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U.S.-Iraq Agriculture Trade Mission Visits Baghdad

At a ceremony at the Al-Rasheed Hotel on Monday, Ambassador Christopher R. Hill, Minister of Trade Dr. Safaeddin Mohamed Safi, and Senior Deputy Minister of Agriculture Dr. Subhi Al-Jamailly welcomed the first U.S.-Iraq Agriculture Trade Mission to Baghdad. Head of delegation Dan Berman led a group of officials from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and 18 major U.S. agriculture companies who came to Iraq looking to invest in Iraq's future development.

In his remarks, Ambassador Hill highlighted the excellent partnership between the U.S. Embassy and the Ministries of Trade and of Agriculture, noting that this trade mission is a direct result of the Strategic Framework Agreement and an important step in strengthening economic relations between the two countries. More important than the government efforts, said Hill, the visit by major U.S. agriculture companies is proof that private business has heightened interest in Iraq to increase trade and investment opportunities.

The trade mission's three-day program included information sessions and briefings on key topics such as the Iraqi agricultural sector, local import regulations, security conditions, and trade finance in Iraq. Over 200 Iraqi companies registered to participate in the program, which included more than 250 matchmaking meetings between American and Iraqi company representatives to discuss the vast potential in developing Iraq's agricultural sector.

Berman noted that agriculture represents nearly 10% of Iraq's economy and is a major employer in many areas of the country. By increasing trade and investment in the agriculture sector, Iraqis will enjoy more selection, better prices, and healthier food in the long term as Iraq's farmers and other food producers improve agricultural productivity and food safety.

The 18 U.S. agriculture companies participating in the trade mission included: Archer Daniels Midland, Chore-Time Brock, Case New Holland, Dantzler, Estmar Global, Global Export Marketing, Ground Works Inc., Hakan Agro Group, Hay Day Farms, JM Grain, John Deere, Lamex, Midamar Corporation, Monsanto, Mountaire Farms, Riceland Foods, San Joaquin Distributors, The Rice Company.



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