



Market Promotion

Market Your Products Internationally and Receive 50% Reimbursement While You Do It!

Exporter Manual

Eligible Activities Include:

- Advertisements
- Marketing and Promotions
- International Trade Shows
- Public Relations
- International Websites
- Foreign Market Compliant Packaging/Labeling
- and More!



**Food
Export**
Midwest USA



**Food
Export USA**
Northeast



The Branded Program is a cost-share funding program that provides financial assistance to help U.S. food and agricultural exporters promote their products in international markets. Participants in this program receive 50 percent cost reimbursement for a variety of approved overseas marketing and promotional expenses.

2022 BRANDED PROGRAM YEAR RESULTS

389
companies
assisted

68
new
companies

PRODUCTS PROMOTED
IN MORE THAN

68
countries

OVER
\$1.65
BILLION
ACTUAL EXPORT SALES

OVER
\$1.7
BILLION
IN PROJECTED
EXPORT SALES

Dear U.S. Exporter:

Your company's decision to market your products internationally through Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast's Branded Program benefits your small business by growing your export marketing budget, helping to engage greater export growth. On a grander scale, your participation helps offset the American trade deficit and supports over 800,000 American jobs. To assist you in this endeavor, we are proud to offer the 2024 Branded Program.

Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast are non-profit organizations comprised of state agricultural promotion agencies that use federal, state, and industry resources to promote the export of Midwestern and Northeastern food and agricultural products. We are dedicated to supporting U.S. suppliers whose business strategy includes promoting their branded food and agricultural products in overseas markets.

Through Exporter Education, Market Entry, and Market Promotion strategies, Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast can help your company understand and discover new exporting opportunities by providing 50% reimbursement for costs incurred to execute eligible marketing and promotional activities. These services are made possible through funding from the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the USDA.

We provide this manual in an effort to make your participation in the Branded Program as easy as possible. It is important that you review the policies, procedures, and guidelines of the program in order to take full advantage of all its benefits. See Pages 35-36 for a complete list of state departments of agriculture and contacts. Additionally, should you need further assistance, contact the Food Export Liaison team at 312.334.9200 in the Midwest and 215.829.9111 in the Northeast.

You can easily manage your entire 2024 Branded Program participation using My Food Export Portal at foodexport.org. Login (or register for a new account) today!

We appreciate your interest in the 2024 Branded Program. We look forward to working with you throughout the year to help you promote and sell your products abroad!

Molly Burns
Branded Program Manager
Food Export–Midwest

Howard Gordon
Branded Program Manager
Food Export–Northeast

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SYMBOL KEY



The symbol noted here indicates **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**.



The symbol noted here indicates **REQUIRED INFORMATION** necessary to process, complete, or approve your request.



The symbol noted here indicates a new **REGULATION**.

2024 Program Calendar – Important Dates

Apply Early



The Branded Program can assist you in:

- Funding assistance to promote your products overseas
- Entering new markets



TIP

The Food Export Advisor Program can help you create an export marketing plan, and identify your exporting goals, so you can get the most out of the Branded Program. Contact your Liaison for more information.



Reimbursement claims must be submitted within 60 days after the completion of the activity.

Reimbursements are subject to denial if submitted after 60 days.

Spending that occurs before you submit your application will not be reimbursable (with the exception of certain trade show booth and international travel expenses). Apply early to avoid lost opportunity.



The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the USDA may issue new regulations and/or revised interpretations or make other changes without notice. If this happens, Food Export-Midwest and Food Export-Northeast may be required to further amend or restrict these guidelines and, in some cases, amend program agreements accordingly.

2023

2024 Branded Program Year Opens for Pre-qualifications AUGUST 16, 2023

Application deadline for January approvals OCTOBER 31, 2023

(Application acceptance beyond this date is contingent upon available funds.)

2024

Start of 2024 program year JANUARY 1, 2024

End of the 2024 program year DECEMBER 31, 2024

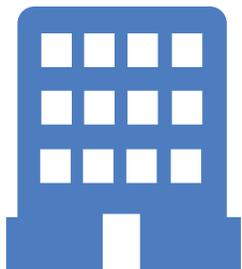
Deadline to submit contract change requests (amendments) DECEMBER 31, 2024

2025

Deadline to submit reimbursement claims and corresponding documentation requests FEBRUARY 28, 2025

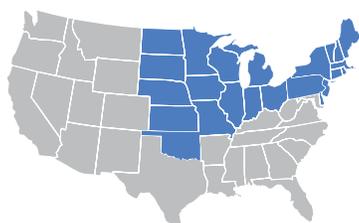
Evaluations due FEBRUARY 28, 2025

Is Your Company Eligible For The Branded Program?



* **Company Must Be Small or Medium in Size or a Cooperative**

Only companies defined as “Small” or “Medium” by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) are eligible to participate. Agricultural producer cooperatives are also eligible and exempt from size restrictions. The SBA utilizes the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) to determine company size status. Generally your total number of employees determines your size. Total number of employees includes all subsidiary employees, all parent company employees, and employees of all subsidiaries of the parent company. For more information, go to [sba.gov](https://www.sba.gov).



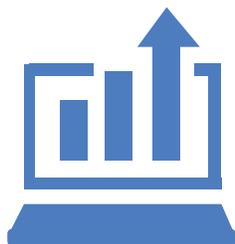
* **Companies Must Be Based in the United States and Headquartered in the Midwest or Northeast Regions**

Each participating company must be a registered business entity in the United States. Companies must be headquartered in one or more of the following states in the Midwest (Food Export–Midwest) and/or Northeast (Food Export–Northeast) regions and can document a positive economic impact to the states listed on Page 6. A company’s headquarters is defined as the physical location of the business’ main management/operations office.



* **Participants Must Have Adequate Resources and Product Supply for Export Market Development**

Each eligible company must provide adequate management and financial resources for export market development. Likewise, companies must furnish adequate product quantities necessary to ensure continuous supplies to the markets for which funding is requested.



* **Participants Must Have Sufficient Gross Sales and Resources**

Each participant must have at least US\$100,000 in gross sales during the previous year and adequate management and financial resources for export market development.

Is Your Company Eligible For The Branded Program? CONTINUED

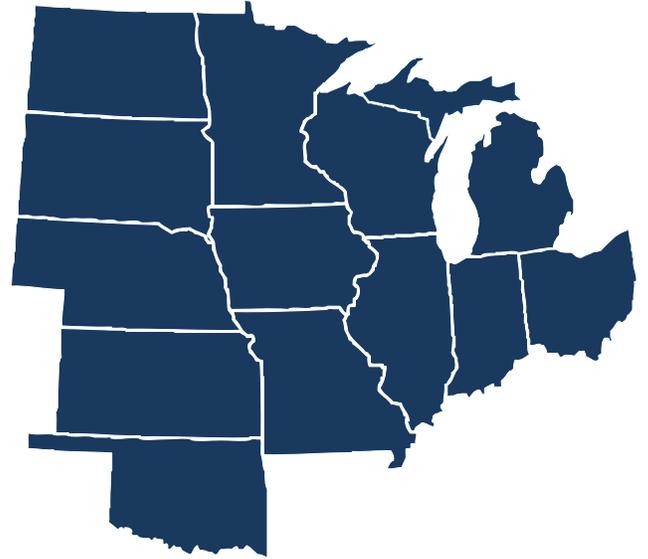


If You Are Outside the Midwest and Northeast Regions

If you are not headquartered in the Midwest or Northeast, you can still apply for the Branded Program through other State Regional Trade Groups (SRTGs). Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast are two of four SRTGs in the United States. Companies located in or impacting the Southern region can contact the Southern U.S. Trade Association (SUSTA) at susta.org or by phone 504.568.5986. For companies located in or impacting the Western region, contact the Western U.S. Agricultural Trade Association (WUSATA) at wusata.org or 360.693.3373.

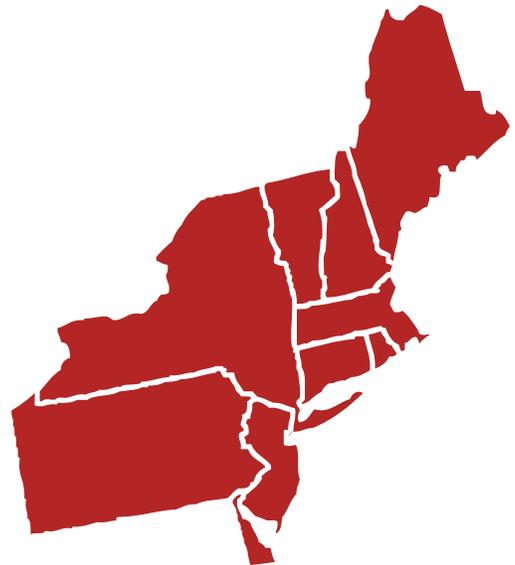
Midwest Region

Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Kansas
Michigan
Minnesota
Missouri
Nebraska
North Dakota
Ohio
Oklahoma
South Dakota
Wisconsin



Northeast Region

Connecticut
Delaware
Maine
Massachusetts
New Jersey
New Hampshire
New York
Pennsylvania
Rhode Island
Vermont



Are Your Products Eligible For The Branded Program?



Products Must Be Value-Added Agricultural Products Including But Not Limited To:

- Consumer Food Products
- Food Ingredients
- Hemp*
- Pet Food Products
- Specific Wood Products
- Feed Ingredients
- Foodservice Products
- Other Agricultural Products
- Seafood**

* Hemp products and hemp ingredients must comply with all local, state, federal or international country laws and regulations to conduct eligible marketing activities and seek reimbursement. Please [click here](#) to review the requirements. Products explicitly promoting/marketing CBD are NOT eligible in the program.

** Eligible seafood products must be of 100% U.S. origin unless they are processed or used as an ingredient. Please contact us for more information about seafood products.

Products Must Contain at Least 50% U.S. Agricultural Content/Ingredients

The U.S. content of food and agricultural products is determined by the percentage of finished product (measured by weight) that originates in the United States, excluding water, packaging and minerals (including salt).

Please bear in mind, ingredients grown in a foreign country are not U.S. agricultural products even if they are purchased from a U.S. company.

Product Must Have a Clearly Visible Statement Indicating U.S. Origin

Brand names with U.S. or America in the title do not fulfill the origin statement requirement. Identifying the origin of your brand as a product of the USA, America, New Jersey, Minnesota, Connecticut, etc. meets this requirement.

Note, if you opt to use your state name as your origin statement, you must use the full state name (e.g. Vermont, not VT). See Page 17 for examples of eligible USA origin statements. This requirement does not apply in countries included on the "U.S. Origin Exemption List" located on Page 16.



A U.S. origin statement is recommended but not required for activities taking place in the United States.

If you are a pet food company and face restrictions on your U.S. origin statement, contact your Branded team and we will work with you to find a solution.



If your product does not fall into one of the categories but still meets the 50% agricultural content standard you may still be eligible. Contact us to see if your product qualifies.

Important Fraud Information



Products Cannot Be Covered By Another Commodity Group

Companies can participate in the Food Export Branded Program ONLY if funding assistance is not available for their product(s) through another commodity group.

Product(s) affected might include chocolate, confections, and meat. If a company has multiple product lines, (for example, roasted almonds and snack chips) that company can apply for Food Export–Midwest or Food Export–Northeast’s Branded Program.

Other cooperators who have Branded Programs are:

- Blue Diamond Growers (BDG)*
- California Prune Board (CPB)*
- Cal-Pure Produce (CP)
- Cranberry Marketing Committee (CMC)
- National Confectioners Association (NCA)
- Raisin Administrative Committee (RAC)
- Southern United States Trade Association (SUSTA)
- Sunkist Growers, Inc.*
- U.S. Livestock Genetics Export (USLGE)
- U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF)
- Welch’s Foods*
- Western United States Agricultural Trade Association (WUSATA)

Important Fraud Information

All Branded Program participants are expected to comply with the laws of the countries they are doing business with, as are the agents representing them. Failure to obey these laws is grounds for being dropped from the program. If participants knowingly commit an act of fraud, we are authorized to inform the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the USDA and the participant will be dropped from the program. Additional legal action may be taken.

Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast have a zero tolerance policy regarding fraud. Participants will not engage in fraud which, for the purposes of this program is defined as: the taking or obtaining by deception, of money or any other benefit from—when not entitled to the benefit or the attempt to do so; the intentional misrepresentation of—financial position; the intentional misrepresentation of information leading to financial loss; the alteration of claim documentation. All suspected fraud and allegations of fraud will be reported to the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the USDA, which could result in being dropped from the program and legal action being taken.

Branded Program Checklist: Understanding the Program Step by Step

Step 1



Pre-Qualification worksheet submission and review

(up to 72 hours for approval)

All companies must submit a pre-qualification, even those who have previously participated in the Branded Program. Applications cannot be started until the pre-qualification has been approved.

Step 2



Application form submission and review

- Application Summary
- Country Marketing Plan
- U.S. trade shows eligible for reimbursement to be included in U.S. Country Marketing Plan
- Electronic Certification Page
- Application Fee (US\$250), nonrefundable *(Note: In 2024, there will be a 3% transaction fee applied to all credit card payments, including application fees.)*

Costs incurred before the date you submit your application will NOT be eligible for reimbursement. An exception may be made for certain trade show booth and travel expenses.

Approvals are based on the quality of the application and the overall level of funding available. Accordingly, Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast reserve the right to accept or reject any application or limit allocations to any applicant.

There is a non-refundable fee of US\$250 paid upon submission of the application online. Your application cannot be processed until this fee is paid. We are now accepting credit card payments through our website as a form of payment for application fees and administrative fees. In 2024, there will be a 3% transaction fee applied to all credit card payments, including application fees.

First-Time Applicants: First-time applicants who do not have previous export experience will be limited to a maximum initial allocation of US\$25,000. First-time applicants with export experience will be limited to an initial maximum allocation of US\$50,000. Requests for additional funds, if available, will be considered if initial funding is fully utilized.

Step 3



Step 3 – Application Approval

Application approval can take up to four weeks

When your application is approved, you will be notified via email. You will then receive an approval email indicating your contract effective date, contract agreement(s) for signature, an invoice for the 6% administrative fee, a “Product of the USA” sign, a W9 Tax Form, and a form to enroll in ACH reimbursement payments.

Branded Program Checklist: Understanding the Program Step by Step CONTINUED

Step 4



Remittance of the program fees and signed agreements

Within 30 days after receipt of the approval confirmation letter

All program participants are charged a non-refundable administrative fee equal to 6% of the approved funding request. All items (completed W9, signed agreement(s), and payment of the administrative fee) MUST be returned within 30 days.

Step 5



Changing Country Marketing Plans

Deadline: December 31, 2024

Changes to Country Marketing Plans and Domestic Trade Show Plans are made online. All changes must be submitted prior to December 31 of the program year. This includes changes such as adding activities, brands, increasing funding levels, or new country marketing plans. Allocations cannot be lowered via a contract change. Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast review and approve contract changes on a case-by-case basis.

Step 6



Reimbursements submission

Deadline: within 60 days after the activity, final deadline: February 28, 2024

Reimbursement claims should be submitted through your company portal at **foodexport.org**, under the Branded Program tab. You will be prompted to submit your backup documentation on our website when you submit the claim. We also accept reimbursement documentation via email or physical mail.

Step 7



Reimbursements disbursement

30 day turnaround time upon submission of all required documents

We are now able to make reimbursement payments through ACH payment. If you are interested in receiving your reimbursements this way, contact your Branded team or fill out **this form** and send to the Branded team. We strongly recommend ACH payments for all companies.



You cannot file for reimbursement until the program agreement is signed, the administrative fee has been paid, and we receive your completed W9 Tax Form.



Contracts and changes to your agreement require executive level signatures.

Branded Program Checklist: Understanding the Program Step by Step CONTINUED

Step 8



Submission of the end of year program evaluation

Deadline: February 28, 2025

Program evaluations are vital to the success and improvement of the Branded Program and are mandatory for all participating companies. Evaluation forms are available online. All information is regarded as strictly “business confidential” and only reported in aggregate with other program participants.

Step 9



Step 9 – Get ready to apply for the 2025 program year

Application submission deadline: October 31, 2024

All steps are covered in detail further in the manual. Please read ahead to learn more about the Branded Program.



Reimbursements and future allocations will be withheld for companies failing to complete evaluation forms.



Note: We can answer your questions or provide assistance at any time during the application process at 312.334.9200 for Food Export–Midwest or 215.829.9111 for Food Export–Northeast.

First Step to Applying: Pre-Qualification



All companies will be cross checked with the System for Award Management (SAM) database online to ensure participants can receive federal funding. We reserve the right to independently verify the accuracy of all information provided through the pre-qualification.



The pre-qualification is a self-certifying form which we use to determine whether or not your company and products are eligible for the program. If, through our research, we are not satisfied with your company's or your product's eligibility, Food Export-Midwest and Food Export-Northeast reserve the right to deny your pre-qualification.



Food Export-Midwest and Food Export-Northeast may reject any applications from past participants if we deem that they have not complied with previous Branded Program Agreements, MAP or FAS regulations, or any other laws of the United States, Food Export Association policy, or if there is an outstanding question regarding the validity of their claims, applications, or evaluations.

My Food Export Portal: Need Help?

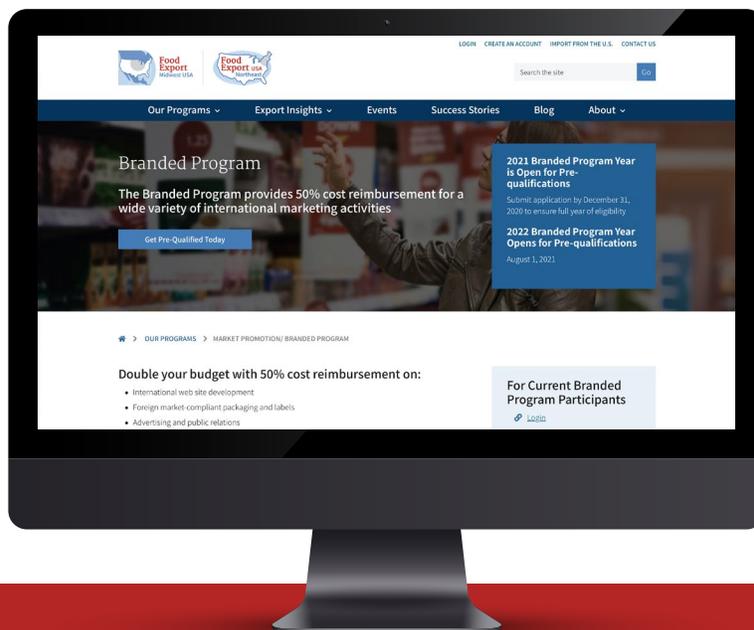
Before logging into your account, you should have the following materials ready:

- Total number of full-time employees, including the parent company and all its subsidiaries
- Gross sales revenue
- Dunn & Bradstreet number (if you have one)
- North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code. Determine your NAICS code here: <https://www.census.gov/naics/>
- Your Federal Tax ID number

The application process begins with the pre-qualification, which can be accessed at foodexport.org. For returning participants, log in and proceed directly to your Branded Program Portal. If you do not have an account on our website, you will first need to complete the New Visitor Registration. Once you are logged in, click on "My Portal," and click on the tab labeled "Branded Program." Select the link "Submit a Pre-Qualification," that appears under the appropriate program year.

Once your pre-qualification is approved, you will receive an email confirmation with instructions for submitting your application. The approval of your pre-qualification will automatically open your access to the application. You can access the application by clicking on "Submit Application", which will appear directly under your approved pre-qualification for the program year. Remember, you cannot begin the application until your pre-qualification is approved.

If you were in the program in past years, you can perform a search to view records from previous years. Using the Branded Program tab on "My Food Export Portal," you can search for your pre-qualifications, program applications, reimbursements, evaluations, Pre-travel Notifications, and previously requested changes to your contract.



Completing The Application

Before starting the application, please be sure to collect the following:



Sales Figures

Confirm total sales and gross export sales for four individual calendar years. We require your actual sales for two years prior to the application, projected sales for the year of the application, and projected sales for the following year.



Brand Name Products

Include all products to be promoted. Include the contact information of the brand owner for any branded products promoted but not owned by the applicant.



Country Information

Refer to list of eligible activities on Pages 17-24 to develop a marketing plan for each country. Obtain details for each activity you will conduct (names, dates, and costs). Determine the amount of matching funds you will request per country.



Applicants without internet access may request hard copies of the necessary application forms.

TIP

For international trade shows, you must submit a plan for the country in which the show takes place.



Companies that only submit a plan for a trade show held in the U.S. may receive Branded funding for two years. At that time, they must demonstrate international activity to continue receiving funding for U.S. activities. **Failure to demonstrate international activity can affect future participation in the program and is reviewed year-to-year by the Branded Program Manager.**

The application includes the following sections:

• Application Summary

Basic company contact information, any previous use of funds through other groups, and your company's sales information.

• Country Marketing Plan

Be prepared to provide cost estimates for all of your promotional plans.

If you have an importer in place, you must include the full contact information of your importer/distributor in that country.

Note: Since June 5, 2018, Federal regulations prohibit funding Branded Program activities in the following countries: Crimea Region of Ukraine, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, and Syria. Certain restrictions apply when exporting to Sudan, please contact us for more information. Note: The USDA is suspending approval for all activities in both Russia and Belarus that are supported by FAS market development program funding.

Please contact the Midwest or Northeast Branded Program teams regarding the eligibility of activities in these countries.

• Trade Shows Held in the U.S.

Expenses associated with select USDA approved trade shows in the United States (Pages 32-33) are eligible for reimbursement.

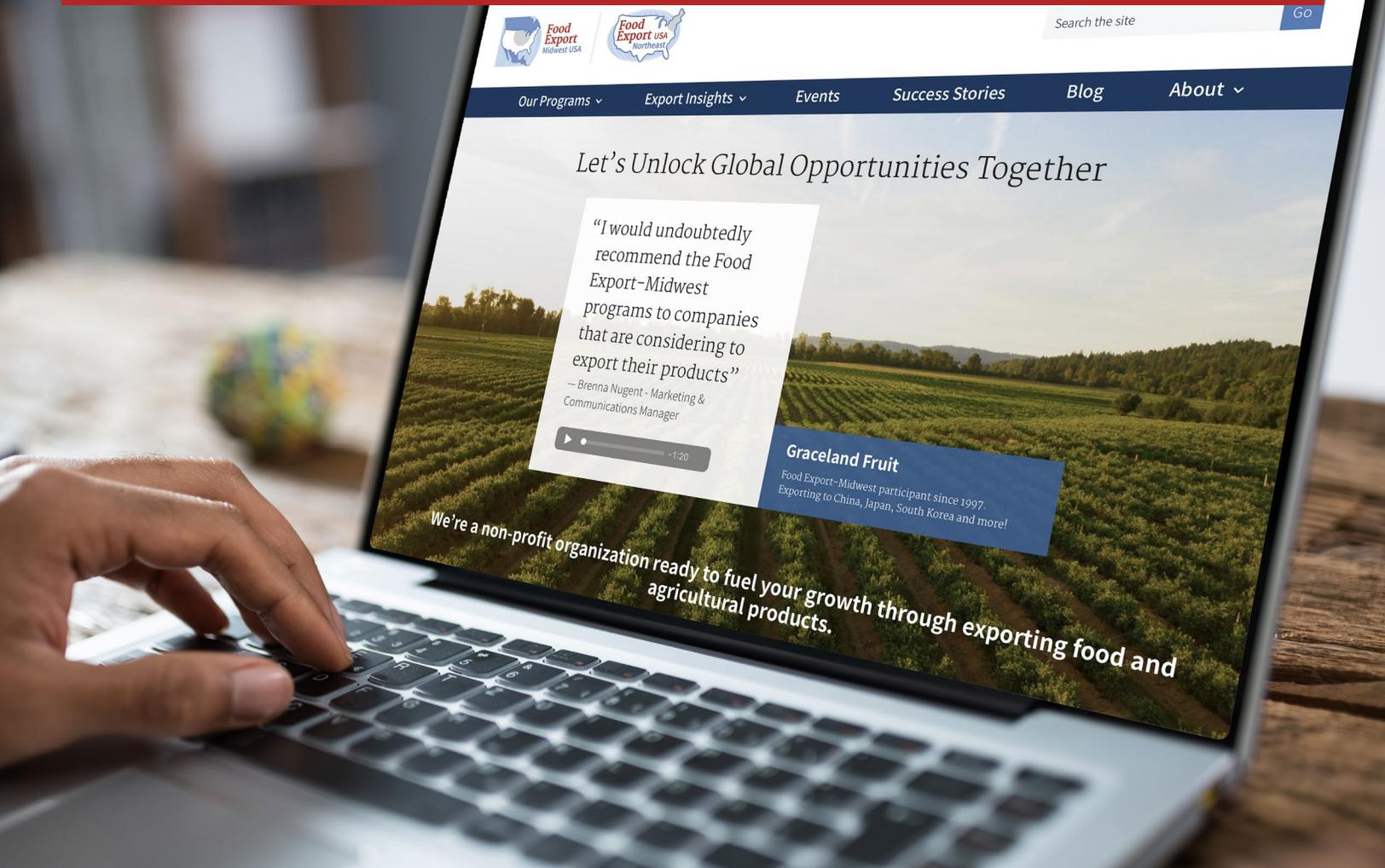
• Product

During the application, you'll provide information on your products. We must confirm that your products meet our standards for U.S. origin. See Page 7 for more information.

• Certification Page

The certification page is the last page of the application summary. This page must be digitally signed and submitted online.

Completing The Application CONTINUED



Please note that certification of exclusivity is used for Branded Program purposes only and provides exclusive rights for the company to obtain Branded Program funding to promote the products in the countries listed in the Brand Permission.

• Application Fee

A non-refundable application fee of US\$250 must be paid online via credit card or, in certain circumstances, a check can be mailed to the appropriate Midwest or Northeast office. *Note: In 2024, there will be a 3% transaction fee applied to all credit card payments, including application fees.*

• Brand Owner Permissions Form

If you are promoting a brand your company does not own because you are an export trading company or you are supplying product for a private label, you must submit a Brand Owner Permissions Form.

Note: The minimum amount of reimbursements a company can request is US\$2,500, and the maximum amount is US\$300,000. Producer-owned agricultural cooperatives may request up to a maximum of US\$350,000. This maximum includes any Branded Program (MAP) funding a participant may receive from other cooperators in addition to the Branded Program.

Making Changes to Your Program Agreement (Amendments)

Companies often have to make changes to their budget and allocation after signing the Program Agreement and paying the administrative fee. The examples below include the most commonly requested changes to existing Program Agreements.

It is the responsibility of your company to alert Food Export–Midwest or Food Export–Northeast of any changes to your product during the program year that may change your eligibility for Branded Program Promotion. This includes changes to the ownership of the Brand, changes to exclusivity agreement, changes to private label agreement, or changes to the product itself, which would decrease its U.S. Agricultural content below the minimal acceptable content as outlined by Market Access Program guidelines.

Adding a New Country

A new country marketing plan must be submitted. Additional funds may be requested, or existing funds can be shifted from another country in your approved application.

Moving Funds Between Existing Approved Countries

It is possible to move funds between existing approved countries. You may need to submit a contract amendment request. Please contact your Branded team with any questions.

Requesting Additional Funds

Spending beyond your original allocation may be reimbursed only after the request has been approved. Thus, it is important to track your expected utilization and request additional funding before December 31 of the program year.

- Requests for additional allocation will be accompanied by a 6% administrative fee on any additional funding approved.
- The deadline to submit contract change requests is December 31 of the program year.
- Total allocations generally may not exceed US\$300,000 per company in a single program year, or US\$350,000 for a producer-owned agricultural cooperative. However, it may be possible to receive funding above this limit. Contact the Branded team to see if your company is eligible.

- If requesting additional allocation, please contact the Midwest or Northeast offices to check on **fund** availability.

Adding a New Overseas Agent

Whenever a new overseas agent is appointed, a participant company must add it to the appropriate Country Marketing Plan, including the company name, address, and other contact information of that importer.

Adding One or More New Products to a Country Marketing Plan

Promotions of products not in your application will result in denial of your reimbursement. You should request new products to be added as necessary.

CHANGING PLANS ONLINE

- Log into “My Food Export Portal” at **foodexport.org** and select the Branded Program tab.
- Select the appropriate program year. *Note: If you are active in only one program year, this step is not required.*
- Click on “Submit Contract Change” beneath the application data.
- Complete all the relevant fields and submit.
- Allow two to three weeks for your change request to be processed.

You can contact us if you need assistance with the contract change submission process.



Approval of Program Agreement Changes must be granted prior to beginning the related new activity. It is advised that participants submit requests for additional funds as early in the year as possible. Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast cannot guarantee approval of additional funding requests for that program year. No changes of any type will be approved if submitted after the end of the program year.



Need help navigating our website? Find detailed instructions on using our website to manage all of your activities by clicking on “Need Help?” in the upper right corner of **foodexport.org.**

Eligibility of Your Expenses



Reimbursements Are 50% of Invoiced Cost

Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast pay 50 cents per dollar of eligible expenses (with the exception of giveaway items priced above US\$4 each and certain travel expenses). Participating companies are paid on a reimbursement basis only.

Dates of Expenses Must Be Eligible

All program activities and related expenses must occur and be paid for between January 1, 2024, and December 31, 2024. However, no reimbursements will be made for expenses incurred before you submit your application (with the exception of certain trade show booth and travel expenses which must be paid in advance). This rule applies to Reimbursement Claims and Amendments. Your Approval Date is clearly stated in the Approval Letter and Program Agreements.

USA Origin Statement Must Be Present

All activities and materials (including product labels, promotional materials, advertising, booth signage, etc.) must identify the origin of the agricultural commodity as being of U.S. origin. Some examples of this are:

- “Product of USA,” “Grown in the USA,” “Made in America,” Full name of a U.S. state, no abbreviations, can substitute for “U.S.,” “USA,” or “America” in the above statement.

Note: If your U.S. origin statement is not listed, please contact the Branded team to verify eligibility.

Note: Brand names that include “USA” or “American” do not qualify as the U.S. origin statement.

The print size of the origin identifications must conform to the U.S. standard of 1/8th inch (.42 cm) in height based on the lowercase letter “o.” For large format promotional signage, the USA origin identification must be visible at standard viewing distance.

Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast cannot, under any circumstances, reimburse your expenses if you do not comply with the USA origin identification requirement.

U.S. companies are granted exemption from the U.S. origin labeling requirement for activities conducted in countries listed on the U.S. Origin Exemption List. These countries are currently on that list: Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Tunisia, and the United States.

Note: The UAE is no longer exempt from the U.S. origin labeling requirements as of January 1, 2017.

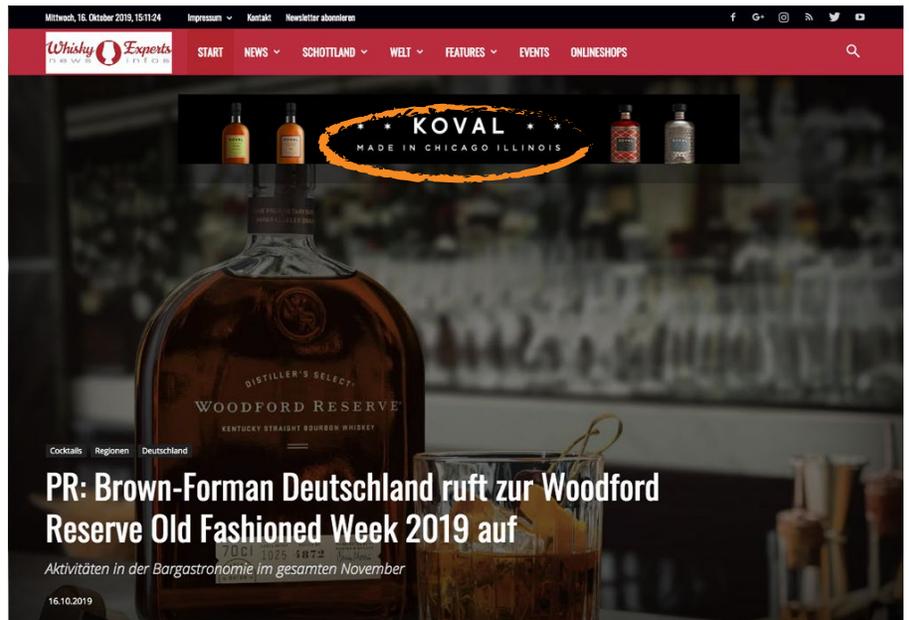
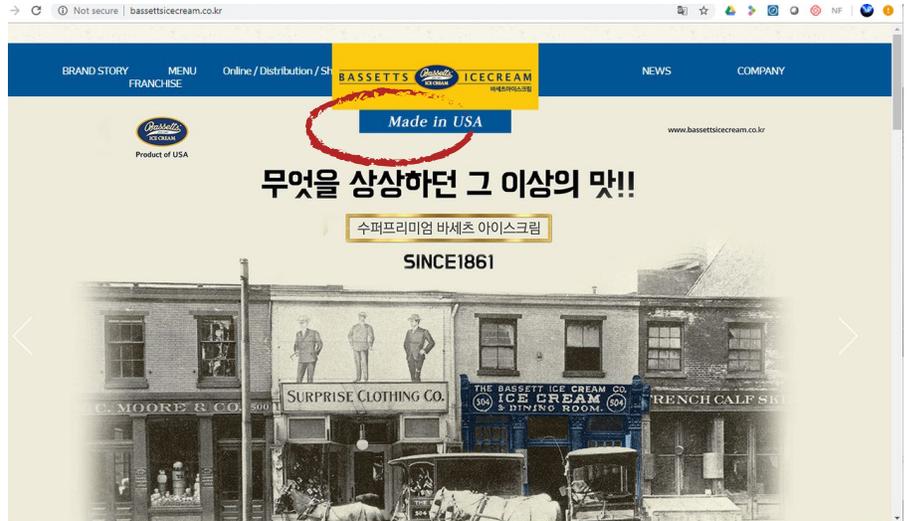
Note: A U.S. origin statement is recommended, but not required for activities taking place in the United States.

Note: Since June 5, 2018, Federal regulations prohibit funding Branded Program activities in the following countries: Crimea Region of Ukraine, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, and Syria. Certain restrictions apply when exporting to Sudan, please contact us for more information.

Note: The USDA is suspending approval for all activities in both Russia and Belarus that are supported by FAS market development program funding.

Please contact the Midwest or Northeast Branded Program teams regarding the eligibility of activities in these countries.

Examples of Accepted U.S. Origin Statements



#productofusa



Eligible Expenses: Domestic



Marketing and Point-of-Sale Materials

The Branded Program reimburses for these marketing materials within the USA only if they are created in conjunction with and pertain to your approved trade show(s) held in the U.S.

Public Relations and Advertisement

We will only reimburse for marketing materials and advertisements within the USA if they are created in conjunction with and pertain to your approved trade show(s) held in the U.S.

Note: All of the PR materials and advertisements must promote your presence at the approved trade show held in the U.S.; the exhibition dates; your booth number; the brand name and the product to be eligible.

Related Expenses for Trade Shows Held in the U.S.

A list of approved trade shows held in the U.S. is available on Pages 32-33.

- Exhibit fees, freight charges to and from the show, equipment and furnishings rented at the show (i.e., booth furnishings, utilities, badge scanners, etc.) setup charges, and electricity rental are examples of eligible expenses for trade shows held in the U.S.
- The costs of design and construction of a booth for the purposes of temporary exhibition are eligible for reimbursement.
- Travel and lodging expenses are not eligible for U.S. trade shows.
- Product showcases at the trade shows are eligible for reimbursement.

Part-time Contractors

Costs for part-time contractors that assist with product demonstrations at approved trade shows held in the U.S. are eligible. The maximum reimbursement amount for part-time contractors is determined by the U.S. government. The maximum eligible expense for 2023 is US\$73.20 per hour or US\$585.60 per day. 2024 contractor fees will be set by the U.S. government and will be announced at a later date.

Note: Employee wages and those of your overseas agent are not eligible.

Freight Costs

Costs for shipping samples and trade show materials to and from approved trade shows held in the U.S. are eligible.

Note: The actual cost of the samples is not eligible.

Seminars and Educational Training

Non-travel related expenses related to the production of seminars and educational training for international audiences are also eligible for reimbursement. Please be aware that in addition to the standard proof of activity for this event, you will be required to provide a list of attendees.



At this time, giveaway items such as pens, key rings, T-shirts, and caps are limited to a maximum reimbursement of US\$2 per individual item. Moving forward this amount can change. A statement identifying the U.S. origin of your product must be visible. Giveaway items must be free and not tied to a sale.

Eligible Expenses: International

Provided below is a description of the promotional activities eligible for reimbursement in the Branded Program. If you have questions about the eligibility of certain expenses, do not hesitate to contact Food Export–Midwest or Food Export–Northeast.

All forms of marketing must promote the brand name and have the U.S. origin statement visible to be eligible for reimbursement.

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

All domestic expenses MUST be associated with or created for an approved U.S. Trade show. A list of these shows can be found on Pages 32-33.

TYPE OF EXPENSE	DOMESTIC	INTERNATIONAL
Point of sale materials	■	■
Other marketing materials Including giveaway items and uniforms	■	■
Print advertisements		■
Website costs		■
Social media advertisement		■
Other online marketing Online marketing done domestically must also have circulation in a foreign market	■	■
Podcasts, radio, television marketing Podcast, radio, and television marketing done domestically must also have circulation in a foreign audience	■	■
Foreign market compliant packaging/labeling		■
Freight for samples	■	■
Domestic trade show related expenses	■	
International trade show related expenses		■
Part-time contractors	■	■
Travel expenses See Travel guidelines for eligibility of international travel expenses		■
Pre-approved international trade missions		■
Demonstrations/merchandising Including in-store promotions and demonstrations		■
Public relations & advertisement	■	■
Seminars and educational training Seminars held domestically must be for an international audience	■	■

Eligible Expenses: International CONTINUED

Marketing and Point-of-Sale Materials

Production and distribution costs of sell sheets, brochures, catalogs, shelf talkers, banners, posters, recipe cards, and related materials, including the cost of translation, are eligible for all overseas marketing activities. Materials that include product discounts or coupons are not eligible.

Public Relations

Production and distribution of press releases, press kits, and other materials and information directed at the media, trade, and consumers are eligible.

Advertising

The cost of production and placement of advertisements in magazines, newspapers, posters, billboards, direct mail, transit, and on TV, radio, and international websites is eligible. Requirements for the U.S. origin statement also apply to all digital marketing, including websites.

像我這種完全不想靠藥物調時差，但又飽受時差之苦的空服員們，大家應該都要隨身攜帶一瓶。搭配作息飲用，好喝又健康，也不用怕像藥物會有藥物殘留，不像保健品一樣難入口，我那天試喝完直接一覺好眠到隔天！



Online Marketing

Online marketing such as advertisements on Facebook, Google, WeChat, etc., and search engine optimization (SEO) are eligible for reimbursement. We will require proof of activity in the form of a screenshot of the advertisement or social media posts clearly showing it targets a foreign audience. A U.S. origin statement must be visible.

Social Media: We reimburse for content creation and social media management and the development of social

media pages that clearly target a foreign audience. We can also reimburse for advertisement of your brand on other social media sites, or by KOLs or influencers. Since social media is ever-changing, contact your Branded Program team with questions on eligibility of other platforms or types of online advertisement.

Social media websites could include: Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Social media advertising must target a foreign audience and visibly demonstrate the U.S. origin statement.

Website Development

Costs associated with developing, servicing, and updating websites that clearly target a foreign audience are eligible for reimbursement.

Videos

The production, translation, recording, and editing of videos used to advertise or promote your product to international customers is eligible for reimbursement.

See this [example](#) from one of our participants.



Demonstrations/Merchandising

In-store and Foodservice promotions, consumer and trade demonstrations, shipment of promotional samples, temporary displays and rental of temporary space for displays, such as end-of-aisle and gondola displays, are eligible.

You must provide pictures or demo reports with your request for reimbursement.

Eligible Expenses: International CONTINUED



Label modification sample



Foreign Market-Compliant Packaging/Labeling

Costs associated with design, production, and printing foreign market compliant labels to be used within the program year and any labor costs to attach or sticker (if outsourced) are eligible for reimbursement.

Participants must demonstrate:

- Packaging must clearly have been produced to create compliance with laws of the importing country.
- The company intends to use the new package/label(s) during the activity plan year.
- All reimbursable packaging and labeling must include an eligible U.S. origin statement unless the packaging and labeling are for countries listed on the U.S. Origin Exemption List on Page 16.



Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast reserve the right to contact vendors, Foreign Third Parties, and your financial institutions to verify transactions and payments. If we are unable to verify payments or participants are unwilling to assist us in the verification, we are under no obligation to provide reimbursement.



Booth expenses sample

International Trade Show Related Expenses

Most international trade shows are eligible including those supported or sponsored by Food Export–Midwest or Food Export–Northeast. If a trade show has a USDA-sponsored USA Pavilion you must exhibit in that pavilion (see Page 34 for more details) or contact us to request exemption from the U.S. Pavilion before the show begins.

- Exhibit fees, freight charges to and from the show, equipment and furnishings rented at the show (e.g., booth furnishings, utilities, badge scanners, etc.), setup charges, electricity rental, and limited travel expenses are eligible. Find more travel information on Pages 29-30.
- Design, creation, and construction costs for a temporary booth for trade-only exhibits and shows are eligible.
- Booth must display the U.S. origin statement. The U.S. Origin Statement must be imprinted on the booth and be clearly visible.



Virtual Trade Shows

The booth cost or registration fee for many international virtual trade shows is eligible for reimbursement. Please check with the Branded Program staff to see whether the virtual show you're planning to attend is eligible. Marketing materials created for a virtual trade show are eligible. A U.S. origin statement must be present.

Note: We recognize that some trade show related expenses must be paid for prior to the start of the Program Year. To help cover those expenses, keep records of payments for booth deposits, airline tickets, and hotel reservations to be eligible for reimbursement even if payments were made prior to the start of the Program Year or your documented application approval date.

Eligible Expenses: International CONTINUED



Travel Expenses

International travel expenses (flight, hotel, meals, and incidentals) are eligible for reimbursement **ONLY WHEN**:

- Flying on an eligible airline
- Travel is associated only with exhibiting at approved, eligible trade shows or trade missions
- Travelers have issued their pre-travel notification prior to the event

See Pages 29-30 for specifics on eligible international travel expenses. For more information on travel expense eligibility, see our [7 Things to Remember When Submitting Claims for Reimbursement](#) blog. **Certain restrictions apply.**

International Trade Seminars Related Expenses

Eligible seminars are those designed to inform industry representatives about U.S. brand names and products. Site rentals, interpreters, translation, and duplication of seminar materials are eligible.

Part-time Contractors

- Costs for demonstrators, interpreters, and translators that assist with eligible promotional activities such as in-store demonstrations, trade shows, and seminars are eligible.
- The maximum reimbursement amount for part-time contractors is determined by the U.S. government. The maximum eligible expense for 2023 is US\$73.20 per hour or US\$585.60 per day. 2024 contractor fees will be set by the U.S. government and will be announced at a later date.

Freight Costs

Costs for shipping samples to overseas agents, consumer and trade demonstrations, and for shipping trade show materials and samples to eligible trade shows and seminars are eligible.

Note: The actual cost of the samples is not eligible.

Trade Missions

If a trade mission is pre-approved by the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the USDA and the State Regional Trade Groups (SRTGs), participants may qualify for reimbursements on travel expenses (i.e., hotel, meals, and airfare). Please check with us in advance. Participation fees for trade missions are not eligible for reimbursement.

Loyalty Point Promotions

Fees to participate in loyalty point promotions may be eligible for reimbursement on a case-by-case basis. These should be requested in advance to the Branded Program Manager. Be sure to include a U.S. origin statement in any shelf talkers or advertisements featuring the product.



Ineligible Expenses



Many marketing-related expenses are considered “costs of doing business” or, for other reasons, fall outside the regulations of the Branded Program and therefore are not eligible for reimbursement. This list should not be considered complete. If you have questions concerning your company’s specific marketing plans and eligible reimbursements, contact Food Export–Midwest or Food Export–Northeast before incurring the expense.

General Ineligible Expenses

- Expenditures for activities and materials that do not carry U.S. origin statements.
- Any activity or product not specifically included or approved as part of the participant company’s Program Agreement or Approved Amendment
- Travel expenses, catering, and attendance fees related to international trade seminars are not eligible.
- Travel and lodging expenses related to trade shows held in the U.S. are never eligible for reimbursement.
- In-store demonstrations and merchandising in the U.S. are not eligible
- Expenses incurred for an activity prior to submission of the application or after December 31 of the program year are not eligible for reimbursement.
- Any activities and functions held within the U.S. (not including certain costs for approved trade shows held in the U.S.), its possessions, and in ineligible countries as listed on Page 16.
- Vehicle rental and fuel to transport trade show materials and samples are not reimbursable.



A company's promotions and advertisements cannot disparage any other company or product either directly or indirectly.

Business-Related Ineligible Expenses

- Salaries, living expenses, office costs, allowances, office parking fees
- Administrative expenses including communications costs (phone, fax, internet) including those related to travel (hotel and cellphone charges)
- Expenses paid to a vendor or foreign third party if we determine that a relationship exists between your company and the vendor/foreign third party in which one or more company employees, owners, partners or associates are also employees, owners, partners or associates of said vendor/foreign third party
- Capital expenditures including purchases of anything with usable shelf-life of one year or more
- Rental, lease, or purchase of warehouse space
- Purchase, construction, or lease of space for permanent displays (i.e., displays lasting beyond a one year activity plan)
- Meals, reception refreshments, entertainment, or gifts
- Business cards, seasonal greeting cards
- Membership and Program fees
- General company literature that does not include product promotion information
- Routine translation and interpretation services not related to eligible promotional materials
- All international travel costs not associated with exhibition at an international trade show or not pre-approved for a trade mission
- Management consultant fees
- Product-related ineligible expenses
- Product research and development
- Package and label design/production and origin identification stickers not specifically required by importing country (see Page 21 for details)
- Shelf trays
- Product samples
- Parking costs at U.S. trade shows
- Company branded shoes/sneakers worn as a uniform item are not eligible for reimbursement

Marketing-Related Ineligible Expenses

- Slotting and shelf-space fees, licensing fees, product registration, and similar sales expenses
- Coupons, redemptions, price discounts, and any other activity to reduce the selling prices of an agricultural product. Printing, distribution, and promotion of coupons are not eligible
- Advertisements or any other marketing and promotional items that feature a coupon that reduces the cost of the product
- Fees for participating in Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast programs and services (including Food Show PLUS!™, Buyers Missions, Market Builder, Focused Trade Missions, etc.)
- Sexual enhancement products and products of a sexual nature
- Promotions or products that are deemed offensive

Documentation Required For Reimbursement

To protect against fraud and other improper activities, we require specific documentation to be submitted for all reimbursement claims. If your company submits reimbursement claims with incomplete documentation, you will be contacted for additional materials. At that point you will have 60 days from notification to provide the requested documents or the reimbursement claims will be denied. Additional documentation is required for travel reimbursement, see Page 31.

Required Materials

All reimbursement requests require the following four documents:

* 1. Invoice

- Document from the vendor stating charges and details of the services rendered.

* 2. Proof of Payment

- Reimbursement is based on your payment, so we must have the proper documentation.
- Accepted proofs of payment include:
 - **Cash Receipt** – Must be marked “paid” and show a zero balance (only acceptable for payments under US\$1,000).
 - **Check** – We must see the canceled version of the check (a copy of the front and back of check), or a copy of the check accompanied by a bank statement showing it was posted.
 - **Bank/Credit Card Statement** – Credit card statement must show the charge. Signature slips are not acceptable. We do not need to see payment to the credit card company.
 - **Wire Transfer** – We must see the wire transfer confirmation or the bank statement showing the posted transaction. The request alone is not sufficient.
 - **Credit Memo** – If you are paying an overseas agent in product you must provide the invoice for the product and corresponding credit memo. If there is a remaining balance after applying the credit to the invoice, we must see that the vendor/overseas agent paid the balance as well as a freight or airway bill indicating the product was shipped.

- Overseas Agent expenses are eligible if they are submitted through the U.S. participant. We need to see all invoices that the Overseas Agent incurs and their corresponding proof of payment. We then need to see the U.S. participant reimburse the Overseas Agent for at least 50% of the total invoiced amount.

Note: When sending sensitive financial documents, it is recommended that you redact account numbers (except for the last four digits) and line items irrelevant to the claim. Please do not send originals – only photocopies.



All foreign language documentation must be translated into English or it will not be processed.



Payments must be made by December 31 of the program year.



A payment received via email from the vendor is not sufficient for proof of payment.



You are required to maintain your Branded Program files for five years following the end of the Program Year. These files are subject to audit by Food Export–Midwest, Food Export–Northeast and the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the USDA.

Documentation Required For Reimbursement CONTINUED

* 3. Proof of Activity

This form of documentation is dependent upon the activity. This document should be an example of the promotional activity that was conducted.

- **Marketing and Point-of-Sale Materials** – You must submit samples of the materials, either originals or photographs of the originals, and the U.S. origin statement must be clearly visible. Giveaway items such as key chains, pens, and shirts must have the origin statement. The give-away item does not have to be manufactured in the U.S. However, it must have the U.S. origin statement and the brand name listed on the item.
- **International Trade Shows** – Expenses related to exhibiting at an international trade show require a photo of your booth with a valid U.S. origin statement. If the expense is for photos, banners, signage, or other graphics used to decorate your booth, we will need photos of each item that clearly shows the U.S. origin statement on each. If you seek reimbursement of a product showcase, please submit a separate photo of your product showcase with a visible U.S. origin statement.
- **Demonstrations/Merchandising** – For in-store demonstrations, foodservice promotions, and temporary displays, we require a list of stores/locations and dates as well as representative photos of the events or displays with a valid U.S. origin statement. We recognize that some stores do not allow photography; in these cases we will accept demonstration reports that include the dates, stores, locations, and summary of customer feedback/sales generated.
- **International Trade Seminars** – We require photos from the events and any literature printed for distribution at the seminar that includes a valid U.S. origin statement. (OPTIONAL) Copies of literature



If the payment is made in a foreign currency, we will determine the U.S. Dollar equivalent by checking the exchange rate on the date of payment according to historical rate provided by oanda.com. If your proof of payment includes an applied exchange rate (e.g. a credit card statement or wire transfer), we will use the effective rate provided by the third party financial institution.

distributed to attendees that include a valid U.S. origin statement, dates, location, list of attendees, and summary of activity.

- **Part-time Contractors** – When part-time contractors are utilized at trade shows, seminars, or in-store tasting and demonstrations, a photograph from these events must be provided as proof of activity that includes a valid U.S. origin statement. In addition, the invoice must include the dates and hours worked as well as the hourly or daily rate.
- **Freight Costs** – A freight or airway bill must be submitted and must clearly show the destination address of the shipment, as well as indication that promotional samples are being shipped. Freight bills will indicate shipment of sample materials (not applicable for shipments sent via tracked courier such as FedEx, UPS, or USPS).

* Foreign Market-Compliant Packaging/Labeling

For all charges related to creating foreign market compliant packaging/labeling (translation, design, compliance consulting, and production of a one-year supply), we require photos or mock-ups of the foreign market compliant labels/packaging clearly showing the elements in the design which were done to create compliance with the importing regulations of the foreign market and a valid U.S. origin statement must be present on all product packaging/labeling. A Bill of Lading (BOL) or airway bill showing packages/product being shipped if modifications are not easily recognizable.



All trade show related expenses will now require booth photos as proof of activity (as opposed to trade show guide listing). Photos will provide detail of products on display in addition to U.S. origin statement.



Product showcases at trade shows require photos of the showcase specifically. If an international trade show, a clear origin statement is required as well.

Documentation Required For Reimbursement CONTINUED

Advertising

- * A valid U.S. origin statement must be visible or audible on all advertising.
- * **Print Ads** – Original or photocopy of cover page publication clearly showing the date and name of the publication. Original or photocopy of publication or page from the publication clearly showing the date and name of the publication in which ad appears that includes a valid U.S. origin statement. A circulation statement needs to be submitted as well to show country subscriptions. If not immediately recognizable, proof that the publication is in circulation in the respective market in which reimbursement is being claimed. Subscription availability or statement from publisher is sufficient.
- **Billboards** – A clear photo of the billboard(s) advertisement that includes a valid U.S. origin statement, as well as a list with the billboard's locations and the dates of the promotional campaign.
- **Radio/TV Ads** – A video or audio recording of the commercial that includes a valid U.S. origin statement. If the expense is for broadcasting of the ads and not just the production, we must also receive a broadcast schedule issued by the TV/Radio station that includes the dates, times, and station(s) on which the promotion aired or confirmation from vendor verifying the broadcast (date, time, and length).
- **Online Advertising** – Screenshots of the advertisement showing U.S. origin statement on the screen. A link to the advertisement is also acceptable as long as the link remains live (cannot be deleted or a temporary advertisement). For SEO activities, the analytics or a screenshot of the search page with U.S. origin statement are sufficient.
- **Social Media** – Screenshots of the social media posts and/or social media main page. A valid U.S. origin statement must be present in either the posts themselves or on the main account page/information. This can be a comment, hashtag, in packaging within the photo, etc. Each post must contain a valid U.S. origin statement. For influencer videos, we require screenshots of the video showing the brand targeting

a foreign audience and the U.S. origin statement, or a copy of the video. Influencer posts must specifically mention the foreign audience. If not immediately recognizable, proof that the posts/page targets the respective market in which reimbursement is being claimed. Analytics of page views may suffice.



* Website Development

- * Screenshots or a link to the website are required that includes a valid U.S. origin statement.
- * Screenshots or a link to the website are required that includes a valid U.S. origin statement. Screenshots must clearly demonstrate that the website is targeting a foreign audience. For example, the web pages in a foreign language, a separate portal for foreign buyers, listing of distributors, prices in foreign currency, analytics of website visitors, or be associated with a foreign market extension (e.g. "co.uk" for the United Kingdom or ".ca" for a Canadian website), etc.

* Public Relations

- * Samples or copies of ALL press materials created (i.e., press kits, press releases, etc.) (itemized in invoice) that include a valid U.S. origin statement.
Note: If press materials are created for an eligible trade show held in the U.S., the press release must promote your exhibit at the show by indicating the dates, locations of the trade show and your booth number. No other domestic press releases are eligible.
- * Copy or partial sample of mailing/distribution list

4. Proof of USA

The activity must promote the product as "Product of the USA"; therefore, a USA origin statement must be visible. Eligible USA origin statements are listed on Page 16. Some markets are exempt from this requirement; see Page 16 for a list of these markets.

Eligible International Travel Expenses



International travel can be difficult to reimburse. Please call the Branded Program staff to discuss your travel plans and any questions. We are happy to help!



For travel expenses to be eligible, you must issue a pre-travel notification prior to the start of the foreign trade show or trade mission. To do this, make sure you have included the event in your Branded Program Application or Contract Change Request. Only shows in your application will be available in our online system. This is designed to help you submit this notification with as much ease as possible.

Need help or need to change the names on your previously submitted notification? Call our office and ask for a member of the Branded Program team.

The Branded Program allows for the reimbursement of some travel expenses related to international trade shows and approved trade missions. Branded Program participants are subject to U.S. federal travel regulations for international travel.

• Exhibiting at an International Trade Show/USA Pavilion

Branded Program participants are required to exhibit inside the USDA-sponsored USA Pavilion (when there is one) to qualify for travel reimbursement. See Page 37 for a list of trade shows with USA Pavilions. If a USA Pavilion does not exist, participants may arrange for booth space anywhere.

• Participants may request exemption from the “USA Pavilion” rule if exhibiting in a product-specific pavilion or in their distributor’s booth. This request for exemption must be submitted in writing in advance of the show to Food Export–Midwest or Food Export–Northeast. Requests for exemption will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

• Advance Approval of Country Marketing Plan

Company must have an approved Country Marketing Plan for the country where the international trade show physically takes place prior to exhibiting at the show.

• Attending an Approved Trade Mission

Travel on trade missions that meet specific criteria are eligible for reimbursement. If you would like travel reimbursement for a trade mission, please contact us in advance to ensure the trade mission is eligible for reimbursement.

• Must Fly on an Eligible Carrier

- Flights on U.S. carriers are eligible for reimbursement
- Flights on EU carriers are eligible if you are traveling to, traveling from, or stopping in the EU.
- Flights on Japanese, Australian, and Swiss carriers are eligible if you are traveling to or from those markets and there is no City Pair Rate. See Page 30 for further information on City Pair Rates.
- See Page 30 for a guide to further help you determine if the airlines you are using are eligible for reimbursement by the Branded Program.
- As of January 2021, British Airways is no longer an eligible carrier.



The cost of "Economy Plus," "Economy Comfort," and other upgraded seating are not eligible for reimbursement.



On-the-side vacations and/or business meetings are not eligible for reimbursement when traveling and exhibiting at shows. When booking travel, make sure to obtain an itinerary that states the cost of the flight without side trips. Submit both the invoice and itineraries for reimbursement.

Branded Program Master Class Blog Series

Take a deep dive into some of the more in-depth types of claims and documentation, which will help you take full advantage of the program.

You'll also find examples and links to further information on the [Branded Resources Page](#).

- **Eligible days of lodging and per diem reimbursement are two days before the start of the show through one day after the show. Your flights can be within a reasonable travel window.**

- **Must Have Same Origin and Destination**

All additional stops in the itinerary must be for eligible, approved trade shows and/or trade missions. If not, see directions below on providing a quote.

Extending your trip? Flying Business/First Class? When you book your flight, pull and save a comparable quote showing the cost for your trip in Economy class, within the reasonable travel window, and without side trips (e.g. flying in and out of the show cities). Include this quote with your claim submission for travel reimbursement. We will reimburse the lesser of the actual ticket flown or the quote for eligible travel.

Note: A stop is a chosen destination, not a layover.

- **Travel Reimbursement**

We can reimburse for visas, passport expenses, and required inoculations.

- **The Program Reimburses for Travel of Two People**

Travel reimbursements will be made for no more than two company representatives per event. A "Company Representative" can be a full-time employee or any agent hired by the participant company. Please be advised that additional documentation for non-employees may be required, such as a copy of their contract or agreement with you.

- **Per Diem Expenses for Meals and Lodging**

Per diem rates are published for both "lodging" costs and "meals and incidentals" (M&IE) and are based on the local city and country. Federal per diem rates are updated monthly and are available at https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp.

- **Lodging:** Travelers are reimbursed 50% for eligible lodging costs.

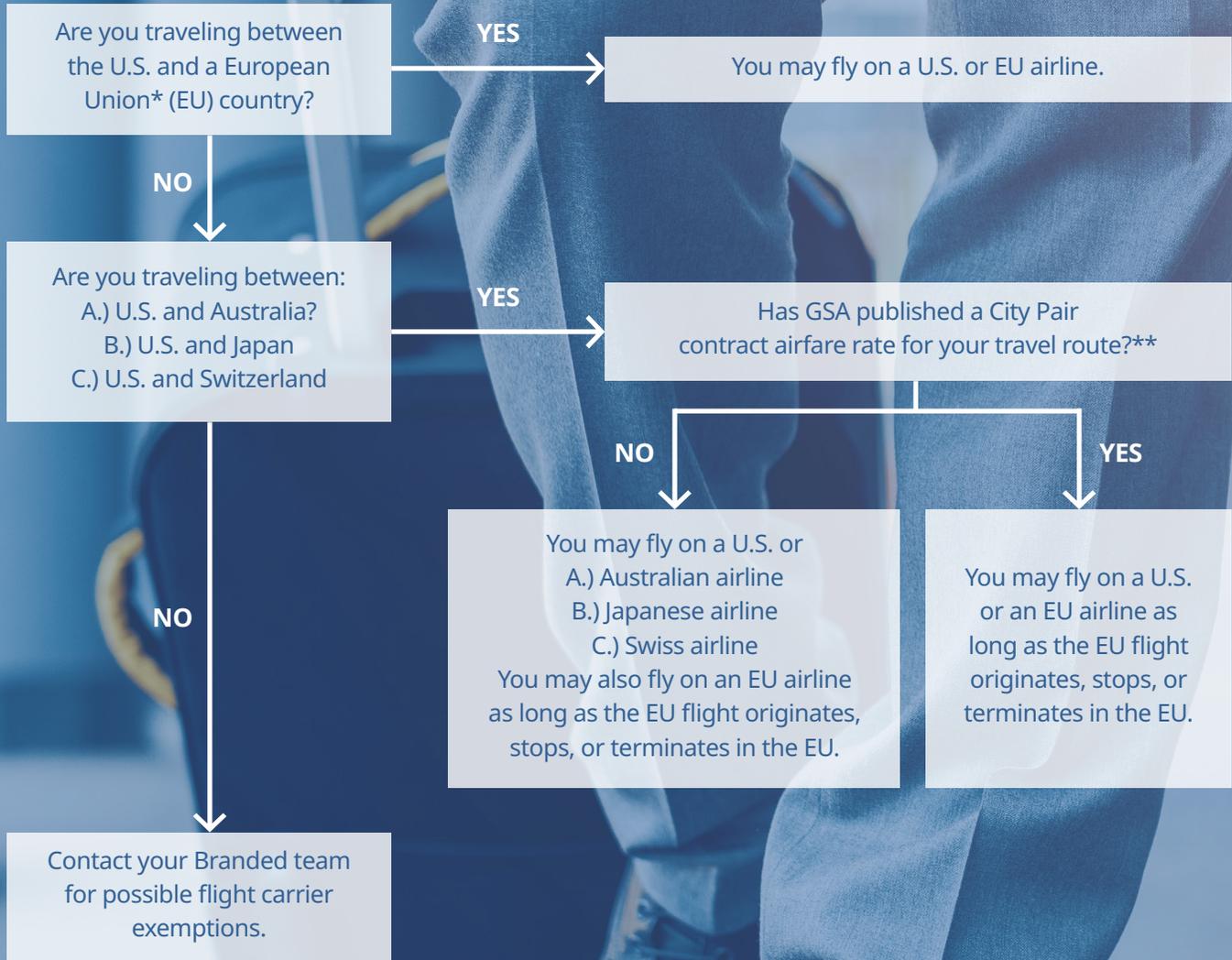
Reimbursements are based on the actual lodging costs up to the maximum per diem allowance. Dates must correspond with trade show exhibit or trade mission dates. The per diem rate for the location of lodging, not the location of the trade show or trade mission, is utilized to calculate reimbursement.

- **Days of travel:** The eligible lodging and per diem days include two days prior to the trade show and one day after.

- **Meals and Incidentals Expenses (M&IE):** Meals and incidentals expenses are reimbursed based on the Federal per diem rate only, no receipts need to be submitted. On the first and last eligible days (travel days), the reimbursement is based on 75% of the per diem rate. For the remaining days, the reimbursement is based on the full per diem rate. The per diem rate for the location of lodging, not the location of the trade show or trade mission, is utilized to calculate reimbursement.

Eligible Flight Decision Matrix

START HERE



*Iceland and Norway are considered part of the EU for the purposes of the EU Open Skies Agreement. Croatia, however, is excluded from the Agreement.

**To determine if your route has an established GSA City Pair contract airfare, search your route here: <https://cpsearch.fas.gov/>

Required Documentation for Travel Reimbursements



Travel claims require ALL of the documentation below. It is also recommended that you retain boarding pass documents in case they are requested. If any of the above documentation is in a foreign language, please translate the details of the document into English (i.e., what services are being charged).



Booking through a third-party booking site? Your reservation email is not enough to receive reimbursement. Please obtain a folio/receipt from the hotel upon checkout, indicating that your stay matches the reservation information.



Booking through Airbnb or similar site? Please obtain a certification that your stay matches your reservation from the apartment owner. This can usually be done through the app or website. The apartment owner's review of your stay suffices as well. This document must be dated after your stay.

* Pre-Travel Notification

You must notify the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the USDA office in the country you will be traveling to at least 30 days in advance of your travel.

* Trip Report

Following your exhibition at the trade show, you must fill out a trip report detailing the experience. This may be done through our website as you are completing your travel reimbursement worksheet, or you can request the form from Food Export–Midwest or Food Export–Northeast.

* Airline Itinerary/Invoice

We must have a detailed itinerary/invoice from either a travel agent or airline. We are specifically looking for the ticket number, origin of travel, destination of travel, travel dates, fare class for each flight, and the total ticket cost. It is advised that all participants retain copies of their boarding passes in case further documentation is needed.

* Itemized Hotel Bill

We must receive a document from the hotel that shows your check in/out dates as well as the nightly room rate. If you were charged by a travel agency, travel website, or similar service provider, we require that you still obtain documentation from the hotel itself dated after your stay that verifies your check in/out dates, name of guest, and nightly room rate with tax.

* Proof of Payment

You must provide a copy of your proof of payment for hotel and airfare. Any of the previously mentioned approved forms of payment are acceptable (see Page 26 for more information).

* Proof of Activity

For a trade show, we require a booth photo (see Pages 25-27) and a list of contacts made. For a trade mission, please include your schedule and a list of contacts made.

U.S. Trade Shows Eligible for Reimbursement

This is a permanent list authorized by the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the USDA. Additional shows will not be added.

Travel and per diem expenditures for trade shows held in the U.S. are not eligible.

The following list and dates may be subject to change. Please check show websites for exact dates.

TRADE SHOW	DATE	LOCATION
VMX: Veterinary Meeting & Expo navc.com/vmx	Jan 13-17, 2024	Orlando, FL
Specialty Food Association's Winter Fancy Food Show specialtyfood.com/shows-events/winter-fancy-food-show-24	Jan 21-23, 2024	Las Vegas, NV
International Builder's Show / Surfaces buildersshow.com / intlsurfaceevent.com	Jan 24-26, 2024	Las Vegas, NV
International Production and Processing Expo ippexpo.org	Jan 30-Feb 1, 2024	Atlanta, GA
Aquaculture America 2024 (WAS) was.org/Meeting/code/AA2024	Feb 18-21, 2024	San Antonio, TX
Seafood Expo North America seafoodexpo.com/north-america	March 10-12, 2024	Boston, MA
Natural Products Expo West expowest.com/en/home.html	March 12-16, 2024	Anaheim, CA
International Home and Housewares Show theinspiredhomeshow.com	March 17-19, 2024	Chicago, IL
Nightclub and Bar Trade Show barandrestaurantexpo.com	March 18-20, 2024	Las Vegas, NV
Global Pet Expo globalpetexpo.org	March 20-22, 2024	Orlando, FL
International Mass Timber Conference oregoncc.org/en/events/2024/03/mass-timber-conference-2024	March 26-29, 2024	Portland, OR
IAADFS Summit of the Americas 2024 iaadfs.org/page/summitmain	April 14-17, 2024	West Palm Beach, FL
Specialty Coffee Association of America Global Specialty Coffee Expo coffeeexpo.org/future-expo-dates	April 12-14, 2024	Chicago, IL

U.S. Trade Shows Eligible for Reimbursement CONTINUED

TRADE SHOW	DATE	LOCATION
BrewExpo America craftbrewersconference.com	April 21-24, 2024	Las Vegas, NV
Pet Food Forum petfoodforumevents.com	April 29-May 1, 2024	Kansas City, MO
NCA Sweets & Snacks Expo sweetsandsnacks.com	May 13-16, 2024	Indianapolis, IN
American Food Fair (USA Pavilion) at the National Restaurant Association Show nationalrestaurantshow.com/2024-show-may-18-21-2024	May 18-21, 2024	Chicago, IL
Dairy-Deli-Bakery Show iddba.org/iddba-show/about/iddba-2024	June 9-11, 2024	Houston, TX
Specialty Food Association's Summer Fancy Food Show specialtyfood.com/shows-events/2024-summer-fancy-food-show	June 23-25, 2024	New York, NY
IFT First Expo iftevent.org	July 14-17, 2024	Chicago, IL
World Floral Expo hppexhibitions.com/wfe	TBD	New York, NY
International Floriculture Expo hppexhibitions.com/wfe	TBD	New York, NY
Americas Food and Beverage Show americasfoodandbeverage.com	TBD	Miami, FL
Natural Products Expo East & OTA's All Things Organic expoeast.com	Sept 19-21, 2024	Philadelphia, PA
National Association of Convenience Stores (NACS) Show convenience.org/events/CalendarofEvents	Oct 7-10, 2024	Las Vegas, NV
Global Produce and Floral Show freshproduce.com/events/the-global-produce-and-floral-show/future-dates	Oct 17-19, 2024	Atlanta, Georgia
Private Label Manufacturers Association Show plma.com/events	TBD	Chicago, IL
World Dairy Expo worlddairyexpo.com	Oct 1-4, 2024	Madison, WI

Trade Shows with USA Pavilions

Companies must exhibit within the USA Pavilion at the eligible trade shows listed below in order to receive reimbursement for trade shows.* This includes your distributor representing your products at shows. Below is a list of major trade shows with U.S. Pavilions taking place in the 2024 Program Year (list and dates are subject to change.) If you are exhibiting at a show that includes a USA Pavilion but wish to exhibit in a different location, please send this request to us in writing. Exemptions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

**If no USA Pavilion exists at a trade show, THIS RULE DOES NOT APPLY and companies may exhibit anywhere at the show and still receive reimbursement.*

Note: This is not a complete list of shows. USA Pavilions are continuously added throughout the year. To verify whether a USA Pavilion exists for any other shows, please visit fas.usda.gov/topics/trade-shows.

AMERICAS

TRADE SHOW	DATE	LOCATION
ANUFOOD Brazil	April 9-11	Sao Paulo, Brazil
SIAL Canada	May 15-17	Montreal, Canada
Taste of the States: Chicago	May 18-21	Chicago, Illinois
Americas Food and Beverage	TBD	Miami, Florida
Espacio Food and Service	TBD	Santiago, Chile

EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

Supermarket Trade Show	February 14-16	Tokyo, Japan
Food and Hotel Asia	March 5-8	Singapore, Singapore
FOODEX Japan	March 7-10	Tokyo, Japan
Food and Hotel Vietnam	March 19-21	Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Food Ingredients China	March 20-22	Shanghai, China
SIAL China	May 18-20	Shanghai, China
Seoul Food and Hotel	June 11-14	Seoul, South Korea
Asia Fruit Logistica	TBD	Hong Kong
Food Ingredients Asia	September 4-6	Jakarta, Indonesia
China Fisheries and Seafood Expo	TBD	Qingdao, China
Food and Hospitality China	TBD	Shanghai, China
Food and Hotel Hanoi	TBD	Hanoi, Vietnam

EUROPE

Fruit Logistica	February 7-9	Berlin, Germany
BioFach (organic)	February 13-16	Nürnberg, Germany
International Food and Drink Exhibition	March 25-27	London, United Kingdom
Seafood Expo Global	April 23-25	Barcelona, Spain
Interzoo	May 7-10	Nurnberg, Germany
SIAL Paris	Oct 19-23	Paris, France
Food Ingredients Europe	TBD	Paris, France

MIDDLE EAST

Gulfood	February 19-23	Dubai, UAE
VIV Middle East	TBD	Abu Dhabi, UAE

OCEANIA

Fine Food Australia	September 4-7	Melbourne, Australia
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Who to Contact for Further Assistance: Food Export–Midwest

Illinois Department of Agriculture

Jackie Sambursky

 217.558.0788

 jackie.sambursky@illinois.gov

Indiana State Department of Agriculture

Drew Sherman

 317.690.4068

 asherman@isda.in.gov

Iowa Economic Development Authority

Brad Frisvold

 515.348.6241

 brad.frisvold@iowaeda.com

Kansas Department of Agriculture

Suzanne Ryan-Numrich

 785.564.6704

 suzanne.numrich@ks.gov

Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development

Jamie Zmitko-Somers

 517.241.3628

 ZmitkoJ@michigan.gov

Minnesota Department of Agriculture

Jeffrey Phillips

 651.201.6220

 jeffrey.phillips@state.mn.us

Missouri Department of Agriculture

Jennifer Kliethermes

 573.751.5611

 jennifer.kliethermes@mda.mo.gov

Nebraska Department of Agriculture

Jordan Schlake

 402.471.2341

 jordan.schlake@nebraska.gov

North Dakota Department of Agriculture

Lindsey Warner

 701.929.6712

 lindsey@ndto.com

Ohio Department of Development

Wendi Howell

 614.466.6811

 Wendi.Howell@development.ohio.gov

Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry

Jamie Cummings

 405.595.2119

 Jamie.Cummings@ag.ok.gov

South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Timothy Schoonhoven

 605.773.5425

 timothy.schoonhoven@state.sd.us

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

Lisa Stout

 608.514.4538

 lisa.stout@wisconsin.gov

Who to Contact for Further Assistance: Food Export–Northeast

Connecticut Department of Agriculture

Erin Windham

 860.713.2543

 Erin.Windham@ct.gov

Delaware Department of Agriculture

Kathy Jackson

 302.698.4325

 Kathy.jackson@state.de.is

Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

 207.287.3200

 info@mitc.com

Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

Bonita Oehlke

 617.626.1753

 bonita.oehlke@state.ma.us

New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food

Josh Marshall

 603.271.3688

 joshua.k.marshall@agr.nh.gov

New Jersey Department of Agriculture

Deelip Mhaske

 609.913.6628

 Deelip.Mhaske@ag.nj.gov

New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets

Anik Gibeau

 518.486.1521

 anik.gibeau@agriculture.ny.gov

Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture

Kristina L. Watson

 717.713.4545

 kriwatson@pa.gov

Rhode Island Commerce Corporation

 401.232.6407

 chafeecenter@bryant.edu

Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets

Trevor Lowell

 802.585.9186

 trevor.lowell@vermont.gov

Frequently Asked Questions



This section contains a collection of the most frequently asked questions by program participants, and the answers to those questions. If you have a question that is not answered in this section, do not hesitate to contact Food Export–Midwest or Food Export–Northeast.

Q Should I submit all of my original reimbursement documentation to Food Export–Midwest or Food Export–Northeast?

A No. Always keep original documents for your files and submit copies of all documentation to Food Export–Midwest or Food Export–Northeast. We may require original documentation at our discretion. Also, you are required to maintain your Branded Program files for five years following the end of the Program Year. These files are subject to audit by Food Export–Midwest, Food Export–Northeast, or the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the USDA.

Q How long does it take to get reimbursed?

A Once a request for reimbursement is received, we process it in the order received. If no other additional information/documentation is needed, we strive to reimburse all approved expenses within 30 business days. This takes into account the time it takes to request and receive your company's funding from the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the USDA. If additional documentation is needed, you will be notified and given 10 business days to acknowledge our request. All claims will be denied if they are still missing the requested information 60 days after the request has been made. Your reimbursement request can be processed more quickly if you:

- Upload all documents in a complete and orderly way in our online portal when submitting your reimbursement claim.
- Provide English translations for all foreign language documents.
- Do not wait until the end of the year to submit all of your reimbursement claims.
- Submit claims within 60 days after the expense is incurred.

Frequently Asked Questions CONTINUED

Q Do I have to wait until February to submit claims?

A You don't! February is the deadline to submit claims. It is advised that you submit your claims as soon as you have completed the activity and have all of the documentation in hand. Remember, Food Export is under no obligation to reimburse claims that are submitted after 60 days of completion of your activity.

Q Why didn't I get paid my full reimbursement?

A You can always find the reason why your claim was denied or partially denied in your Branded Program Portal. Some frequent reasons for full or partial denial are:

- U.S. origin statement is missing from the proof of activity documentation
- Insufficient or missing documentation
- No response to multiple follow-up attempts for clarification on unclear expenses
- Expenses were for ineligible activities
- Expenses were incurred for an ineligible or non-approved country
- Transactions were not documented by canceled check, wire transfer, bank statement, or credit card statement (Invoices paid with off-invoicing are not reimbursable)
- Payment was made before your program approval date

Q Why do I have to submit an evaluation?

A The evaluation is a requirement of your participation in the Branded Program and helps us continue to offer this program year after year. This form compares results with stated goals and allows you to make comments about the impact of the Branded Program. The form is required, kept strictly confidential, and used to determine the effectiveness of the Branded Program in raising the level of U.S. exports. This form is available online in your Branded Program Portal. Reimbursements and future allocations may be withheld until complete evaluations are submitted.

Q Can my overseas agent be reimbursed for expenses?

A Yes, but not directly. The overseas agent must be paid by the U.S. company by check, wire transfer, bank transfer, credit card, or credit memo for at least 50% of the total invoiced amount. After paying the agent, the U.S. company can submit the agent's expenses for Branded Program reimbursement. Also, all agent expenses are subject to the same eligibility requirements as the U.S. company.

Q Can I exhibit at a show in my overseas agent booth?

A You may exhibit in your distributor's booth, but if there is a USA Pavilion at the show, you must request an exemption, in writing, in advance of the show.

Q Will my overseas agent travel cost be reimbursed?

A Yes, but you are only eligible for travel reimbursements for the cost of two travelers.

Q Our company decided to change its logo. Will the program reimburse us for a new label?

A No, only foreign compliant packaging is eligible for reimbursement. We cannot reimburse you for any packaging intended for use in the U.S.

Q If we hire a taxi or rental car to take product samples or booth decorations from our hotel to the trade show convention center, is this eligible?

A No, travel costs are not eligible for trade shows held in the U.S. In this case, your packages are traveling with you, so it is seen as transport of you. For overseas shows, the meals and incidentals allowance covers your daily show transportation. A freight cost for shipping samples or booth materials via a common carrier (UPS, USPS, etc.) is eligible for domestic and international trade shows.

Q Are product samples, costs of labels, or packaging for samples eligible for reimbursement?

A The cost of labels and packaging for samples is eligible, but the cost of the actual samples is not.

Frequently Asked Questions CONTINUED

Q Our importer conducted in-store tastings but did not provide any photos as proof of activity. We know the tastings took place—what else can we provide?

A Most demonstration companies have their demo assistants fill out a demo report for each tasting. We will accept copies of the demo reports, along with detailed information on the location, dates, and times of the tasting as proof of activity.

Q Will I only be reimbursed for Food Export–Midwest or Food Export–Northeast sponsored international trade shows? For a maximum of three years?

A No and no. All international trade shows are eligible for reimbursement. Please make sure you exhibit in the USA Pavilion if one exists at the show.

Q What if a show does not have a USA Pavilion? How do I find out?

A You should always contact the show organizers. We have also provided a tentative list of trade shows that have a USA Pavilion on Page 34. Dates and locations are subject to change throughout the year; please log onto the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the USDA website for a current list of trade shows.

Q My booth posters didn't carry a USA origin statement but I displayed a "Made in the USA" sign. Why didn't I get reimbursed for the design and printing of the posters?

A The U.S. origin statement must be incorporated into the design of all graphic and printed materials to be eligible for reimbursement.

Q We created our promotional literature in-house. Why can't we get reimbursed for the cost of the design software, ink cartridges, and the paper? It is cheaper than using an outside vendor.

A We can never reimburse for office supplies since there is no way to document that paper, ink cartridges, etc., were used only for the creation of eligible literature and graphics.

Q Does the statement of origin have to be printed on give-aways to be eligible for reimbursement?

A Yes, and your company name/brand name must be printed on the item.

Q Can I be reimbursed for advertising and similar promotions in the USA?

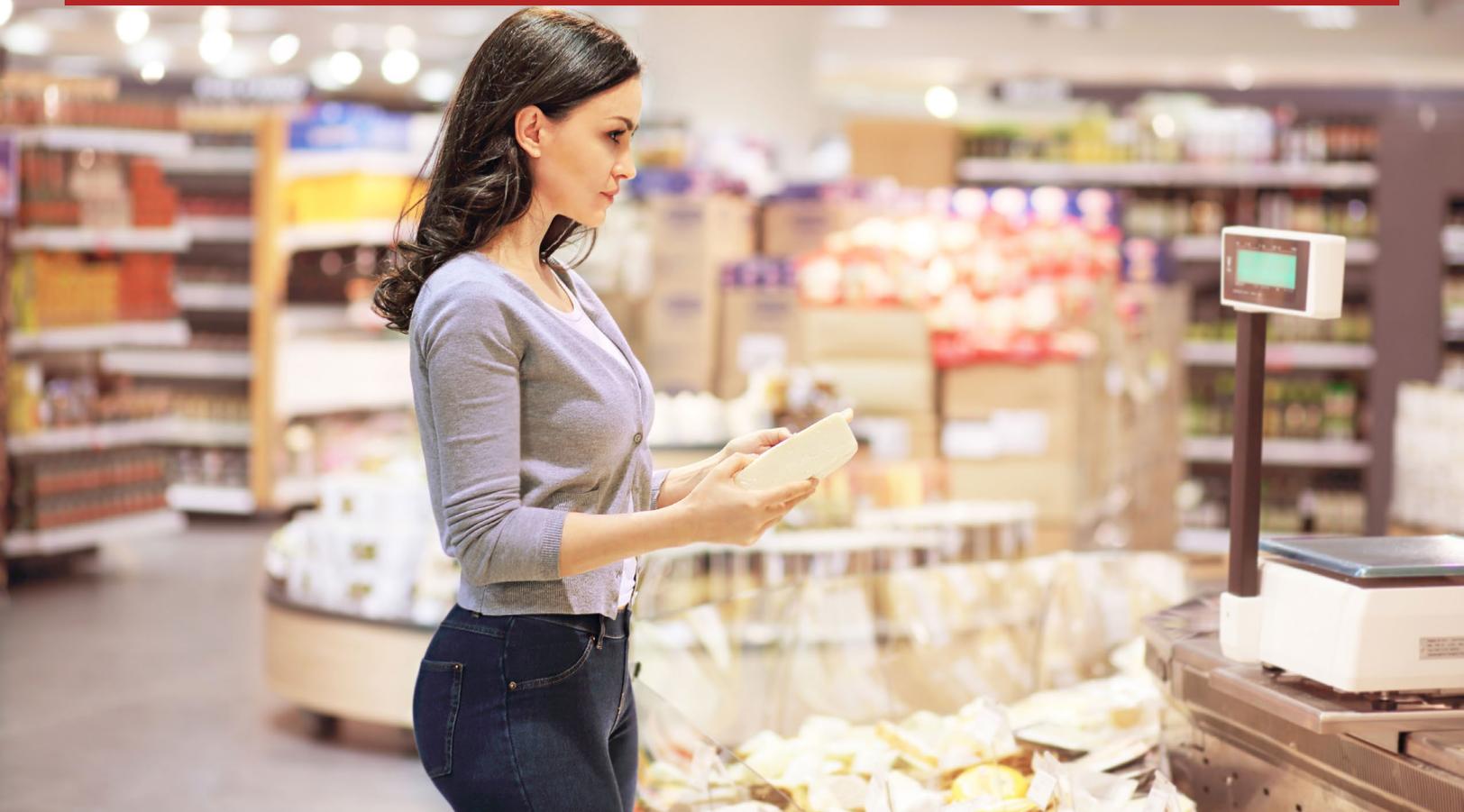
A No. The only reimbursable expenses in the U.S. or its possessions are those related to exhibiting at an approved trade show held in the U.S.

Q When the trade show or trade mission activity is over, can I extend my trip and stay a little longer than the actual dates of the activity?

A 1.) Eligible days for reimbursement of lodging and per diem expenses are two days before the start of the show, and one day after the show. Your flights can be within a reasonable travel window.

2.) If you wish to deviate from the eligible travel dates of the activity, when you book a flight, kindly save a comparable flight quote showing the cost of your trip without side travel. Submit the comparable quote with your claim submission of travel reimbursement. Food Export will reimburse the lesser of the actual ticket flown or the quote for eligible travel.

3.) When in doubt of travel claims, please contact the Branded Program team to discuss your trip before you book. We are happy to review your proposed travel itinerary and answer any questions you may have.



Contract Changes (Amendments)

Changes to your plans can be made throughout the course of the year. In some cases (adding funds, adding new countries, adding new brands) the changes will result in the need to amend your contract. If that occurs, an agreement outlining the changes to your existing contract will be mailed to you. Like the contract it will require an Executive Level signature (President, CEO, Owner, etc.).

Approval Date(s)

The approved date of the application and/or contract change request, as stated in your approval letter(s), Program Agreement, and any Program Contract Changes. Expenses incurred before the approval date will not be reimbursed. All requests to add countries must be submitted before activities in those countries are conducted. Remember the February 28 deadline is for reimbursements requests and evaluations. Any changes to your original Country Marketing Plans (Program Agreement Changes) must be submitted before the program year ends on December 31.

Branded Funds

This term refers to the amount of reimbursements received by the participating company. Example: If a company submits a claim for US\$100, the US\$50 reimbursement the company receives is considered Branded Funds.

Business Confidentiality

The information in this application may be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Only information that would likely impair the government's ability to obtain necessary information or cause substantial competitive harm may be withheld under exception 4 of the FOIA, 5 U.S.C. 552, 7CFR, Part 1, Subpart A. If this application is requested from the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the USDA under FOIA, the participant will be notified and may fully explain, in writing, any objections to the disclosure of any specified portion of the information requested.

Brand Owner Permissions Form

The U.S. applicant must own the brand name of the products to be promoted or have the brand owner sign the brand permission page of the application form. This certifies that the brand owner gives the applicant the exclusive right to seek Branded Program funds to promote the specified product(s) in the specified market(s). This must be done for all products where the applicant does not own the brand name.

Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the USDA

The Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is the government agency that provides Market Access Program funding to Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast for their Branded Program.

Incurred Expense

An expense is incurred on the date that the check, wire transfer, credit card, or other bank transaction occurs, not the date on which the goods or services are provided by the vendor. The only exception: trade show booth expenses are considered to be incurred when the show takes place, not when the payment is made.

Market Access Program (MAP)

This is a federally funded program that provides financial assistance to U.S. exporters for the promotion of U.S. agricultural products in international markets. Participating trade associations and non-profit organizations representing producers and other sectors of agriculture are provided funds from a joint program under the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the USDA which is aimed at developing international markets. Today, there are approximately 80 of these groups working with the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the USDA on a continuing basis in a variety of programs.

Overseas Agent

These can be distributors, agents, brokers, importers, and representatives in international markets where Branded Program funds are being used. Typically, the overseas agents are conducting Branded Program activities on behalf of the U.S. supplier.

Overseas Agent Funds

The portion of the expense that is paid by the overseas agent. For example, if a distributor in Canada pays for an advertisement in full, the U.S. company must reimburse them at least 50% of that expense. The portion they are not reimbursed by the U.S. company is the overseas agent funds.

Participant Funds

The 50% contribution the company makes each time an expense is reimbursed. Example: When a company submits a reimbursement for US\$100, the company has actually contributed US\$50 into their own overseas marketing budget. The US\$50 is considered participant funds.

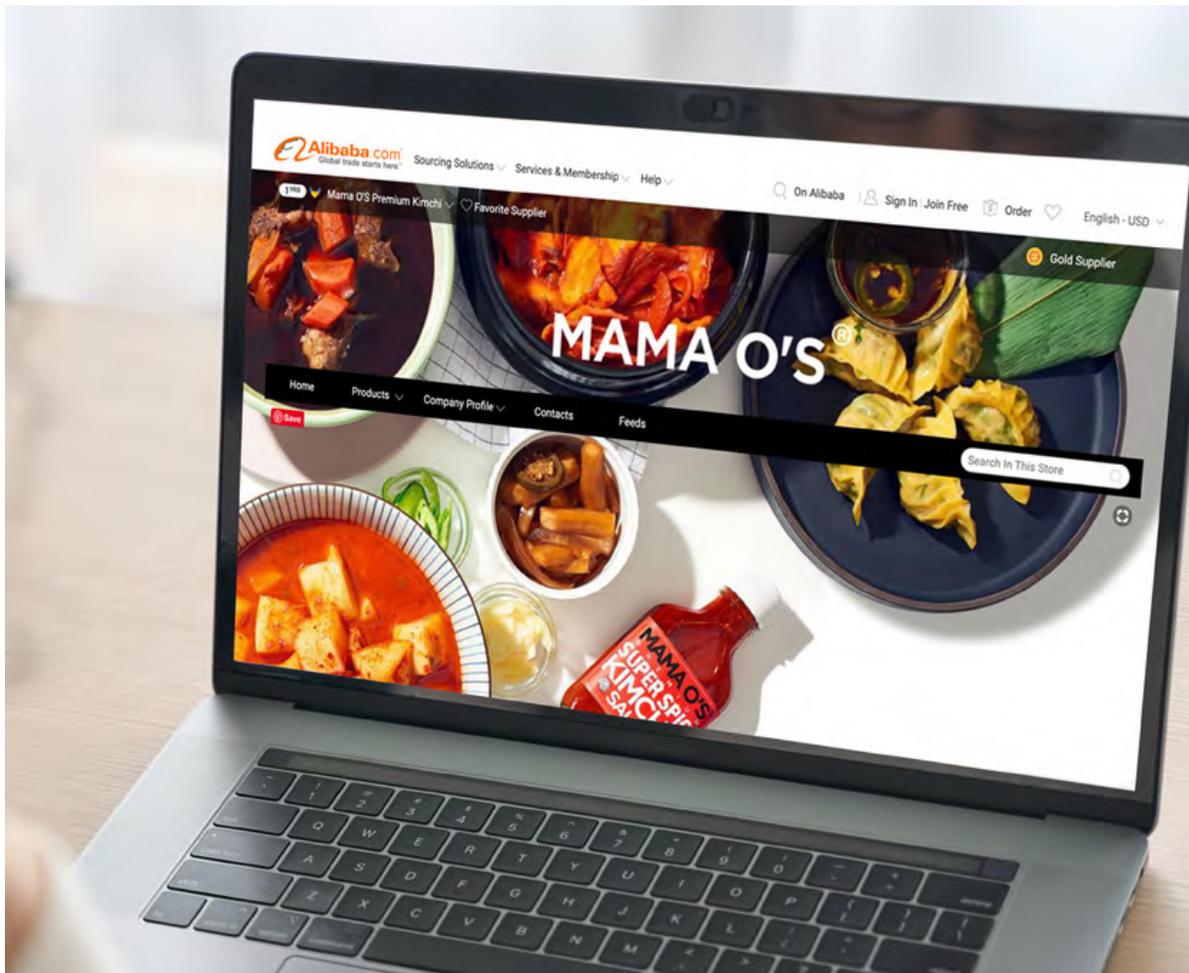
Small Company

A company that meets the Small Business Administration's (SBA) definition of a small company. This is according to their North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes as published at 13CFR, part 121 (based on the number of employees or annual sales, depending on the SIC industry category).

SRTGs (State Regional Trade Groups)

Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast are two of the four State Regional Trade Groups (SRTGs) that assist companies with export promotions. Two other regional groups, Southern United States Trade Association (SUSTA) and Western United States Agricultural Trade Association (WUSATA), provide similar services for companies based in or sourcing product from the Southern and Western U.S. regions, respectively. See Page 6 for SUSTA and WUSATA contact information.

Proof of Activity Examples



Proof of Activity Examples CONTINUED



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Program Guide



YOUR CONNECTION TO GROWTH®

The 3 Tracks to Export Growth

Our three program categories enable new and established suppliers to pursue international market opportunities and fuel long-term growth.



Exporter Education

Enhance your export expertise with ongoing education programs for all experience levels.



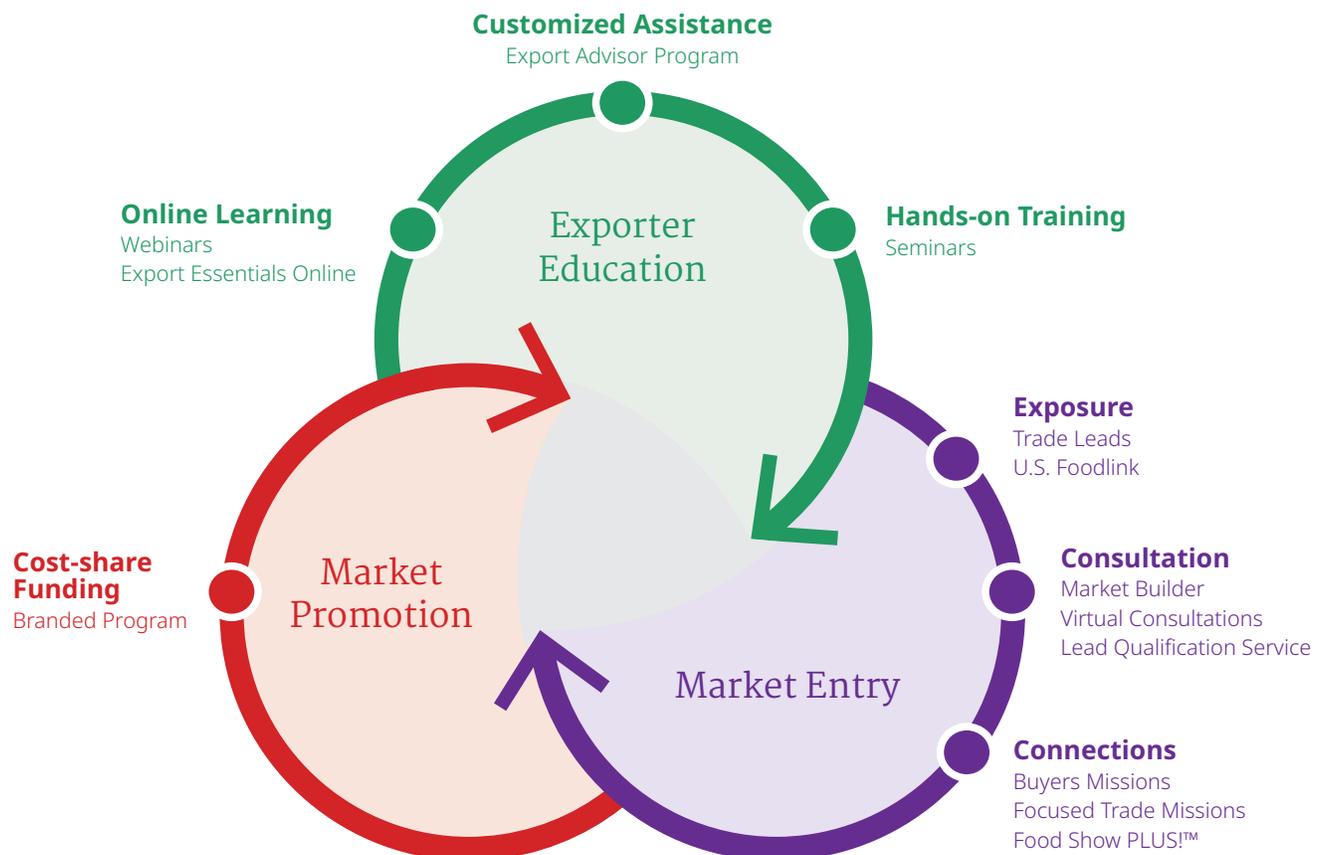
Market Entry

Identify opportunities in international markets and meet potential buyers.



Market Promotion

Strengthen your international presence through the Branded Program.



Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast administer many services through Market Access Program (MAP) funding from the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the USDA. Persons with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations or alternate means of communication of program information should contact us. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast prohibit discrimination in all their programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, familial/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. To file a program discrimination complaint, go to <https://www.ascr.usda.gov/filing-program-discrimination-complaint-usda-customer>. Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast are equal opportunity employers and providers. Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast do not tolerate fraud and are vigilant in preventing fraud in any of their programs. Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast reserve the sole right to accept or deny companies into their programs. For complete participation policies and our code of ethics, visit: www.foodexport.org/termsandconditions.



Exporter Education

Webinars

Learn about the export process and the resources available to help expand your business

Export Advisor Program

Year-long assistance from expert advisors to help your company develop and implement an export strategy

Export Essentials Online

Comprehensive online learning modules on the exporting process

Seminars

Live seminars based on key export topics and regional subjects of interest



Market Entry

Trade Leads

Receive targeted trade leads from qualified buyers via our overseas network at no cost

Market Builder

Customized market research from our In-Market Representatives and importer feedback on your product

Lead Qualification Service

Get help qualifying foreign buyer leads following an event or via online introduction

Focused Trade Missions

Travel and explore a market to experience the local food industry landscape and meet with prospective buyers

U.S. Foodlink

Showcase your products and gain exposure with buyers in our internationally-distributed newsletter

Virtual Consultations

Video chat with an In-Market Representative to get first-hand feedback from our industry experts

Buyers Missions

Meet with qualified buyers and promote your products without leaving the U.S.

Food Show PLUS!™

Maximize your trade show success with on-site assistance, market knowledge, and access to qualified buyers



Market Promotion

Branded Program

Receive 50% cost reimbursement on an assortment of international marketing activities including advertising, demos, website development, international trade shows, and more



Find Export Success at Your Fingertips.

Scan to see our program overview.

www.foodexport.org/program-overview

Midwest 312.334.9200

E-mail info@foodexport.org

Northeast 215.829.9111

Visit www.foodexport.org



Terms and Conditions

As a participant in any Food Export–Midwest or Food Export–Northeast program or activity, I agree to abide by the following terms and conditions:

Non-Discrimination Statement

Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, familial/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. (Not all bases apply to all programs.)

Persons with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations or alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact Food Export–Midwest at (312) 334-9200 or Food Export–Northeast at (215) 829-9111. You can also email us at info@foodexport.org. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English

To file a complaint alleging discrimination, please complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; fax: (202) 690-7442; or email: program.intake@usda.gov.

Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast are equal opportunity employers and providers.

Participation Eligibility

Ensuring broad company participation and access to Food Export–Midwest or Food Export–Northeast programs and services is an important component in achieving our mission. Food Export programs are open to those appropriate entities that have expressed interest in exporting and exhibit potential of increasing exports of food and agricultural products, and therefore impacting our regions' agriculture, improving the regions' prosperity and creating jobs. Participation is open to those entities that can demonstrate such impact, either through the presence of corporate headquarters, facilities or significant sourcing

from documented suppliers within our regions, and to all otherwise-qualified individuals and entities on an equal basis and without regard to any non-merit factors.

Food Export–Midwest or Food Export–Northeast recognize that other export-focused organizations may also offer resources that are appropriate for entities considering participation in our programs. We view collaboration as an essential component to success, (as evidenced by our own strategic alliance) and strongly advocate any such effective complementary resources, while at the same time avoiding duplication. Food Export–Midwest or Food Export–Northeast make it a priority to inform current or potential participants about other relevant export service providers, including providing them with specific contact information. These include our member state agencies, other State Regional Trade Groups, other Cooperator agricultural groups, U.S. Department of Commerce Export Assistance Centers, Small Business Administration or Small Business Development Centers or other similar organizations.

Maintaining the integrity and public support for Food Export–Midwest or Food Export–Northeast's mission is one of our highest priorities. Food Export–Midwest or Food Export–Northeast reserve the right to approve participation in any of our programs based upon the participant's prospects to help us in our mission of increasing U.S. exports, positively impacting U.S. agriculture and creating prosperity and U.S. jobs.

We reserve the right to deny participation, including Branded Program reimbursement, to any company or for any product which, in Food Export–Midwest or Food Export–Northeast's sole opinion, may cast a negative or controversial light on Food Export–Midwest, Food Export–Northeast, our member state agencies, the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the USDA, the Market Access Program (MAP) or taxpayer support for any of the above; to any firm or individual which, in the sole opinion of Food Export–Midwest or Food Export–Northeast does not comply with FAS, MAP or Food Export–Midwest or Food Export–Northeast regulations or policies, or otherwise offer the best opportunity to achieve our mission of increasing food and agricultural exports; or for any failure to comply with our Code of Ethics. (foodexport.ethicspoint.com)

Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast reserve the right to deny services. Submission of any false or misleading information may be grounds for rejection or subsequent revocation of any application or participation.

Code of Ethics

This Code of Ethics (“Code”) of Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast is a statement of the organizations’ common values and of our common commitment to promote the highest possible standards of professional business conduct for the mutual benefit of the industry and for the ultimate benefit of the consumer.

Ethics Goal

Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast, by adopting and enforcing this Code, seek to maintain and enhance the reputation of our organizations and of our participants within the industry.

Code of Ethics

It is expected that Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast staff, members, contractors, and participants in our activities:

- Strive to maintain the highest standards of business conduct by using only legal and ethical means in all business activity.
- Actively promote and encourage the highest level of integrity within the trade.
- Cooperate in every reasonable and proper way with other related organizations, as appropriate, and work with them toward the advancement of the food and agricultural exporting industry.
- Be fair, equitable and respectful to employer(s), employees, associates, competitors, customers, the public, and all business or professional relationships arising through contact with Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast.
- Adhere to honesty in advertising and in representations to the public, including in any application or reimbursement claim to Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast.
- Treat customers and suppliers honestly, fairly and objectively.
- Observe all applicable state, federal, foreign or international laws and regulations.
- Provide a safe working environment.
- Avoid any unfair or deceptive practice and always

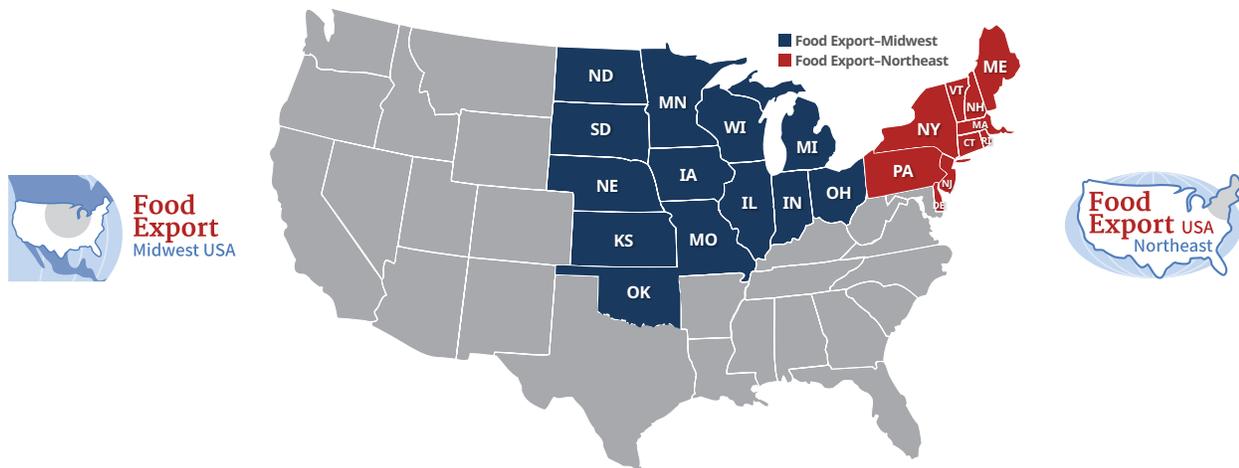
present our products, programs, or services in an honest and forthright manner.

- Refrain from discriminatory practices in dealing with employees, contractors, participants, customers and vendors.
- Respect the rights of others concerning their intellectual property such as patents, copyrights, trademarks, trade secrets, or any other proprietary business information and, if any innocent breach occurs, promptly address and rectify any such breach.
- Recognize that other participants will compete for business within lawful, reasonable and customary practice.
- Comply in good faith with contractual obligations.
- Never pay any bribe, kickback or other corrupt payment in any form directly or indirectly to or for anyone for the purpose of obtaining or retaining business or obtaining any other favorable action, nor offer or extend any gift or entertainment that is illegal, known to be in violation of the rules of the recipient’s organization, or likely to result in a feeling or expectation of personal obligation on the part of the recipient.
- Act in a manner consistent with, and make every effort to uphold this Code of Ethics.
- This Code of Ethics does not set forth all aspects of good conduct and ethical behavior. Acceptance of, and adherence to this Code is a condition of participation with or employment by Food Export–Midwest & Food Export–Northeast.

Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast do not tolerate fraud in the operation of its programs. Any incident of suspected fraud can be reported (anonymously) by:

- **Calling 1.855.727.6715 (domestic toll-free, international calling rates apply)**
- **Filing a report online at www.foodexport.ethicspoint.com**

State Affiliations and Information



Food Export Association of the Midwest USA®

Illinois Department of Agriculture
Indiana State Department of Agriculture
Iowa Economic Development Authority
Kansas Department of Agriculture
Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development
Minnesota Department of Agriculture
Missouri Department of Agriculture
Nebraska Department of Agriculture
North Dakota Department of Agriculture
Ohio Department of Development
Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry
South Dakota Department of Agriculture
Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection

Food Export USA®-Northeast

Connecticut Department of Agriculture
Delaware Department of Agriculture
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources
New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food
New Jersey Department of Agriculture
New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets
Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture
Rhode Island Commerce Corporation
Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets

ABOUT US

Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast are non-profit organizations composed of 23 Midwestern and Northeastern state agricultural promotion agencies that use federal, state, and industry resources to help companies increase product sales overseas. Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast administer many services through Market Access Program (MAP) funding from the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the USDA.

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