 25% in five years
- Double the number of referrals for Gold Key services in five years
- Enhance exports with five currently exporting threshold exporters per year



## A Strategy for Export Expansion: The Concierge Approach

The greatest challenge in export development in the Central Valley has not been developing resources and assistance for potential exporters. Extensive resources already exist. What is required to change the tentative export culture among the businesses of the Central Valley to a more proactive and engaged international trade effort is a more proactive and engaged program of export education and assistance.

For our particular region, the passive approach of putting up websites with links to resources has not resulted in businesses reaching out for that assistance. This plan is about boots on the ground with the region's economic developers, elected officials, and business leaders taking the message directly to our threshold exporters and walking them through the steps that will establish their international business model and initial partnerships.

### STRATEGY 1

#### **Make Central Valley Export Education More Targeted, Hands-On, and Comprehensive to Overcome the Complacency, Confusion, & Misconceptions of Threshold Exporters**

##### **Tactics**

- 1 Assess current Valley-wide export resources to include all existing services and identify possible gaps and potential enhancements to current programs and assistance.
- 2 Develop an export resource app and introduce it to users at export and economic development training and events.
- 3 Engage professional consultation services to achieve search engine optimization (SEO) for existing online export resources as well as the planned export resources application.
- 4 Launch a quarterly export university for cohorts of ten (10) threshold exporters each to be conducted in cooperation between the United States Commercial Service, Central Valley chambers of commerce, Center for International Trade (Fresno & Merced), California

Manufacturers Technology Center's (CMTC) Export Tech University (a C level engaged export training program), economic development corporations (EDCs), and partners specializing in international business such as universities, financial institutions, and export service providers. The course will culminate in each participating business developing their own export business plan.

- 5 Approach Central Valley university and college leadership, particularly business schools, about the need to strengthen curricula dealing with international trade topics and exporting in particular.
- 6 Support the continued involvement of the U.S. Commercial Service's Fresno Export Assistance Center staff with International Business programs at California State Universities in Fresno, Bakersfield, and Stanislaus and at Fresno Pacific University. Propose the reintroduction of the previously successful international business internship program that placed students with local companies to help those businesses begin to export. Promote the expansion of such programs to higher educational institutions throughout the Central Valley.

## STRATEGY 2

### Engage Central Valley Economic Development Organizations (EDOs) to Integrate Export Education and Referral Generation Into Their Standard Attraction, Expansion, and Retention Programs

#### Tactics

- 1 Enlist economic development partners to help compile and promote the regional export resource app to every business they touch in the course of their activities.
- 2 Develop an economic developer's crash course in California Central Valley export development to be offered online annually, with follow-up webinars on specific export topics to be offered on a monthly basis.
- 3 Hold three (3) annual export partner services showcases—one in the South, Central, & North regions of the Central Valley—in cooperation with the member organizations of the California Central Valley Economic Development Corporation (CCVEDC), chambers of commerce, cities, and export services providers.
- 4 Annually, select one or more international trade shows that the CCVEDC and/or the U.S. Commercial Service is scheduled to attend and prepare three (3) companies from each export university cohort taking place that year to accompany the EDO's to at least one event. Provide hands-on guidance in developing the businesses' export message and marketing materials and in making prearranged Gold Key contacts at that trade event.

## STRATEGY 3

### Partner With Local Media to Provide and Highlight Export Success Stories With the Aim of Changing the Passive Export Culture of the Central Valley

#### Tactics

- 1 Approach local television stations with existing "made local" campaigns to highlight California Central Valley companies that are standing up as export champions in one export success feature per month.
- 2 Partner with a regional business publication for a monthly feature on the implementation of the Central Valley Export Plan.
- 3 Secure commitments from EDC's and chambers of commerce throughout the California Central Valley to incorporate an export plan implementation update in their newsletters, to create a consistent and persistent message of export advocacy and growth.







#### STRATEGY 4

**Take a More Proactive, Hands-On Approach to Business Matchmaking to Address Inexperience, “Business as Usual” Complacency, and Lack of Foreign Cultural Knowledge Among Threshold Exporters. Utilize International Enterprise Networks to Facilitate Targeted Foreign Outreach and Leverage Foreign Nation ED Funding Available for the Purpose of Encouraging International Partnerships**

##### Tactics

- 1 Organize visits from foreign delegations to local trade shows (CITD and USCS events, the Fresno Food Expo, World Ag Show) to introduce them to Central Valley threshold exporters.
- 2 Organize assisted trade missions to a specific, targeted country for four (4) export university companies twice per year.
- 3 Step the more tentative threshold exporters through a process of graduating from major US trade shows to foreign shows, either by assisting them with domestic and international event selection and possible financing referrals or by attending those trade shows with the threshold exporters and providing them assistance prior to and during the event.

#### STRATEGY 5

**Incorporate Export Financing Education and Referrals Into the Economic Development Process**

##### Tactics

- 1 Include a section on current export financing resources in the export resource app, updated annually.
- 2 Enlist financing agencies and partners to speak at export university sessions.
- 3 Include export financing panels at economic development workshops both for businesses seeking capital and operational financing education and for economic developers as part of their continuing education.
- 4 Enlist Central Valley EDCs to make export financing referrals a standard practice when performing operational analyses of threshold exporters.
- 5 Seek funding for a 5-year market development program to reimburse local exporters for a portion of certain qualifying costs (i.e., trade show travel and hotel expenses, shipping of trade show samples, advertising) of entering a market where their company previously had no export activity. This tactic is intended to assist the export market development of non-agriculture industries in a manner similar to the assistance provided to the agriculture industry by WUSATA.

## A Pilot Project for the Central Valley's Emerging Technology Sector

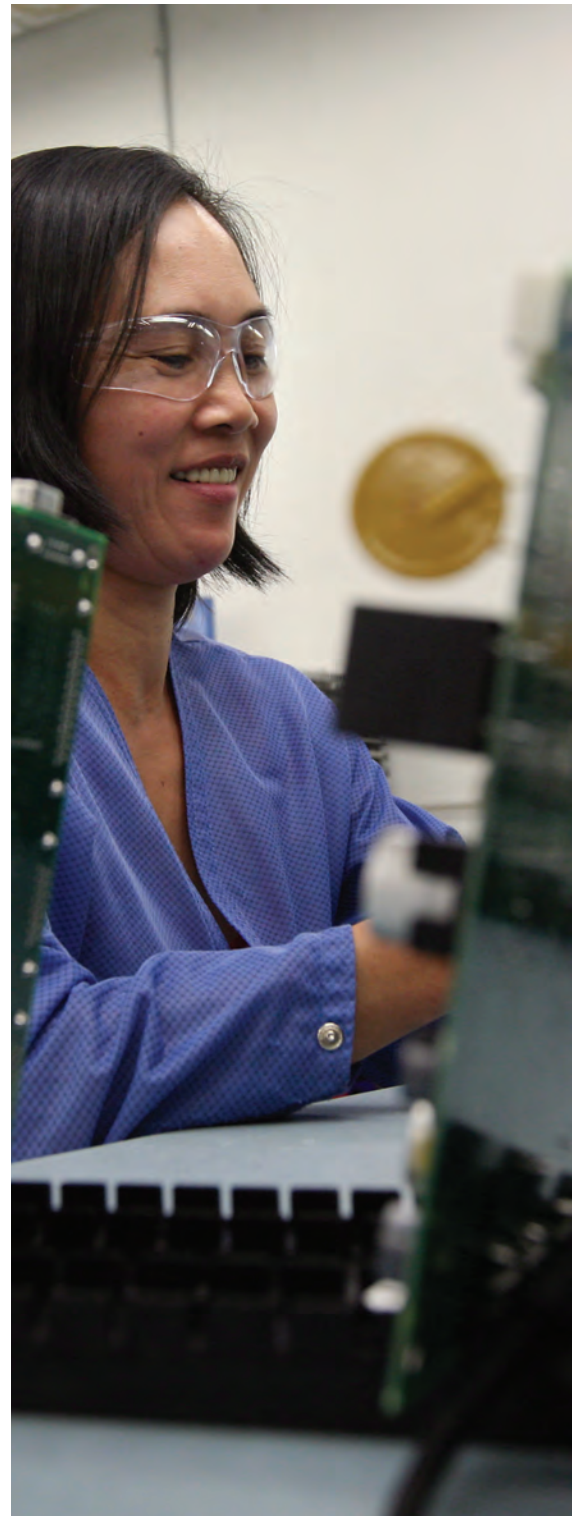
The development of new technology hubs and education venues in the California Central Valley, positioning the region as an affordable alternative to Silicon Valley and to outsourcing tech services to other countries, has received nationwide attention. The purpose of the next strategy is to act as a pilot project to apply the strategies already outlined for threshold exporters in general directly to the technology industry, which has been identified in market research as a growth sector in California. The results of this effort will be assessed annually to determine their success, return on investment (ROI), and the value of continuing or expanding the concentration on the technology sector.

### STRATEGY 6

#### Actively Educate and Engage the Burgeoning Technology Services Industry in the Central Valley in Export Expansion.

##### Tactics

- 1 Enlist Central Valley EDO's to assess their local threshold exporters of technology services and determine the current strongest export markets.
- 2 Develop partnerships with international information networks, like the Enterprise Europe Network, to foster international technology partnerships and innovation. Analyze results for possible adaptation to other industries.
- 3 Address previously listed Strategies specifically to tech services threshold exporters by each year gearing at least one (1) export university cohort toward them and selecting at least one (1) company from this industry to participate in trade show or trade mission activities.





## Export Policy

Among research respondents, export issues that fall within the spheres of state and federal influence and control were a focus of significant concern. These issues included export control laws, regulatory compliance, and customs clearance. The perception of onerous export regulations can deter a business from thoroughly investigating their options and opportunities even if abundant assistance is available to navigate these challenges.

*The 2015 appointment of CCVEDC Chair and Fresno County EDC President Lee Ann Eager to the California International Trade and Investment Advisory Council established by Governor Jerry Brown marks the first time the Central Valley has had a voice in helping to develop the state's trade policies and priorities. Our region's ability to make its concerns heard has never been greater.*

This plan includes the following strategy specifically to address export advocacy from the perspective of Central Valley businesses and their concerns.



## STRATEGY 7

### **Engage Central Valley Business Leaders and Business Associations Such as the Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development Corporations, to Advocate for Strong Export Incentives at the Local, State, and Federal Levels of Government.**

#### Tactics

- 1 Prepare a comprehensive policy memo that supports export incentives with specificity. Key elements of this document will include identified policy solutions on: distribution channels (ports, rail), free trade agreements (customs clearance, tariffs, barriers to market entry), intellectual property protection, work visas, and export financing services.
- 2 Work with politically active organizations to include export policy reform as a part of their overall policy platform.
- 3 Identify key partners to attend local legislative trips to Sacramento and Washington, DC with export policy as a key topic for discussion with the appropriate government departments.
- 4 Work with local cities to include export support for threshold companies as a priority in their respective business/economic development departments.
- 5 Present the policy memo for adoption to the San Joaquin Valley Consortium of Central California Counties at their annual meeting.
- 6 Seek funding to make legislative trips with a singular focus on export support.
- 7 Develop a foreign direct investment strategy for the region.

## Export Champions

The shared experience of the various metro regions within the Global Cities Exchange, the network of peer organizations that have participated in the GCI over its five-year mission, confirms that the greatest boon to export success are the business leaders who are already actively engaged in international trade and are willing to stand as examples and champions to the cause of export development and expansion. California Central Valley Export Leaders Include...



### **GLEN ROBERTS**

*Bakersfield & Fresno U.S. Commercial Service's Export Assistance Centers, Director*

Despite immense ongoing success in providing businesses with international trade assistance, Glen Roberts and the U.S. Commercial Service of the U.S. Department of Commerce are the best kept secrets in export development in the Central Valley. As the Director of the Bakersfield & Fresno U.S. Export Assistance Centers, Glen Roberts brings more than twenty-five years of experience to bear when leading trade missions, making those much sought-after Gold Key B2B introductions, and utilizing an information and resource network that includes 165 offices in 82 countries. The Centers' most recent results find a \$1-to-\$200 return on investment for business clients engaging the assistance of Glen and his team of International Trade Specialists.

Getting the word out about this assistance and about the economic value of export development were the goals when Glen Roberts joined the Core Team that helped research and develop this export plan. Glen's willingness to go the extra mile and help Central Valley economic developers take this message on the road to businesses throughout the eight-county area makes him a valuable partner and a true export champion.



### **PETER DEYOUNG**

*Ag Marketing Worldwide, President*

Peter DeYoung is a well-known and respected authority in the area of marketing agricultural products around the world. With more than 30 years of experience as a brand manager, marketing and public relations professional, Mr. DeYoung is also an experienced culinary professional and television producer with numerous awards to his name. He established Ag Marketing Worldwide (AMW), in addition to another full-service advertising and public relations firm he has owned and managed for 18 years. Ag Marketing Worldwide represents agricultural commodity boards and private branded food products around the globe. AMW maintains the experience and relationships to assist these groups, delivering a wide range of services, including brand management, new product introduction, inbound and outbound market tours, culinary and foodservice education, as well as new product development with the foodservice sector among other services. AMW is headquartered in Central California.



### **WALT PLACHTA**

*CEI Engineering Associates, Inc, Branch Manager*

A native of Michigan, Walt Plachta has lived and done business in Fresno County for 30+ years. He assumed the chairmanship of the Fresno County Economic Development Corporation Executive Board in 2015. Walt is both an experienced professional geologist and manager of the Fresno office of CEI Engineering Associates, an award-winning national multi-service engineering company. Active in several professional organizations locally and statewide, such as the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) and the American Public Works Association (APWA), Mr. Plachta is committed to excellence and leadership—in the engineering industry and in the economic development and prosperity of the community he has adopted as his home.



## Plan Implementation

The California Central Valley Economic Development Corporation (CCVEDC), made up of the EDC's of all eight counties in the region, will act as the administrative body for managing the multi-agency activities and any pass-through funding for plan implementation. In serving this function, the CCVEDC will:

- Align important regional export planning to the goals, objectives, and strategies of this plan.
- Provide strategy and policy recommendations to strengthen plan updates, implementation schedules, and scopes of work.
- Act as the central point of contact for distributing information on the organization of Central Valley export university cohorts, media outreach, export education events, and trade missions related to the plan.
- Promote the plan during events and outreach activities organized or attended by the CCVEDC to help generate public and financial support, including distributing promotional materials related to plan activities.
- Distribute plan progress updates at meetings of the CCVEDC board and the Steering Committee for plan implementation.

The “boots on the ground” for this proactive implementation plan are intended to be those of every economic development organization, chamber of commerce, university, and elected official within the Central Valley. It is envisioned that these critical economic developers will work directly with the CCVEDC as plan administrator to organize export university cohorts, export education showcases, and guided trade missions aligned with the Strategies of this plan in cooperation with peer organizations and work with the administrator to seek funding and technical support for their work under the umbrella of this plan.

The Core Team will convene quarterly to draft, update, and refine an annual scope of work for plan implementation and bi-annually to review program metrics provided by the plan administrator. CCVEDC will also report progress on program outcomes to the Steering Committee.



## PLAN DEVELOPMENT

### *Core Team*

California State University, Fresno  
City of Fresno  
Fresno Chamber of Commerce  
Fresno County Economic Development  
Corporation/California Central Valley EDC  
U.S. Commercial Service –  
U.S. Export Assistance Center

With the support and assistance of: The San Joaquin Valley  
Regional Association of California Counties and the Center  
for International Trade Development

### *Steering Committee*

Allied Grape Growers  
California Blueberry Commission  
California Central Valley Economic Development Corporation  
California Department of Food and Agriculture  
County of Fresno Board of Supervisors  
Dairy America  
Fowler Packing  
Fresno Chamber of Commerce  
Geekwise Academy  
National Raisin  
Nichol's Farms  
State Center Community College District  
The Office of Congressman Devin Nunez  
The Office of Congressman David G. Valadao  
The Office of Congressman Jim Costa  
Wawona Frozen Foods  
Weir Floway  
West Side Trading Company

## PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

### *Core Team*

California State University, Fresno  
Center for International Trade Development  
Fresno Chamber of Commerce  
Fresno County Economic Development Corporation/CCVEDC  
JPMorgan Chase  
U.S. Commercial Service – U.S. Export Assistance Center

### *Steering Committee*

Ag Marketing Worldwide  
Amani International  
California Commodities Exchange  
California Department of Food and Agriculture  
California State University, Fresno – Craig School of Business,  
Ag EMBA Graduate Program  
CEI Engineering Associates, Inc.  
City of Fresno  
Dairy America  
Fresno Area Hispanic Foundation  
Geekwise Academy  
Innomine Group  
Jeffrey Scott Agency  
JPMorgan Chase  
San Joaquin Valley Regional Association of California Counties  
Snowflake Designs  
Southeast Fresno Community Economic Development Association  
State Center Community College District  
University of California, Merced

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## Acknowledgements

About The Global Cities Initiative  
A Joint Project of Brookings and JPMorgan Chase

The Global Cities Initiative is a joint project of the Brookings Institution and JPMorgan Chase to help metropolitan private and public sector leaders grow their regional economies by strengthening international connections and competitiveness through exports, foreign investment, and other strategies. GCI activities include producing research and data for better decision-making, fostering policy and practice innovations, and promoting collaboration and replication through a peer learning network. For more information, see <http://www.brookings.edu/projects/global-cities.aspx> or [www.jpmorganchase.com/globalcities](http://www.jpmorganchase.com/globalcities).

### GCI/GCX Disclaimer

This plan was developed in partnership with the Fresno County Economic Development Corporation, the San Joaquin Valley Regional Association of California Counties, the California Central Valley Economic Development Corporation, California State University Fresno, the City of Fresno, the Fresno Chamber of Commerce, the U.S. Commercial Service, and the California Centers for International Trade Development. The conclusions and recommendations of this report are solely those of its authors and do not reflect the views of the Brookings Institution or JPMorgan Chase. The Brookings Institution is a private non-profit organization. Its mission is to conduct high-quality, independent research and, based on that research, to provide innovative, practical recommendations for policy makers and the public. Brookings recognizes that the value it provides is in its absolute commitment to quality, independence and impact, and makes all final determinations of the scholarly activities of the Global Cities Initiative, including the research agenda and products.

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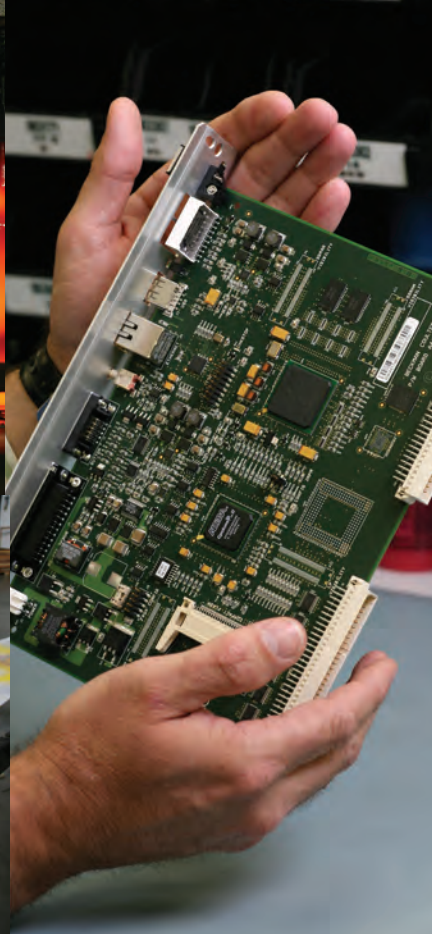
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