



## Burley Company Among Idaho Bean Growers Expanding Sales to Mexico

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BURLEY • A Burley company is making a stronger push to sell bean crop harvesting equipment in the Mexican market following an Idaho trade mission earlier this month to Latin America.

Pickett Equipment Co. was one of 17 Idaho companies and organizations represented during a trade mission to Brazil and Mexico in early December with Lt. Gov. Brad Little. Pickett Equipment joined the Idaho Bean Commission for the trade mission and the two worked to grow sales of Idaho bean seed as well as bean harvesting equipment to Mexico, according to the Idaho Department of Commerce. The commerce department and the Idaho State Department of Agriculture organized the trip.

“Going to Mexico as a member of the trade mission helped us put the security situation in perspective and assess conditions on the ground,” said Jonathan Price, international sales manager for Pickett Equipment, in a written statement. “Had we not signed up for the mission, I don’t think we would have looked as seriously at Mexico as an attractive market for our equipment.”

Company officials couldn’t be reached for comment Monday. But Pickett’s website notes that it has a market presence not only in Mexico, but also China, Brazil, South Africa and Turkey.

Board members of the Idaho Bean Commission say the commodity has plenty of potential in the Mexican markets.

Bill Bitzenberg, a commission board member, said a drought in Mexico has led to a shortage of dry beans, such as pintos, in that country. At the same time, Idaho bean growers have worked for years with the country to show the Gem State’s ability to produce disease-free seeds that can, in turn, be planted in Mexico farms.

“It’s just a little niche that the Idaho bean market has that we can produce disease-free seeds,” Bitzenberg said.

In a written statement, Lorell Skogsberg, a board member for the bean commission, said: “The IBC is confident there will be seed sales as a result of this trade mission. Every vendor we met with would like to do business with and be a partner of the IBC. Because of Idaho’s reputation and history of quality, Idaho seed is well known and respected in Mexico.”

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