

(b) Past Export Performance (20)

The 6-year average share (1998–2003) of the value of exports promoted by the applicant compared to

- The applicant's 6-year average share (1998–2003) of all Cooperator marketing plan expenditures plus a 6-year average share (1997–2002) of MAP expenditures and a 6-year average share (1997–2002) of foreign overhead provided for co-location within a U.S. agricultural trade office.

(c) Past Demand Expansion Performance (20)

- The 6-year average share (1998–2003) of the total value of world trade of the commodities promoted by the applicant compared to

- The applicant's 6-year average share (1998–2003) of all Cooperator marketing plan expenditures plus a 6-year average share (1997–2002) of MAP expenditures and a 6-year average share (1997–2002) of foreign overhead provided for co-location within a U.S. agricultural trade office.

(d) Future Demand Expansion Goals (10)

- The projected total dollar value of world trade of the commodities being promoted by the applicant for the year 2009 compared to

- The applicant's requested funding level.

(e) Accuracy of Past Demand Expansion Projections (10)

- The actual dollar value share of world trade of the commodities being promoted by the applicant for the year 2002 compared to

- The applicant's past projected share of world trade of the commodities being promoted by the applicant for the year 2002, as specified in the 1999 Cooperator Program application.

The Commodity Divisions' recommended funding levels for each applicant are converted to percentages of the total Cooperator Program funds available then multiplied by the total weight factor to determine the amount of funds allocated to each applicant.

Closing Date for Applications

All Internet-based applications must be properly submitted by 5 p.m. eastern standard time, March 10, 2003. Signed certification statements also must be received by that time at one of the addresses listed below.

All applications on diskette (with two accompanying paper copies and a signed certification statement) and any other applications must be received by 5 p.m. eastern standard time, March 10, 2003, 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, 1400 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.

Signed in Washington, DC on January 8, 2003.

Kenneth J. Roberts,

Acting Administrator, Foreign Agricultural Service.

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BILLING CODE 3410–10–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**Foreign Agricultural Service****Section 108 Foreign Currency Program**

AGENCY: Foreign Agricultural Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Foreign Agricultural Service invites proposals from interested parties to use Tunisian dinars acquired by the United States for activities to expand markets for U.S. agricultural commodities and for technical assistance activities.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Marketing Operations Staff, Foreign Agricultural Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 4932–S, STOP 1042, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20250–1042, (202) 720–4327.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Introduction**

The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) will make available Tunisian dinars to provide assistance in market development and agricultural technical assistance activities. These foreign currencies were acquired by USDA pursuant to agreements made under Title I of the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954, (Pub. L. 480).

Title I, Pub. L. 480 authorizes the U.S. government to finance the sale and exportation of agricultural commodities to foreign governments on concessional terms. Between 1986 and 1991, the U.S. entered into various Title I, Pub. L. 480 agreements with foreign governments, on terms which allowed repayment to the United States in local currencies. Pub. L. 480 authorizes the U.S. government to use these foreign currencies to implement market

development and agricultural technical assistance activities.

This announcement supersedes all previous announcements regarding this program. On January 8, 2002, FAS published a notice in the **Federal Register** (67 FR 862–864) inviting proposals to use currencies of the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Sri Lanka, and Tunisia for market development projects and technical assistance activities. The currencies of the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, and Sri Lanka, which were available under the previous announcements, are no longer available.

FAS must disburse local currencies to program participants, usually through the disbursing officer in the U.S. embassy in the country of origin. That is, FAS may not convert the local currency to any other currency prior to disbursement. It is the responsibility of the recipient to arrange for receiving and using the foreign currencies made available, or converting the funds to other currencies. Applicants should note that Tunisian currency may not be readily convertible.

Proposal Process

This notice is complemented by concurrent notices announcing five other foreign market development programs administered by FAS, including the Market Access Program (MAP), the Foreign Market Development Cooperator (Cooperator) Program, the Emerging Markets Program, the Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops Program, and the Quality Samples Program. The MAP and Cooperator Program notices detail a Unified Export Strategy (UES) application process which provides a means for interested applicants to submit a consolidated and strategically coordinated single proposal that incorporates funding requests for any or all of these programs. Some applicants to the section 108 foreign currency program, particularly those who are applying for funding under more than one program, may wish to use the UES application process. The Internet-based UES application, including step-by-step instructions for its use, is located at the following URL address: <http://www.fas.usda.gov/cooperators.html>. Other applicants, particularly those who are applying for funding only under the section 108 foreign currency program, should follow the application procedures contained in this notice. Interested applicants that are unsure of how to apply are urged to contact the Marketing Operations Staff at the address or phone number above.

FAS recommends that proposals to participate in the section 108 foreign

currency program contain, at a minimum, the following:

(a) *Organizational information, including:*

- Organization's name, address, Chief Executive Officer (or designee), and Federal Tax Identification Number (TIN);
- Type of organization, *e.g.*, corporation, non-profit organization;
- Name, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address of the primary contact person;
- If a trade organization, a description of the organization and its membership;
- A description of the organization's prior export promotion experience; and
- A description of the organization's experience in implementing a trade or technical assistance activity;

(b) *Market information, including:*

- An assessment of the targeted market;
- A long-term strategy in the market; and
- U.S. export value/volume and market share data and goals for 2000–2005;

(c) *Project information, including:*

- A brief project title;
- Request for funding in one of the available foreign currencies;
- A brief description of the specific market development trade constraint to be addressed by the project, performance measures for the years 2003–2005 which will be used to measure the effectiveness of the project, a benchmark performance measure for 2003, the viability of long term sales to this market, the goals of the project, and the expected benefits to the represented industry;
- A method for evaluating and reporting results;
- A description of the activities planned to address the constraint; and
- An itemized list of all estimated costs associated with each project activity for which reimbursement will be sought;

(d) Information indicating all funding sources and amounts to be contributed by each entity that will supplement implementation of the proposed project. This may include the organization that submitted the proposal, private industry entities, host governments, foreign third parties, Commodity Credit Corporation, FAS, or other Federal agencies. Contributed resources may include cash or goods and services; and,

(e) A completed Standard Form 424 (SF-424). This form is available on the Internet via the section 108 fact sheet at the following URL address: <http://www.fas.usda.gov/info/factsheets/>

[108fact.htm](#), or by calling the contact listed above.

Review Process and Allocation Criteria

The FAS allocates funds in a manner which 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. FAS will provide financial assistance under this program on a competitive basis and applications will be reviewed against the evaluation criteria contained herein. Each proposal will be evaluated by the applicable FAS commodity division. The divisions will recommend funding levels for each applicant based on a review of the applications against the following factors:

- The ability of the organization to provide an experienced staff with the requisite technical and trade expertise to execute the proposal;
- The funding request and the organization's willingness to contribute resources, including cash, goods and services of the U.S. industry and foreign third parties;
- The conditions or constraints affecting the level of U.S. exports and market share for the agricultural commodities and products;
- The degree to which the proposed project is likely to contribute to the creation, expansion, or maintenance of the targeted foreign market; and
- The degree to which the organization's proposal is coordinated with other private or U.S. government-funded market development projects.

The purpose of this review is to identify meritorious proposals and to suggest an appropriate funding level for each application based upon these factors. Meritorious proposals will then be reviewed by representatives of each FAS program area for the purpose of allocating available funds among the applicants.

Preference is given to nonprofit U.S. agricultural trade organizations that

represent an entire industry or are nationwide in membership and scope.

Note: FAS generally reviews section 108 proposals on a quarterly basis. However, FAS may also consider proposals on an accelerated basis if an urgent marketing opportunity becomes available. FAS will evaluate such proposals according to the criteria specified in this notice.

Agreements

Following approval of a proposal, FAS will enter into an agreement with the organization that submitted the proposal. Agreements will incorporate the project details as approved by FAS and specify any other terms and conditions applicable to project funding. Agreements include the maximum amount of funds, in local currencies rather than U.S. dollars, which may be made available for a participant's approved activities. All agreements with non-profit organizations under this program are administered under 7 CFR 3019—Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and other Non-profit Organizations. These regulations can be found on the Internet at the following URL address: http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_01/7cfr3019_01.html.

Submission of Proposals

Applicants may submit proposals at any time. However, all Internet-based section 108 proposals (using the UES application) must be properly submitted by 5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, March 10, 2003, because the UES entry Web site closes at that time. Signed SF-424 forms must be delivered to one of the addresses listed below.

All proposals on diskette (with two accompanying paper copies and a signed SF-424 form) and any other proposals must be delivered to 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 Ave., 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.

Signed at Washington, DC, on January 8, 2003.

Kenneth J. Roberts,

Acting Administrator, Foreign Agricultural Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Gallatin National Forest Invasive Plant Treatment EIS, Gallatin National Forest, Gallatin County, Madison County, Meagher County, Park County, Sweet Grass County, and Stillwater County, MT

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: Invasive plants can alter ecosystem processes, including: productivity; hydrologic function; nutrient cycling, and natural disturbance patterns such as frequency and intensity of wildfires. Changing these processes can lead to displacement of native plant species, eventually impacting wildlife and plant habitat, recreational opportunities, livestock forage, and scenic values. The Forest Service has identified that at least 15,500 acres on the Gallatin National Forest that are in a downward trend due to the infestation of invasive plants. The Forest Service will evaluate these known infestations and high-risk areas or conditions that may cause infestations over the next ten to fifteen years and analyze various management activities to reduce the spread and density of invasive plants and allow desirable native vegetation to re-establish and regain vigor. Based on previous trend information, it is estimated that infestations could increase to approximately 155,000 acres over the next ten to fifteen years at historic funding levels. The purpose and need for this project is for the Forest Service to improve the trend of the

ecological condition for the known infestations, prevent infestations in areas that have potential for invasion, and allow for adaptive management to treat anticipated new infestations across the Gallatin National Forest over the next ten to fifteen years. The proposed actions being considered to achieve the purpose and need include implementing an integrated pest management program aimed at controlling new starts, priority areas and areas of minor infestations; and implementing holding actions on areas of existing large infestations. The Gallatin National Forest is proposing to continue control of invasive plants through the integration of mechanical, biological, ground and aerial (helicopter) herbicide control methods.

DATES: Comments concerning the scope of the analysis should be received in writing on or before February 28, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to Hebgen Lake Ranger District, Gallatin National Forest, PO Box 520, West Yellowstone, MT 59758.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Direct questions about the proposed action and EIS to Susan LaMont, Project Coordinator, PO Box 520, West Yellowstone, Montana 59758, phone (406) 823-6976.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: These management activities would be administered by the Gallatin National Forest in Gallatin, Madison, Meagher, Park, Sweet Grass, and Stillwater Counties, Montana. The EIS will tier to the 1987 Gallatin National Forest and Grasslands Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan), which provide the overall management direction for the area. The proposed action is consistent with the Forest Plan. The purpose of the Forest Service proposal is to further movement towards desired conditions outlined in the Forest Plan, by:

- Protecting the natural condition and biodiversity on the Gallatin National Forest by preventing or limiting the spread of aggressive, non-native plant species that displace native vegetation;

- Promptly eliminating new invaders (species not previously reported in the area) before they become established;
- Reducing known and potential invasive plant seed sources on trailheads and campsites, along main roads and trails, within powerline corridors, and in wildlife and livestock use areas;
- Preventing or limiting the spread of established invasive plants into areas containing little or no infestation;
- Protecting sensitive and unique habitats including the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness Area, LeeMetcalf Wilderness, municipal watersheds, critical winter ranges, research natural areas, riparian areas, and sensitive plant populations.

The proposed action will be consistent with the Forest Plan, which provides goals, objectives, standards and guidelines of the various activities and land allocations on the forest. The Forest Plan allocates the project area into twenty-six management areas (MAs), the invasive plants occur within most of these management areas. Private lands are also included within the project area boundary. Although excluded from Forest Service activities, project access and the condition of private lands will be considered during alternative development and when analyzing potential cumulative efforts.

The key issue topics identified to date include:

- The current and potential impacts of invasive plants on natural resources such as critical big game habitat, native plant communities, wilderness values, watersheds, and threatened, endangered, or sensitive species;
- Economics, effectiveness, and potential impacts of various control methods on natural resources;
- Potential effects on non-target native plants, wildlife and fish populations, and human health from the application of herbicides (both ground base and aerial applications).

The areas the Forest Service plan to analyze include:

| Ranger district | Location (township range) | Maximum treatment acreage ¹ | Estimated aerial treatment acreage |
|-------------------|--|--|------------------------------------|
| Big Timber | Between T5N—T5S; and Between R15E—R10E, Montana Principle Meridian. | 900 Acres | 0 Acres. |
| Livingston | Between T6N—T8S; and Between R12E—R5E, Montana Principle Meridian. | 2,000 Acres | 0 Acres. |
| Gardiner | Between TFS—T9S; and Between R17E—R5E, Montana Principle Meridian. | 6,200 Acres | 0 Acres. |
| Bozeman | Between T4N—T9S; and Between R8E—R1E, Montana Principle Meridian. | 3,700 Acres | 171 Acres. |
| Hebgen Lake | Between T8S—T15S; and Between R5E—R2E, Montana Principle Meridian. | 2,700 Acres | 172 Acres. |

¹ These are the maximum projected treatment acres, actual treatment acres may be less.

A range of reasonable alternatives will be considered, including a no action

alternative. Other alternatives will examine various combinations of

invasive plant treatment. Based on the issues gathered through scoping, the