

Businesses line up to export themselves to Shanghai 2010

More than 25 Hawke's Bay businesses are working on plans for a regional delegation to an expo in Shanghai in 2010.

Export Hawke's Bay is organising the delegation to Shanghai 2010, a six-month long world expo featuring pavilions from 178 countries.

The expo runs from May until October and Hawke's Bay will take part in August to coincide with the expo's Oceania Month and also Chinese Valentine's Day on 16th August.

More than 25 local businesses attended a recent meeting to discuss plans for the regional delegation to Shanghai and gauge support for the concept.

Export Hawke's Bay chairman Murray Painter says he was delighted with the turnout at the meeting and the strong interest

from businesses in what is a very exciting project and a first for Hawke's Bay.

"While the world expo is predominantly for countries to showcase their attractions, we have taken it one step further with a trade show in downtown Shanghai, a few kilometres away from the expo site, where we can promote Hawke's Bay's fantastic range of goods and services as well as Hawke's Bay as a different and attractive destination for visitors, especially Chinese."

The delegation will be utilising the New Zealand Trade and Enterprise facilities in Shanghai at "New Zealand Central, which include meeting rooms, demonstration kitchens and a multi-purpose function space.

Murray Painter says a project team, representing progressive

exporting and export-related businesses in Hawke's Bay, has been set up to drive the planning towards Shanghai 2010.

"I am confident we will develop a very professional presence in Shanghai which will lead to increased overseas exchange earnings from tourism, products and services."

He says while there is strong support from the business and tourism sector, he's disappointed with the response from the education sector. "Most Hawke's Bay schools are keen to benefit from international students and we are hopeful they will commit to this regional initiative."

He says EIT has shown a willingness to take part, however it is yet to confirm it will be involved.

"This is a fantastic opportunity

for Hawke's Bay, but without representation from the education sector we may be forced to restrict our efforts to tourism and business."

Murray says they are also investigating the possibility of having a "Virtual Expo" for those businesses who can't attend in person.

This would involve high-tech interactive software allowing prospective buyers or service users to communicate directly with suppliers using an internet browser.

He says any businesses interested in being part of the regional delegation to Shanghai 2010 should contact Export Hawke's Bay.

■ For further information visit www.exporthb.co.nz