



Sector Focus: GARDEN & LEISURE

The British love their gardens and animals, and this ongoing passion ensures the gardening and pet markets continue to be two of the most attractive to UK industry, even in challenging economic times.

AMA Research estimated the UK domestic garden products distribution market was worth £4.9bn in 2017 at retail selling prices, representing an increase of 3% over the previous year. Meanwhile, the total UK pet market was estimated by AMA to be valued at around £6.5 billion.

But while the UK garden and pet markets offer great opportunities for many businesses, operating on a wider international scale is becoming attractive to a growing number of manufacturers.

Trade associations Gardenex and PetQuip can help British companies find export opportunities around the world, through their wide range of events and services to manufacturers and exporters.

Amanda Sizer Barrett, Director Gen-

eral of Gardenex and PetQuip, said: "From feedback from our members, we know that some of the most proactive sell more overseas than they do in the UK and have established multiple distributors in markets around the world.

"But even some of the smaller SMEs can often achieve significant business with buyers looking for niche quality products not widely available on the local market."

The key markets for both the garden and pet sectors are Europe and North America. In the garden sector especially, this is largely due to climate and a hobby gardening culture. In the US, the National Gardening Association's most recent survey estimated that lawn and garden spending increased in 2018 to \$52.3 billion, making the US easily the largest market in the world for garden products. Germany is the largest European market, estimated in 2018 at €18.5 billion according to the German garden industry organisation, the IVG.

IVH, the German pet association, reported retail sales of pet products in Germany in 2017 at €4.16 billion, whilst Fediaf, the European pet food federation, states that the pet care sector in Europe contributes a turnover of €36.5 billion. Meanwhile, in its most recent annual survey, the American Pet Products Association says the US market for pet products is worth over \$75 billion.

To help UK manufacturers and suppliers to tap into this vast marketplace, Gardenex and PetQuip organise British exhibiting groups at key international shows. The

main garden trade shows are spoga+gafa in Germany and the National Hardware Show in the US (pictured left). Exhibiting at these events can be the springboard for gaining export business around the world, with the European shows in particular attracting trade buyers from over 100 countries.

For the pet sector the major exhibitions are Interzoo in Germany, Zoomark in Italy and Global Pet Expo in the US.

Gardenex and PetQuip also offer very successful 'Meet the Buyers' events at their offices in Kent, as well as specialist export advice, international market information, international publicity and many other export- and business-orientated services. These all help UK companies identify and convert exporting opportunities around the world.

The latest key areas include Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, which are becoming relatively accessible markets for UK exporters. Some companies are beginning to look at the Far East, including South Korea, China and especially Japan, which is one of the world's largest markets for pet products. They are also targeting the Middle East and South America but while some of these markets are potentially huge, they can be more complex in terms of exporting documentation, regulations and the general issues of language and culture. ●

For more information about the events, business initiatives and services offered to UK manufacturers by Gardenex and PetQuip, please contact info@gardenex.com or info@petquip.com or telephone the associations' head offices on +44 (0)1959 565995.

