

Hand Delivery (including FedEx, UPS, etc.): U.S. Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service, Marketing Operations Staff, Room 4932-S, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-1042.

U.S. Postal Delivery: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service, Marketing Operations Staff, STOP 1042, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20250-1042.

V. Application Review Information

1. *Criteria.* FAS will use the following criteria in evaluating proposals:

- The ability of the organization to provide an experienced staff with the requisite technical and trade experience to execute the proposal;
- The extent to which the proposal is targeted to a market in which the United States is generally competitive;
- The potential for expanding commercial sales in the proposed market;
- The nature of the specific market constraint or opportunity involved and how well it is addressed by the proposal;
- The extent to which the importer's contribution in terms of handling and processing enhances the potential outcome of the project;
- The amount of reimbursement requested and the organization's willingness to contribute resources, including cash and goods and services of the U.S. industry and foreign third parties; and
- How well the proposed technical assistance component assures that performance trials will effectively demonstrate the intended end-use benefit.

Highest priority for funding under this announcement will be given to meritorious proposals that target countries that meet either of the following criteria:

- *Per capita* income less than \$9,205 (the ceiling on upper middle income economies as determined by the World Bank [World Development Indicators 2003]); and population greater than 1 million. Proposals may address suitable regional groupings, for example, the islands of the Caribbean Basin; or
- U.S. market share of imports of the commodity identified in the proposal of 10 percent or less.

2. *Review and Selection Process.* Proposals will be evaluated by the applicable FAS commodity division. The divisions will review each proposal against the factors described above. The purpose of this review is to identify meritorious proposals, recommend an appropriate funding level for each

proposal based upon these factors, and submit the proposals and funding recommendations to the Deputy Administrator, Commodity and Marketing Programs.

3. *Anticipated Announcement Date.* Announcements of funding decisions for the QSP are anticipated during June 2004.

VI. Award Administration Information

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

2. *Administrative and National Policy Requirements.* The agreements will incorporate the details of each project as approved by FAS. Each agreement will identify terms and conditions pursuant to which CCC will reimburse certain costs of each project. Agreements will also outline the responsibilities of the participant, including, but not limited to, procurement (or arranging for procurement) of the commodity sample at a fair market price, arranging for transportation of the commodity sample within the time limit specified in the agreement (organizations should endeavor to ship commodities within 6 months of effective date of agreement), compliance with cargo preference requirements (shipment on United States flag vessels, as required), compliance with the Fly America Act requirements (shipment on United States air carriers, as required), timely and effective implementation of technical assistance, and submission of a written evaluation report within 90 days of expiration of the agreement.

QSP agreements are subject to review and verification by the FAS Compliance Review Staff. Upon request, a QSP participant will provide to CCC the original documents which support the participant's reimbursement claims. CCC may deny a claim for reimbursement if the claim is not supported by adequate documentation.

3. *Reporting.* A written evaluation report must be submitted within 90 days of the expiration of each participant's QSP agreement. Evaluation reports should address all performance measures that were presented in the proposal.

VII. Agency Contact(s)

For additional information and assistance, contact the Marketing Operations Staff, Foreign Agricultural

Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 4932 South, STOP 1042, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20250-1042, phone: (202) 720-4327, fax: (202) 720-9361, e-mail: mosadmin@fas.usda.gov.

Signed in Washington, DC on January 16, 2004.

A. Ellen Terpstra,

Administrator, Foreign Agricultural Service, and Vice President, Commodity Credit Corporation.

[FR Doc. 04-1454 Filed 1-22-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-10-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Commodity Credit Corporation

Notice of Funds Availability; Inviting Applications for the Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops Program

Announcement Type: New.
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 10.604.

SUMMARY: The Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) announces the availability of \$2 million in funding for the 2004 Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops (TASC) Program. The intended effect of this notice is to solicit applications from the private sector and from government agencies for participation in the FY 2004 TASC Program. The TASC Program is administered by personnel of the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS).

DATES: See paragraph IV.3 below for a detailed description of relevant dates.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Entities wishing to apply for funding assistance should contact the Marketing Operations Staff, Foreign Agricultural Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 4932-S, Stop 1042, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20250-1042, phone: (202) 720-4327, fax: (202) 720-9361, e-mail: mosadmin@fas.usda.gov. Information is also available on the Foreign Agricultural Service Web site at <http://www.fas.usda.gov/mos/tasc/tasc.html>

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Authority: The TASC Program is authorized by section 3205 of Pub. L. 107-171. TASC regulations appear at 7 CFR part 1487.

Purpose: The TASC Program is designed to assist U.S. organizations by providing funding for projects that address sanitary, phytosanitary, and technical barriers that prohibit or threaten the export of U.S. specialty

crops. U.S. specialty crops, for the purpose of the TASC Program, are defined to include all cultivated plants, or the products thereof, produced in the U.S., except wheat, feed grains, oilseeds, cotton, rice, peanuts, sugar, and tobacco.

As a general matter, TASC Program projects should be designed to accomplish the following goals:

- Projects should address a sanitary, phytosanitary, or related technical barrier that prohibits or threatens the export of U.S. specialty crops;
- Projects should demonstrably benefit the represented industry and not a specific company or brand; and,
- Projects must address barriers to U.S. specialty crops that are currently available on a commercial basis and for which barrier removal would predominately benefit U.S. exports.

Examples of expenses that the CCC may agree to reimburse under the TASC Program include, but are not limited to: Initial pre-clearance programs, export protocol and work plan support, seminars and workshops, study tours, field surveys, development of pest lists, pest and disease research, database development, reasonable logistical and administrative support, and travel and per diem expenses.

II. Award Information

In general, all qualified proposals received before the specified application deadlines will compete for funding. The limited funds and the range of barriers affecting the exports of U.S. specialty crops worldwide preclude CCC from approving large budgets for individual projects. In prior years, the amount of funding per proposal has ranged from \$13,000 to \$250,000, the maximum allowed.

Applicants may submit multiple proposals, and applicants with previously approved TASC proposals may apply for additional funding. However, no TASC participant may have more than three approved projects underway at any given time.

The FAS will consider providing either grant funds at direct assistance to U.S. organizations or providing technical assistance on behalf of U.S. organizations, provided that the organization submits timely and qualified proposals. The FAS will review all proposals against the evaluation criteria contained in the program regulations.

Funding for successful proposals will be provided through specific agreements. These agreements will incorporate the proposal as approved by FAS. FAS must approve in advance any subsequent changes to the project. The FAS or another Federal agency may

have involvement in the implementation of approved projects.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants: Any United States organization, private or government, may apply to the program. Government organizations consist of federal, state, and local agencies. Private organizations include non-profit trade associations, universities, agricultural cooperatives, state regional trade groups, and private companies.

Foreign organizations, whether government or private, may participate as third parties in activities carried out by U.S. organizations, but are not eligible for funding assistance from the program.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching: Although a minimum level of cost share contribution is not required, it is very strongly encouraged in this highly competitive program. If provided, such support may be in the form of cash, good, or in-kind services which are dedicated to the project by the organization that submitted the proposal, private industry entities, host governments, or foreign third parties.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package: Organizations can submit applications to the FAS through the Unified Export Strategy (UES) application Internet website. Applicants also have the option of submitting electronic versions in the UES format (along with two paper copies) of their applications to the FAS on diskette.

Applicants planning to use the UES Internet-based system must contact the FAS Marketing Operations Staff on (202) 720-4327 to obtain site access information including a user ID and password. The UES 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 are not required to use the UES, but are strongly encouraged to do so because it reduces paperwork and expedites the FAS processing and review cycle.

Applicants who choose to submit applications on diskette can obtain an application format by contacting the Marketing Operations Staff, phone: (202) 720-4327, fax: (202) 720-9361, e-mail: mosadmin@fas.usda.gov.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission: All TASC proposals must contain complete information about the proposed projects as described in section 1487.5(b) of the TASC Program regulations. In addition, in accordance

with the Office of Management and Budget's issuance of a final policy (68 FR 38402) regarding the use of a universal identifier for all Federal grants and cooperative agreements, 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 on 1-866-705-5711. Incomplete applications and applications which do not otherwise conform to this announcement will not be accepted for review.

3. Submission Dates and Times: TASC funding is limited, and in order to assure sufficient resources are available to meet unanticipated needs during the fiscal year, TASC proposals will, generally, only be evaluated on a quarterly basis. That is:

- Proposals received prior to, but not later than 5 p.m. (local time Washington, DC) February 1, 2004, will only be considered for funding during the three month period beginning on that date;

- Proposals received prior to, but not later than 5 p.m. (local time Washington, DC) May 1, 2004, will only be considered for funding during the three month period beginning on that date;

- proposals received prior to, but not later than 5 p.m. (local time Washington, DC) August 1, 2004, will only be considered for funding during the three month period beginning on that date.

- Proposals not approved for funding during the applicable review period will only be considered for funding during a subsequent period, or after August 1, 2004, when the applicant specifically requests such consideration in writing. Proposals received after 5 p.m. August 1, 2004, or rejected proposals for which the applicant requests consideration after that date, will be considered if funding remains available at that time.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, a proposal may be submitted for expedited consideration under the TASC Quick Response process if, in addition to meeting all requirements of the TASC program, a proposal clearly identifies a time-sensitive activity. In these cases, a proposal may be submitted at any time for an immediate evaluation.

All proposals will be date stamped upon receipt.

4. Funding Restrictions: Proposals which request more than \$250,000 of CCC funding in a given year will not be considered. Proposals to fund projects that exceed three years in duration will not be considered. No TASC participant

may have more than three approved projects underway at any given time. Although funded projects may take place in the United States, all eligible projects must specifically address sanitary, phytosanitary, or technical barriers to the export of U.S. specialty crops.

Certain types of expenses are not eligible for reimbursement by the program. For example, program funds shall not be used to reimburse the costs of market research, advertising, or other promotional expenses. CCC will not reimburse expenditures made prior to approval of a proposal or unreasonable expenditures.

5. Other Submission Requirements: All Internet-based applications must be properly submitted by 5 p.m. (local time in Washington, DC) on February 1, 2004; May 1, 2004; or August 1, 2004, in order to be considered during that quarter's review process.

All applications on diskette (with two accompanying paper copies) and any other applications must be received by 5 p.m. (local time in Washington, DC) on February 1, 2004; May 1, 2004; or August 1, 2004, at one of the following addresses:

Hand Delivery (including FedEx, DHL, UPS, etc.); U.S. Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service, Marketing Operations Staff, Room 4932-S, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-1042.

U.S. Postal Delivery: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service, Marketing Operations Staff, STOP 1042, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20250-1042.

V. Application Review Information

1. Criteria: The FAS follows the evaluation criteria set forth in § 1487.6 of the TASC regulations.

2. Review and Selection Process: The FAS will review proposals for eligibility and will evaluate each proposal against the factors described above. The purpose of this review is to identify meritorious proposals, recommend an appropriate funding level for each proposal based upon these factors, and submit the proposals and funding recommendations to the Deputy Administrator, Commodity and Marketing Programs. The FAS may, when appropriate to the subject matter of the proposal, request the assistance of other U.S. government experts in evaluating the merits of a proposal.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices: The FAS will notify all applicants in writing of the final disposition of its application. The FAS

will send an approval letter and agreement to each approved applicant. The approval letter and agreement will specify the terms and conditions applicable to the project, including levels of funding, timelines for implementation and written evaluation requirements.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements: The agreements will incorporate the details of each project as approved by FAS. Each agreement will identify terms and conditions pursuant to which CCC will reimburse certain costs of each project. Agreements will also outline the responsibilities of the participant. Interested parties should review the TASC Program regulations found at 7 CFR part 1478 in addition to this announcement.

3. Reporting: TASC participants are subject to the reporting and recordkeeping requirements described in 7 CFR part 3019. In addition, participants are required to submit a written report(s), on no less than an annual basis, and a final report, each of which evaluates their TASC project using the performance measures presented in the approved proposal.

VII. Agency Contact

For additional information or assistance, contact the Marketing Operations Staff, Foreign Agricultural Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 4932-S, Stop 1042, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20250-1042, phone: (202) 720-4327, fax: (202) 720-9361, e-mail: mosadmin@fas.usda.gov.

A. Ellen Terpstra,

Administrator, Foreign Agricultural Service, and Vice President, Commodity Credit Corporation.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food and Nutrition Service

Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection; Comment Request—Analysis of the Summer Food Service Program and Food Needs of Nonparticipating Children—Data Collection Instruments

AGENCY: Food and Nutrition Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Food and Nutrition Service's intention to request Office of Management and Budget

approval of the data collection instruments for the Analysis of the Summer Food Service Program and Food Needs of Nonparticipating Children.

DATES: Written comments on this notice must be received by March 23, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Comments may be sent to: Alberta C. Frost, Director, Office of Analysis, Nutrition and Evaluation, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 3101 Park Center Drive, Alexandria, VA 22302.

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the proposed information collection instruments should be directed to Alberta C. Frost (703) 305-2117.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Analysis of the Summer Food Service Program and Food Needs of Nonparticipating Children—Data Collection Instruments.

OMB Number: Not yet assigned.

Expiration Date: N/A.

Type of Request: New collection of information.

Abstract: Section 13 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA), 42 U.S.C. 1761, authorizes the Summer Food Service Program. The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) provides assistance to States to initiate and maintain nonprofit food service programs for children in needy areas during the summer months and at other approved times. The food service to be provided under the Summer Food Service Program is intended to serve as a substitute for the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program during the times