

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Commodity Credit Corporation

Notice of Funds Availability: Inviting Applications for the Market Access Program

Announcement Type: New.
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 10.601.

SUMMARY: The Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) announces that it is inviting proposals for the 2008 Market Access Program (MAP). The intended effect of this notice is to solicit applications from eligible applicants and award funds in October 2007. The MAP is administered by personnel of the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS).
DATES: All applications must be received by 5 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time, May 14, 2007. Applications received after this date will not be considered.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Entities wishing to apply for funding assistance should contact the Program Policy Staff, Foreign Agricultural Service, Portals Office Building, Suite 400, 1250 Maryland Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20024, phone: (202) 720-4327, fax: (202) 720-9361, e-mail: ppsadmin@fas.usda.gov. Information is also available on the Foreign Agricultural Service Web site at <http://www.fas.usda.gov/mos/programs/map.asp>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Authority: The MAP is authorized under Section 203 of the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978, as amended. MAP regulations appear at 7 CFR part 1485.

Purpose: The MAP is designed to create, expand and maintain foreign markets for United States' agricultural commodities and products through cost-share assistance. Financial assistance under the MAP will be made available on a competitive basis and applications will be reviewed against the evaluation criteria contained herein. All agricultural commodities, except tobacco, are eligible for consideration.

The FAS allocates funds in a manner that effectively supports the strategic decision-making initiatives of the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993 and the USDA's Food and Agricultural Policy (FAP). In deciding whether a proposed project will contribute to the effective creation, expansion, or maintenance of foreign markets, the FAS seeks to identify a clear, long-term agricultural trade strategy and a program effectiveness

time line against which results can be measured at specific intervals using quantifiable product or country goals. The FAS also considers the extent to which a proposed project targets markets with the greatest growth potential. These factors are part of the FAS resource allocation strategy to fund applicants who can demonstrate performance and address the objectives of the GPRA and FAP.

II. Award Information

Under the MAP, the CCC enters into agreements with eligible participants to share the costs of certain overseas marketing and promotion activities. MAP participants may receive assistance for either generic or brand promotion activities. The program generally operates on a reimbursement basis.

III. Eligibility Information

1. *Eligible Applicants.* To participate in the MAP, an applicant must be: a nonprofit U.S. agricultural trade organization, a nonprofit state regional trade group (i.e., an association of State Departments of Agriculture), a U.S. agricultural cooperative, or a State agency. A small-sized U.S. commercial entity (other than a cooperative or producer association) may participate through a MAP participant.

2. *Cost Sharing.* To participate in the MAP, an applicant must agree to contribute resources to its proposed promotional activities. The MAP is intended to supplement, not supplant, the efforts of the U.S. private sector. In the case of generic promotion, the contribution must be stated in dollars and be at least 10 percent of the value of resources provided by CCC for such generic promotion. In the case of brand promotion, the contribution must be stated in dollars and be at least 50 percent of the total cost of such brand promotion.

The degree of commitment of an applicant to the promotional strategies contained in its application, as represented by the agreed cost share contributions specified therein, is considered by the FAS when determining which applications will be approved for funding. Cost-share may be actual cash invested or in-kind contributions, such as professional staff time spent on design and execution of activities. The MAP regulations, in section 1485.13 (c), provide detailed discussion of eligible and ineligible cost-share contributions.

3. *Other.* Applications should include a justification for funding assistance from the program—an explanation as to what specifically could not be

accomplished without federal funding assistance and why participating organization(s) are unlikely to carry out the project without such assistance.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. *Address to Request Application Package.* Organizations that are interested in applying for MAP funds are encouraged to submit their requests using the Unified Export Strategy (UES) format. The UES allows interested entities to submit a consolidated and strategically coordinated single proposal that incorporates requests for funding and recommendations for virtually all the FAS marketing programs, financial assistance programs, and market access programs. The suggested UES format encourages applicants to examine the constraints or barriers to trade that they face, identify activities that would help overcome such impediments, consider the entire pool of complementary marketing tools and program resources, and establish realistic export goals. Applicants are not required, however, to use the UES format. Organizations can submit applications in the UES format by two methods. The first allows an applicant to submit information directly to the FAS through the UES application Internet Web site. The FAS highly recommends applying via the Internet, as this format virtually eliminates paperwork and expedites the FAS processing and review cycle. Applicants also have the option of submitting electronic versions (along with two paper copies) of their applications to the FAS on compact disc.

Applicants planning to use the Internet-based system must contact the FAS Program Policy Staff on (202) 720-4327 to obtain site access information. The Internet-based application, including a Help file containing step-by-step instructions for its use, may be found at the following URL address: <http://www.fas.usda.gov/cooperators.html>.

Applicants who choose to submit applications on a compact disk can obtain an application format by contacting the Program Policy Staff on (202) 720-4327.

2. *Content and Form of Application Submission.* To be considered for the MAP, an applicant must submit to the FAS information required by the MAP regulations in section 1485.13. In addition, in accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's issuance of a final policy (68 FR 38402 (June 27, 2003)) regarding the need to identify entities that are receiving government awards, all applicants must submit a

Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number.

An applicant may request a DUNS number at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711.

Incomplete applications and applications which do not otherwise conform to this announcement will not be accepted for review.

The FAS administers various other agricultural export assistance programs including the Foreign Market Development Cooperator (Cooperator) Program, Cochran Fellowships, the Emerging Markets Program, the Quality Samples Program, the Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops Program and several Export Credit Guarantee programs. Any organization that is not interested in applying for the MAP but would like to request assistance through one of the other programs mentioned should contact the Program Policy Staff on (202) 720-4327.

3. *Submission Dates and Times.* All applications must be received by 5 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time, May 14, 2007. All MAP applicants, regardless of the method of submitting an application, also must submit by the application deadline, via hand delivery or U.S. mail, an original signed certification statement as specified in 7 CFR 1485.13 (a)(2)(i)(G). Applications or certifications received after this date will not be considered.

4. *Funding Restrictions.* Certain types of expenses are not eligible for reimbursement by the program, and there are limits on other categories of expenses. CCC will not reimburse unreasonable expenditures or expenditures made prior to approval. Full details are available in the MAP regulations in section 1485.16.

5. *Other Submission Requirements and Considerations.* All Internet-based applications must be properly submitted by 5 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time, May 14, 2007. Signed certification statements also must be received by that time at one of the addresses listed below.

All applications on compact disc (with two accompanying paper copies and a signed certification statement) and any other form of application must be received by 5 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time, May 14, 2007, at one of the following addresses:

Hand Delivery (including FedEx, DHL, UPS, etc.): U.S. Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service, Program Policy Staff, Portals Office Building, Suite 400, 1250 Maryland Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20024.

U.S. Postal Delivery: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural

Service, Program Policy Staff, Stop 1042, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20250-1042.

V. Application Review Information

1. *Criteria and Review Process.*

Following is a description of the FAS process for reviewing applications and the criteria for allocating available MAP funds.

(1) *Phase I—Sufficiency Review and FAS Divisional Review*

Applications received by the closing date will be reviewed by the FAS to determine the eligibility of the applicants and the completeness of the applications. These requirements appear at sections 1485.12 and 1485.13 of the MAP regulations. Applications that meet the requirements then will be further evaluated by the proper Commodity Branch in FAS' Market Development and Grants Management Division. The Commodity Branch will review each application against the criteria listed in section 1485.14 of the MAP regulations. The purpose of this review is to identify meritorious proposals and to recommend an appropriate funding level for each application based upon these criteria.

(2) *Phase 2—Competitive Review*

Meritorious applications then will be passed on to the Office of the Deputy Administrator, Office of Trade Programs, for the purpose of allocating available funds among the applicants. Applications will compete for funds on the basis of the following allocation criteria (the number in parentheses represents a percentage weight factor):

(a) Applicant's Contribution Level (40)

* The applicant's 4-year average share (2004-2008) of all contributions (cash and goods and services provided by U.S. entities in support of overseas marketing and promotion activities) compared to

* The applicant's 4-year average share (2004-2008) of the funding level for all MAP participants.

(b) Past Performance (30)

* The 3-year average share (2004-2006) of the value of exports promoted by the applicant compared to

* The applicant's 2-year average share (2005-2007) of the funding level for all MAP applicants plus, for those groups participating in the Cooperator program, the 2-year average share (2006-2007) of Cooperator marketing plan budgets, and the share for 2005 of foreign overhead provided for co-location within a U.S. agricultural office;

(c) Projected Export Goals (15)

* The total dollar value of projected exports promoted by the applicant for 2007 compared to

* The applicant's requested funding level;

(d) Accuracy of Past Projections (15)

* Actual exports for 2005 as reported in the 2007 MAP application compared to

* Past projections of exports for 2005 as specified in the 2005 MAP application.

The Commodity Branches' recommended funding levels for each applicant are converted to percentages of the total MAP funds available then multiplied by each weight factor as described above to determine the amount of funds allocated to each applicant.

2. *Anticipated Announcement Date.*

Announcements of funding decisions for the MAP are anticipated during October 2007.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. *Award Notices.* The FAS will notify each applicant in writing of the final disposition of its application. The FAS will send an approval letter and project agreement to each approved applicant. The approval letter and agreement will specify the terms and conditions applicable to the project, including the levels of MAP funding and cost-share contribution requirements.

2. *Administrative and National Policy Requirements.* Interested parties should review the MAP regulations which are available at the following URL address: <http://www.fas.usda.gov/mos/programs/map.asp>. Hard copies may be obtained by contacting PPS at (202) 720-4327.

3. *Reporting.* The FAS requires various reports and evaluations from MAP participants. Reporting requirements are detailed in the MAP regulations in section 1485.20(b) and (c).

VII. Agency Contact(s)

For additional information and assistance, contact the Program Policy Staff, Foreign Agricultural Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Portals Office Building, Suite 400, Stop 1042, 1250 Maryland Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20024, phone: (202) 720-4327, fax: (202) 720-9361, e-mail: ppsdmin@fas.usda.gov.

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