

# CRACKING INTO GLOBAL MARKETS

## How a Georgia Small Business Sells Solutions to Farmers Worldwide

In the heart of southeast Georgia, Ralph Steger has not only cultivated pecans on his 40-acre orchard in Baxley. Steger's small but powerful invention, the Krak-N-Blo, is growing into global markets.

The machine, a compact, cost-effective pecan sheller, was born out of necessity and years of tinkering.

"There are other such machines that use some of the same concepts but are much bigger; mine has a very small footprint," said Steger. "It's a single unit that takes up only three square feet of floor space: pour the pecans in, switch it on, that's it!"

The Krak-N-Blo is tailored for small-scale growers looking to skip the middleman of industrial shelling companies. Steger explained that farmers who are willing to shell and market the pecans themselves "will recoup their cost and typically triple the money they would make from the same harvest."

Farmers around the world are taking an interest in the Krak-N-Blo's potential for their operations. Since launching the business in 2021, Steger has shipped his invention to South Africa, Mexico, Peru, Israel, and most recently, Australia. That global reach has been significantly supported by the Georgia Department of Economic Development's (GDEcD) Trade team.

"The Trade team at GDEcD was helpful and provided suggestions such as obtaining a trademark on the name Krak-N-Blo, which I did," said Steger. The Trade team provided market analysis on competitors and in-depth information on countries that grow pecans and that sell equipment. "It's nice to have that back-and-forth with them, and it improved my knowledge of exports," he commented.

Now, with international interest growing and word spreading through videos and customer referrals, Steger is gearing up for the next phase of global expansion. "Exporting is a significant part of my sales – a nice percentage," he said. "There are a tremendous number of small businesses like mine, even internationally [on multiple continents] where small growers would find benefit with my machine."

For Steger, the No. 1 hurdle is keeping up with demand. "Frankly, I've got tremendous market potential," he noted as he explained how he makes each product by hand. "I was taking it slow because I'm a one-man show."

Pecan Pro may be a one-man-manufacturer, but when it comes to exploring opportunities for international sales in new markets, Steger has the GDEcD Trade team at his back.

Learn more about GDEcD's free services for Georgia-based exporters at [georgia.org/trade](https://georgia.org/trade).



The Georgia Department of Economic Development's nationally recognized Trade team works with Georgia-based small businesses like American Dakota to expand their global sales, making companies more resilient and creating opportunities for growth. The Trade team's services, ranging from market research to international connections, are provided at no cost to eligible Georgia businesses. **To learn more or connect with one of our trade team members, visit [georgia.org/trade](https://georgia.org/trade).**

