



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

U.S. AGRIBUSINESS TRADE AND INVESTMENT MISSION TO THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

**Astana and Almaty, Kazakhstan
July 23-28, 2006**

Secretary Mike Johanns will lead the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Trade and Investment Mission to the cities of Astana and Almaty, Kazakhstan, July 23-28, 2006. The primary goal of the USDA mission is to promote trade and investment, particularly in agricultural commodities, processed food products, agricultural inputs, livestock genetics, and food processing and agricultural equipment.

The USDA is recruiting approximately 15 U.S. agribusinesses to participate in this mission. In Kazakhstan, ground transportation, domestic flights, translation services, and meeting facilities will be covered by the U.S. Government.

Representatives from the Kazakhstani private agribusiness sector, officials from the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Industry and Trade, federal investment agencies, and local governmental organizations will participate in the Trade and Investment Mission.

Kazakhstan Offers U.S. Partners:

- Approximately four times the size of Texas, Kazakhstan is the largest country in Central Asia.

- Kazakhstan has Central Asia's largest economy with double-digit growth in 2000-01, and growth over 9 percent annually in 2002-2005.
- A strong agricultural sector, featuring grain and livestock production in the north and fruit and vegetable production in the south. Roughly 20 percent of Kazakhstan's labor force works in agriculture. Kazakhstan is Central Asia's largest grain exporter.
- Increasing agricultural exports is a key part of Kazakhstan's economic diversification strategy away from its overdependence on the oil sector.
- Strong economic ties to the United States. Kazakhstan is the largest recipient of foreign direct investment (FDI) in Central Asia, and the United States is the largest foreign investor. There are well over 100 American companies doing business in Kazakhstan today.
- Notable progress in transforming from a centrally-planned economy to a more transparent, less regulated, more market driven business environment.
- Continued effective fiscal and monetary policy has maintained macro-economic stability and limited inflation to 6-8 percent over the last three years.
- Kazakhstan has made significant steps towards accession to the WTO, and hopes to join in 2007.
- Tax laws are considered to be among the most comprehensive in the former Soviet Union. The latest Tax Code, which entered into effect on January 1, 2002, applies taxes universally and allows only a limited set of exemptions.
- The best banking system in the former Soviet Union according to the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

USDA Will Provide You With:

- Unique opportunities to dialogue with potential business partners
- Meetings with and presentations by key Kazakhstani federal and local officials
- Briefings on the macroeconomic situation, legal and regulatory environment, banking sector, privatization process, land code, and investment climate
- Information on U.S. government programs to facilitate commercial relations
- Logistical support, translation services, one-on-one meetings, and site visits.

The deadline to express interest to participate on the Mission is June 9, 2006. To apply, or for more information, please contact:

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