

News story: Newcastle seed business flourishes thanks to exporting

Seedcell manufacture biodegradable pods filled with different vegetable or herb seeds, allowing customers to sustainably grow their own produce at home. Each pod is pushed into the soil, where the seeds get the correct amount of food and water to ensure germination.

Since 2017 the company has been working with advisers at the Department for International Trade (DIT), to help increase sales and target new overseas markets.

Its products are now sold in France, Malta and Italy, and Seedcell now has plans to export to the US and Australia within the next 12 months.

Launched in 2014 with just 1 employee, Managing Director Dan Robson now employs 3 full-time and 2 part-time members of staff thanks to the company's exporting success.

Dan Robson, said:

Exporting was a natural progression for the business, due to the UK weather. We decided to sell our products in places where sunshine is almost guaranteed and where people were more likely to be out enjoying their gardens.

A bad winter in the UK has had a direct impact on our sales, therefore exporting has been transformative for the business.

We worked with DIT to explore new territories and the team advised us on how we should adjust our packaging to suit overseas markets. Our main challenge was adapting to different languages, but thanks to DIT's advice, we found a solution by printing our instructions on each pod as an image, rather than a text description. This helped to give our products a universal 'language' that people in all markets could understand.

When we first started exporting, we had a lot of questions and initial doubts around selling overseas but DIT's experience and insights were invaluable. My main advice would be, don't walk before you run. Do your research and with the right support, you too could benefit from exporting.

As part of its [Exporting is GREAT campaign](#), DIT is currently showcasing 30+

UK businesses – from a range of sectors and regions – to inspire and support firms up and down the country to export.

David Coppock, Regional Director for the North East, said:

Seedcell is a great example of a business that is seeing growth thanks to selling its products abroad. We've been heavily involved with the business by providing support and advice throughout its entire exporting journey and are pleased to see how successful the company has been in new markets.

We are seeing businesses of all shapes and sizes across the North East region realise the endless benefits of exporting and have 19 dedicated International Trade Advisers across the region ready to help other business like Seedcell. If you think exporting might be right for your business, please get in touch today and see how we can support you.

Business looking for support should visit great.gov.uk which gives UK businesses access to millions of pounds' worth of potential overseas business, helping them start or increase exporting.