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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gardenex and PetQuip support Government 'bounce-back' plan of trade measures for UK businesses

Gardenex and PetQuip have welcomed a series of new Government measures to help boost exports as UK businesses recover from the Coronavirus pandemic.

The measures announced today (8th September) by Exports Minister, Graham Stuart MP, will offer immediate support to companies by ensuring specialists provide advice on online retail and international market-places.

Additionally, the launch of a new Consumer and Retail Export Academy will provide businesses with the critical knowledge, skills and networks needed to increase exports.

The plan will also outline long-term support for the sector as new export opportunities arise from trade deals being negotiated with the US, Japan, New Zealand and Australia.

E-commerce will be at the heart of the plans, with measures tailored to help consumer and retail businesses develop international, multi-channel, e-commerce strategies fit for the changed retail environment.

The value of retail sales made online has risen by more than 300% in the last 10 years. This trend is expected to continue as a result of Coronavirus, with many UK businesses already experiencing increased sales online.

The Federation of Garden & Leisure Manufacturers Ltd has been working actively with DIT and other government departments and other sectoral trade bodies to help shape the government's export strategy, confirms Amanda Sizer Barrett, Director General of the Federation.

Amanda said: "We are very pleased to continue to encourage exports in conjunction with DIT, and we will be running more of our sectoral e-commerce webinars and other initiatives in conjunction with DIT's e-commerce specialists, as well as signposting new specific sectoral international market and business opportunities and continuing to inform and support our Gardenex and PetQuip members preceding and following the end of the EU-Exit Transition period."

Announcing the new measures, Minister for Exports, Graham Stuart MP said: "We recognise that Coronavirus has brought challenges to many industries, not least the consumer and retail sector, where so much depends on face-to-face interactions. This package of support will give businesses the helping hand they need to adapt their methods and thrive in the future.

“More trade and investment is absolutely critical if the industry – and our whole economy – is to overcome such challenges. These measures provide both short and long-term support for businesses that employ so many people across the UK.

“As we continue to encourage businesses to increase their trade overseas, we will also ensure that they can take full advantage of the opportunities that will be unlocked through our negotiation of Free Trade Agreements with countries around the world.

The retail industry is a key pillar of the UK economy, contributing £104bn of GVA to the UK economy in 2019, with the value of retail sales reaching £395bn in 2019, a 3.8% increase from 2018.”

The full range of measures announced today include:

1. Consumer and Retail Export Academy: A digital learning syllabus of consumer & retail-focused webinars available through DIT’s online platforms; a dedicated regional coaching programme; and an extensive library of industry-specific factsheets on key export markets.

2. Boosted digital and e-commerce offer consisting of three initiatives:

a. International Clicks Fast Track Initiative:

- Access to new DIT partnerships with business-to-business marketplaces, increasing the routes to market following store closures due to COVID-19.

b. Omnichannel Optimiser Initiative:

- Tailored advice for consumer and retail businesses to help them develop an international multi-channel strategy to help them succeed online;
- Exclusive e-commerce related insights from industry experts via talks, virtual events and podcasts;
- A specialist webinar series equipping exporters with e-commerce knowledge to help them take advantage of the growing digital opportunities that have emerged from the COVID-19 outbreak.

c. FDI ecommerce marketing campaign:

- Digitally led marketing activity to showcase e-commerce inward investment opportunities to potential international investors.

3. UKEF offer: Further outreach and engagement with the industry to respond to the industry’s needs; a refreshed ‘Exporters Edge’ campaign to raise awareness of the support available; and easier access to working capital to allow a wider range of businesses to access support.

4. A digital investment prospectus: A prospectus detailing the UK’s RetailTech offer and unique capabilities. This will be promoted in key markets in order to engage with inward investors.

5. Showcasing ‘Brand Britain’ at global events: Leveraging Government presence at high profile events, such as Expo 2020 Dubai, Tokyo Olympics and the Commonwealth Games, to provide a platform for consumer goods companies to showcase their offering to a global

audience; enabling UK companies to use GREAT branding at global events; engaging consumer and retail businesses in the Midlands region to help them take advantage of DIT's international events, and Hyve Group PLC's market leading trade shows as a platform to reach overseas buyers.

The measures follow the recently announced agriculture, food and drink bounce-back plans in June, in conjunction with the Department for Farming and Rural Affairs (Defra).

Please contact Gardenex and PetQuip if you would like to benefit from membership of the association or require any further advice and assistance on:

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