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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Foreign Agricultural Service

Notice of a Program To Provide for the Sharing of United States Agricultural Expertise With Emerging Markets

AGENCY: Foreign Agricultural Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice contains information concerning a U.S. Department of Agriculture technical assistance program that was amended by the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 in order to provide such assistance to emerging markets. This notice replaces the Federal Register notice published on June 3, 1992 (57 FR 23374).

DATES: This notice is effective immediately.

ADDRESSES: Requests for information should be addressed to the Director, Emerging Markets Office, Foreign Agricultural Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 6506, South Building, Washington, DC 20250; Fax (202) 690-4369.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. Description of Program

The Emerging Markets Program is authorized by section 1542(d) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990, as amended (1990 Act). Section 1542(d) provides that:

For each of the fiscal years 1991 through 2002, the Secretary of Agriculture . . . in order to develop, maintain, or expand markets for United States agricultural exports, is directed to make available to emerging markets the expertise of the United States.

The expertise is to be used to assess, recommend, and identify projects and activities, including those that have the potential to reduce trade barriers, to enhance the food and rural business systems needs of emerging markets, and

to provide technical assistance to implement such projects and activities.

The Emerging Markets Office (EMO) of the Foreign Agricultural Service is responsible for the management and implementation of the Emerging Markets Program.

2. Country Eligibility

Section 1542(f) of the 1996 Act provides that an emerging market is any country that:

- Is taking steps toward a market-oriented economy through the food, agriculture, or rural business sectors of the economy of the country; and
- Has the potential to provide a viable and significant market for United States commodities or products of United States agricultural commodities.

In order to determine whether a country has the potential to provide a viable and significant market for U.S. agricultural commodities and products, EMO will consider various factors, including:

- (a) Per capita income less than \$8355 (the food aid per capita income cut-off figure of OECD's Development Assistance Committee);
- (b) Population greater than 1 million; or
- (c) Positive economic growth factors.

3. Assessments, Recommendations and Identification of Opportunities and Projects

Section 1542(d)(1)(B) of the 1990 Act provides that the Secretary may select teams of experts to conduct assessments (including an analysis of the food and rural business needs of an emerging market), make recommendations, and identify opportunities and projects which technical expertise could be provided to address those needs.

Teams of experts will not be used if sufficient information is available from existing information to determine whether technical assistance is needed to implement a project. Under other circumstances the Secretary may select an individual or firm to provide the same services as those of a team of experts. A data base of experts is maintained by EMO and the Farm Service Agency (FSA). Persons interested in being included in the data base may write EMO for information. In addition, an advisory committee, authorized by the 1990 Act and the

Federal Advisory Committee Act, may provide advice to the Secretary concerning assessments, recommendations, and the identification of opportunities and projects for which technical assistance would be utilized.

45. Technical Assistance

In accordance with section 1542(d)(1)(D) of the 1990 Act, the Secretary is authorized to provide or pay for technical assistance, including the establishment of extension services, to enable individuals or other entities to implement recommendations or to carry out identified opportunities or projects. If USDA does not have the expertise to provide needed technical assistance, USDA will consider entering into contracts, or cooperative agreements with non-USDA sources in order to obtain the needed expertise. In such instances, USDA will solicit technical assistance through the Commerce Business Daily. Contracts, grants, and cooperative agreements will be awarded according to USDA policies, guidelines, and regulations, which are available from EMO on request.

5. Selection

Factors used to determine whether the Secretary will provide or pay for technical assistance to implement projects may include:

1. Amount of private sector contributions;
2. Prospects for developing, maintaining or increasing U.S. agricultural exports;
3. Long-range impact on U.S. agricultural exports;
4. Enhancement of emerging markets' food and rural business systems;
5. Impact on the transformation of host country economics to free market systems;
6. Compatibility with U.S. foreign policy interests; and
7. Cost

Signed at Washington, D.C. on May 31, 1996.

August Schumacher, Jr.,
Administrator, Foreign Agricultural Service.
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