

2016 BRANDED PROGRAM

EXPORTER MANUAL



Your Complete Guide to Managing the Food Export Association of the Midwest USA and Food Export USA–Northeast Branded Program



**MARKET
PROMOTION**

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

Eligible Activities Include: Advertisements • Marketing and Promotions • International Tradeshows • Public Relations • Package and Label Modifications • and More!



During the 2014 Branded Program year, Food Export Association of the Midwest USA (Food Export–Midwest) and Food Export USA–Northeast (Food Export–Northeast) assisted 422 companies. This included 57 new companies.

Participants promoted their food and agricultural products in over 50 countries and we would like to share some of their successes throughout the year.

The results of the program, as reported by the companies who participated, are as follows:

- Over USD \$637 million in actual export sales
- Over USD \$854 million in projected export sales
- 98 companies made their first export sale in a new market
- 1,397 new agent relationships were established
- 197 companies increased sales by 20% or more



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 2016 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 assist you in making your participation in the Branded Program as easy as possible. It is important that you review the policies, procedures, and guidelines of the program to be able to take full advantage of all the benefits. See pages 46 and 47 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.

Due to recent advancements in our user interface, you are now able to easily manage your entire Branded Program participation using My Food Export Portal at www.foodexport.org. Login (or register for a new account) today!

We appreciate your interest in the 2016 Branded Program. We look forward to working with you throughout the year to help you promote and sell your products abroad!

Joe Yotti

Branded Program Manager
Food Export–Midwest

Joshua Dillard

Branded Program Manager
Food Export–Northeast



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**.

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Apply Early!

The Branded Program opens its application for funding on August 1, 2015, for companies to be reimbursed for activities occurring between January 1, 2016, and December 31, 2016. Remember, the Branded Program can assist you in:

- Creating your export marketing plan
- Identifying your export goals
- Funding assistance to promote your products overseas
- Entering new markets

2015

2016 Branded Program Year Opens for Pre-qualifications	AUGUST 1, 2015
Application deadline for January approvals	OCTOBER 1, 2015
<i>(Application acceptance beyond this date is contingent upon available funds)</i>	

2016

Start of 2016 program year	JANUARY 1, 2016
End of the 2016 program year	DECEMBER 31, 2016
Deadline to submit requests for additional funding	DECEMBER 31, 2016

2017

Deadline to submit reimbursement requests	FEBRUARY 28, 2017
Evaluations due	FEBRUARY 28, 2017

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

Reimbursements are subject to denial if submitted after 60 days.

Expenses incurred before submission of your pre-qualification are ineligible for reimbursement. Pre-qualify early to avoid lost opportunity.

From time-to-time, 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.

IS YOUR COMPANY ELIGIBLE FOR THE BRANDED PROGRAM?

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

Only companies defined as “Small” 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 www.sba.gov.

* **Participating Companies Must Be Based in the United States**

Each participating company must be a registered business entity in the United States.

* **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.

* **Have Sufficient Gross Sales and Resources**

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

* **Companies Must Be Headquartered in the Midwest or Northeast Regions**

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 the following page. A company’s headquarters is defined as the physical location of the business’ main management/operations office.

MIDWEST REGION



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

NORTHEAST REGION



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

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 www.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 www.wusata.org or 360.693.3373.

ARE YOUR PRODUCTS ELIGIBLE FOR THE BRANDED PROGRAM?

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

- Food ingredients
- Specific wood products
- Consumer food products
- Other Agricultural Products**
- Foodservice products
- Seafood*
- Feed ingredients

* 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.

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



If you do not see your product category listed here, please contact us to verify if your product does qualify.

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 and packaging.

For example: Place your product on a scale. Deduct the weight of any added water and the packaging. At least 50% of the remaining weight must be composed of U.S. agriculture content. 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. Minerals are not considered an agricultural product.

Product Must Be Clearly Labeled As Product of the USA

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 20 for examples of eligible USA origin statements.

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/Almond Board of California
- California Pistachio Export Council/Cal Pure
- National Confectioners Association
- New York Wine and Grape Foundation
- Ocean Spray Cranberries, Inc.
- Southern United States Trade Association (SUSTA)
- Sunkist Growers, Inc.
- Sunsweet Growers
- Sun-Maid Growers of California
- U.S. Livestock Genetics
- U.S. Meat Export Federation
- Welch Foods, Inc. /National Grape Growers Cooperative
- Western United States Agricultural Trade Association (WUSATA)
- Wine Institute

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 they 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. 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)

Applications can not be started until the pre-qualification has been approved. Spending that occurs before you submit your pre-qualification will not be reimbursable (with the exception of certain tradeshow booth and travel expenses).

Step 2 – Application form submission and review

- Application Summary
- Country Marketing Plan
 - U.S. tradeshows eligible for reimbursement to be included in U.S. Country Marketing Plan
- Electronic Certification Page
- Application Fee (\$250)

Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast rate applications based upon allocation criteria and then allocate appropriate available funding to applicant companies that meet those criteria. Approvals are based on the quality of the application and the overall level of funding available. Accordingly, both organizations reserve the right to accept or reject any application or limit allocations to any applicant.

There is a non-refundable fee of USD \$250 that must be paid upon submission of the application online. Your application cannot be processed until this fee is paid.

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

Step 3 – Approval confirmation of the initial funding request

Application approval can take up to three weeks

When your application is approved, you will be notified by a letter, which will indicate an “approval date”. Accompanying the letter will be two agreements including the terms and conditions, an invoice for the 6% administrative fee, “Product of the USA” signage, and a W9 Tax Form.

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 allocation. All items (completed W-9, both signed agreements, and payment of the administrative fee) **MUST** be returned with in 30 days. Applications that have not fully contracted after 60 days will be dropped for the program year.



You cannot file for reimbursement until both Program Agreements are signed and returned to our office, the administrative fee has been paid, and we receive your completed W9 Tax Form.



Contracts and changes to your agreement now require executive level signatures. Regardless of who fills out the application (or contract change request), we will not accept any agreements not signed by an owner, President, CEO, or executive level individual.

Step 5 – Changing Country Marketing Plans

Deadline: December 31, 2016

Changes to Country Marketing Plans can be made online. All changes must be submitted prior to December 31, 2016. This includes changes such as adding activities, brands, increasing funding levels or new country marketing plans.

Step 6 – Reimbursements submission

within 60 days after the activity

Step 7 – Reimbursements disbursement

30 day turnaround time upon submission of all required documents

Step 8 – Submission of the end of year program evaluation

Deadline: February 28, 2017

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

Step 9 – Get ready to apply for the 2017 program year

Application submission deadline: October 1, 2016

All steps are covered in detail further in the manual. Please read ahead to learn more about the Branded Program—a great way to offset eligible marketing and promotional expenses worldwide. Don't hesitate to contact us at any time if you need further assistance at info@foodexport.org.



Note: A Branded Program representative is available to 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

The application process begins with the pre-qualification which can be accessed at www.foodexport.org. For returning participants log in and proceed directly to your Branded Program Home page. If you do not have an account on our website you will first need to complete the new user registration process.

For instructions on the use of the foodexport.org portal, click here: (<https://www.foodexport.org/files/FileDownloads/help.pdf>) 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 combined
- Total sales
- Dunn & Bradstreet number (if you have one)
- NAICS code
- Your Federal Tax ID number



Even companies who have previously participated in the Program must submit a pre-qualification and application to re-apply for each new program year.



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, 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 application from a past participant 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.

Follow these instructions to access the [foodexport.org](https://www.foodexport.org) Branded Program Portal:

- You must have an existing user ID and password to register for Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast programs and services. Your account must be authorized for Branded Program access. If it is not, please contact our office. If you have any questions or encounter any problems, contact your Food Export Liaison for assistance:
 - In the Northeast, call 215.829.9111
 - In the Midwest, call 312.334.9200
- If you are a previous participant, upon login click on “My Food Export Portal.” To enter Your Branded Program Home Page click on the tab labeled “Branded Program.”
- Upon arriving to your Branded Program tab, you will need to submit the pre-qualification application via the link “Submit a Pre-Qualification” that appears under the appropriate program year.
- If you are unsure whether you are registered in the system and already have a user ID and password, click on the link “Forgot User name”. You will be asked to enter your email address. If the system recognizes your email address, you will be prompted to login by clicking on “Login Now”. If you have forgotten your password, you will be able to obtain it by clicking “Forgot Password.”
- If the system does not recognize your email address, and you would like to submit a pre-qualification application, you need to complete the new user registration process to proceed.

Once your prequalification is approved, you will receive an email confirmation which will provide you with essential instructions for submitting your application. The approval of your prequalification will automatically open your access to the formal application process. You can access the application by clicking on “Application” which will appear directly under your approved pre-qualification for the program year. Remember, you will only gain access to the formal application process once 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. You can search for your pre-qualifications, program applications, reimbursements, evaluations, Pre-travel Notifications, and previously requested changes to your contract. All of this is available to you via the Branded Program tab on My Food Export Portal.



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

Upon approval of your pre-qualification, you can complete the application on our website. Before starting the application, please be sure to collect the following:

• **Sales Figures**

Confirms total sales and gross export sales for 4 individual calendar years. We require your actual sales for 2 years prior to the application, projected sales for the year of the application, and projected sales for the following year.

• **Brand Name Products**

Includes 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 42-45 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.

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. For international tradeshows, you must submit a plan for the country in which the show takes place. If you have an importer in place, you must include the full contact information of your importer/distributor in that country. You can receive reimbursement for Branded funding for up to five years for any one country; the five years in the country do not have to be consecutive.

Note: Since June 1, 2004, federal regulations prohibit funding Branded Program activities in the following countries: Iran, Sudan, North Korea, and Cuba. As of 2011 South Sudan is considered a separate nation from Sudan and is not restricted.

• Tradeshows Held in the U.S.

Expenses associated with select USDA approved tradeshows in the United States are eligible for reimbursement. Expenses are only eligible if the applicant is exhibiting for the first time or has not exhibited in the past three years without using the Branded Program.



Five year graduation rule applies. For more information on graduation, please see page 53.



Companies who only submit a plan for a tradeshow held in the U.S. may receive Branded funding for two years. At that time, they must demonstrate international activity by also applying for an international market to continue receiving funding for U.S. activities for three more years.

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

• Product

Originals or photos of product labels/packaging for all products listed on your application summary must be submitted with your application. This is required before we can begin the review of your application.

• Certification Page

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

• Application Fee

A non-refundable application fee of \$250 must be paid online via credit card or, in certain circumstances, a check can be mailed to the appropriate Midwest or Northeast office.

• Exclusivity Agreement

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 an Exclusivity Agreement.



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 exclusivity agreement.

MAKING CHANGES TO YOUR PROGRAM AGREEMENT

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.

- 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 may not exceed USD \$300,000 per company in a single program year.
- If requesting additional allocation, please contact the Midwest or Northeast offices to check on fund availability.

Adding a New Country

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

Moving Funds Between Existing Approved Countries

No change requests need to be submitted.

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.

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.

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 which 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 One or More New Products to a Country Marketing Plan

Promotions of products not in your application will result in denial of your reimbursement. Request new products to be added as their marketing plans are developed.

Changing Plans Online

- Log into “My Food Export Portal” at www.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 “Change Contract” beneath the application data.
- Complete all the relevant fields and submit.
- Allow 2 to 3 weeks for your change request to be processed.

You can also contact your Food Export representative 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 after October 1st of 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 www.foodexport.org.

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 \$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, 2016, and December 31, 2016. However, no reimbursements will be made for expenses incurred before you submit your application (with the exception of certain tradeshow 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: 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 1/6th 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.

Note: U.S. companies are granted exemption from the U.S. origin labeling requirement for activities conducted in Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia.

Country Must Be Eligible

The Branded Program will fund the same participant company for a specific country for no more than five program years. The five years do not have to be consecutive. Agricultural producer cooperatives are exempt from this rule.

Note: Since June 1, 2004, federal regulations prohibit funding Branded Program activities in the following countries: Iran, Sudan, North Korea, and Cuba. As of 2011 South Sudan is considered a separate nation from Sudan and is not restricted.



The graduation five year period is applied across the entire program and any MAP funds from any source. Certain international tradeshow are exempt from counting against graduation. A list of these shows is available on page 41.

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 tradeshow(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 tradeshow(s) held in the U.S.

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

Related Expenses for Tradeshows Held in the U.S.

A list of approved tradeshows held in the U.S. is available on pages 42 and 43.

- Tradeshows held in the U.S. are reimbursable ONLY for those who have not exhibited at that particular show within the past three years at their own expense.
- 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 tradeshows held in the U.S.
- The cost of design and construction of a booth for the purposes of temporary exhibition.
- Travel and lodging expenses are not eligible for U.S. tradeshows

Part-time Contractors

Costs for part-time contractors that assist with product demonstrations at approved tradeshows 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 2014 is USD \$63.31 an hour or USD \$506.48 a day. 2016 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 tradeshow materials to and from approved tradeshows 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 which would include both the name of the individual as well as his/her firm.



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.

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.

Give-away Items (not tied to sale of any products)

At this time, give-away items such as pens, key rings, t-shirts, and caps are limited to a maximum reimbursement of USD \$2 per individual item. Moving forward this amount can change. The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the USDA will notify us through written MAP notices on their website. A statement identifying the U.S. origin of your product must be visible.



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.

Electronic Marketing

Electronic marketing such as text messages, e-mail, and podcasting is now eligible for reimbursement. We will require proof of activity in the form of a copy of the message sent, distribution list, and a statement from the vendor indicating how they targeted a specific market.



Website Development

As of 2013, costs associated with developing, servicing, and updating websites that clearly target a foreign audience are eligible for reimbursement.



Demonstrations/Merchandising

In-store and Food service promotions, consumer and trade demonstrations, shipment of promotional samples (but not the cost of the actual product samples), temporary displays and rental of temporary space for displays, such as end-of-aisle and gondola displays, are eligible.

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

Package and Label Modifications

Brands supported by the Branded Program must carry an eligible U.S. origin statement on domestic and foreign packaging. Costs associated with design (as necessary to accommodate required changes only), production, and printing of a one-year supply* of translated labels and any labor costs to attach or sticker (if outsourced) are eligible for reimbursement.

Participants must demonstrate:

- Changes were necessary to meet the importing laws of an international country.
- Changes are to existing packaging and labels.
- The company intends to use the new package/label(s) during the activity plan year.

** A one year supply refers to amount produced during eligible dates of a single program year, which, depending on application approval date, may not be equal to a 12 month period.*

Note: Changing flavors or varieties, or changing the size of the packaging is considered new product packaging, which is not reimbursable. Sample and promotional labels/packaging as well as gift boxes are not eligible for reimbursement. See pages 29-30 for more details on what has to be submitted for proof of activity.

International Tradeshow Related Expenses

Most international tradeshows are eligible including those supported or sponsored by Food Export–Midwest or Food Export–Northeast. If a tradeshow has a USDA-sponsored USA pavilion you must exhibit in that pavilion (see pages 49-51 for more details).

- 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 34-40.
- 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.

Note: We recognize that some tradeshow 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.

Travel Expenses:

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

- Flying on a US/EU airline
- Travel is associated only with exhibit at eligible trade show or trade mission
- Travelers have issued their pre-travel notification prior to the event

See pages 34-35 for specifics on eligible international travel expenses.

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, tradeshows, and seminars are eligible.
- The maximum reimbursement amount for part-time contractors is determined by the U.S. government. The maximum eligible expense for **2015 is USD \$63.31 an hour or USD \$506.48 a day. 2016 contractor fees will be set by the U.S. government and will be announced at a later date.**
- Employee wages and those of your overseas agent are not eligible.

Freight Costs

Costs for shipping samples to overseas agents, consumer and trade demonstrations, and for shipping tradeshow materials and samples to eligible tradeshows 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.



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.



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 tradeshows 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 approval of the activity or amendment
- Any activities and functions held within the United States (not including certain costs for approved tradeshows held in the U.S.), its possessions, and in ineligible countries as listed on page 16
- Vehicle rental and fuel to transport tradeshow materials and samples is not reimbursable

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 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

Business Related Ineligible Expenses (continued)

- 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 tradeshow 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 23 for details)
- Shelf trays
- Product samples

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 no longer eligible.



Coupon Promotions

While expenses related to coupon promotions are still ineligible, the regulations have been loosened slightly. In the past if a promotion included a coupon for a product not promoted by or a part of a participant's application (For instance if a pretzel company—who was a Branded Program participant—did a promotion with a Beer company—who was not a Branded Program participant—who includes a coupon for their beer) the entire expense would be denied. This is no longer the case.

- 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, etc.)
- Sexual enhancement products and products of a sexual nature
- Promotions or products that are deemed offensive.



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

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 36.



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

* 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 USD \$2,000).
 - **Check** – We must see the cancelled 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.
 - **Credit Card** – 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.



If the payment is made in a foreign currency, we will convert it into U.S. dollars based on the conversion rate on the date the participant paid, not when they were invoiced per the rates of www.oanda.com unless documentation showing the exchange rate used at the time of the transaction is submitted.

* 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 copies, and the U.S. origin statement must be clearly visible. Give-away 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 statement, "Made in the USA", and the brand name listed on the item.

• International Tradeshows

Expenses related to exhibiting at an international tradeshow require a photo of your booth. 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 show the U.S. origin statement on each.



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

• Demonstrations/Merchandising

For in-store, foodservice promotions, and temporary displays, we require a list of stores/locations and dates as well as representative photos of the events or displays. We recognize that some stores do not allow photography; in these cases we will accept demonstration reports.

• International Trade Seminars

We require photos from the events and any literature printed for distribution at the seminar.

• Part-time Contractors

When part-time contractors are utilized at tradeshows, seminars, or in-store tasting and demonstrations, a photograph from these events must be provided as proof of activity. 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 origin and destination address of the shipment as well as indication that promotional samples are being shipped.

3. Proof of Activity (continued)

* Package and Label Modifications

For all charges related to package and label modifications (translation, design, production, printing, etc.), we require copies of the original packages and/or labels and the modified versions. Additionally, we need the documents that detail the import laws that are requiring the modifications. A U.S. origin statement is MANDATORY to receive reimbursement, however we cannot reimburse for the cost of it to be added to domestic packaging and labeling.



Proof of activity for advertisements, package and label modifications and any other printed material—we will only accept PDFs of the actual material, not a PDF of the design.

* Advertising

An English translation or transcript must be submitted with all foreign language advertising. U.S. origin statement must be visible or audible on all advertising.

* **Print Ads** – Original publication or page from the publication clearly showing the date and name of the publication, as well as materials with the U.S. origin statement on the ad itself. A circulation statement needs to be submitted as well to show country subscriptions.

• **Billboards** – A clear photo of the billboard, as well as a list with the billboard's locations and the dates of the promotion.

• **Radio/TV ads** – A video or audio recording of the commercial. An English transcript must be submitted with all foreign language ads. If the expense is for broadcasting of the ads and not just the production, we must also receive a broadcast schedule showing dates, times, and the station(s) on which the spot(s) aired.

* Website development

* Screen shots of the website are required.

* The site is clearly targeting a foreign audience, for example web pages in a foreign language, a separate portal for foreign buyers, etc.

* **Public Relations**

- * Samples or copies of ALL materials created (i.e., press kits, press releases, etc.)

Note: If a press release is created for an eligible tradeshow held in the U.S., the press release must promote your exhibit at the show. No other domestic press releases are eligible.

- * Copy of at least a partial mailing list and what was mailed for your mass mailings.

- * **Tradeshow Booth** – A photo of your booth clearly showing a statement promoting the U.S. origin of the products.

* **Booth Signage and Literature**

- * Photo of any posters or signs in your booth. The U.S. origin statement must be visible.
- * Sample or copy of all literature distributed at your booth.



Whenever exhibiting at an international tradeshow or one held in the U.S., program participants are required to exhibit in the show's USA pavilion when available. Under certain circumstances exemptions can be granted. Please make sure your request is sent at least 60 days in advance of the show.

4. Proof of USA

The activity must promote the product as "Made in the USA"; therefore, a USA origin statement must be visible. Eligible USA origin statements are listed on page 20.

Note: When sending sensitive financial documents, it is recommended that you redact account numbers and line items irrelevant to the claim. Please do not send originals—only photocopies.



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.

COVER SHEET FOR PROMOTIONAL CLAIMS

If you do not have internet access please copy the page below and fill out for each of your reimbursement submissions. Otherwise, when submitting your claims online, you can print a similar cover page directly from our website.

EXPENSE ITEM #: (OFFICE USE ONLY)

COMPANY:

COUNTRY (WHERE ACTIVITY TOOK PLACE):

ACTIVITY TYPE (CHECK ONE):

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> TRADESHOW EXPENSE | <input type="checkbox"/> DEMONSTRATION/MERCHANDISING |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PART-TIME CONTRACTORS | <input type="checkbox"/> MARKETING/POS MATERIALS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> INTERNATIONAL TRADE SEMINAR | <input type="checkbox"/> PACKAGE/LABEL MODIFICATIONS |

INVOICE AMOUNT PAID IN FOREIGN CURRENCY (A): _____

EXCHANGE RATE AT TIME OF PAYMENT (B): _____
(EXCHANGE RATES FOUND AT WWW.OANDA.COM)

INVOICE AMOUNT PAID IN U.S. DOLLARS (A X B): _____

AMOUNT PAID BY COMPANY: _____

AMOUNT PAID BY OVERSEAS AGENT: _____

REIMBURSEMENT RATE: 50%

REIMBURSEMENT REQUESTED IN U.S. DOLLARS: _____

COVER SHEET FOR PROMOTIONAL CLAIMS

If you do not have internet access please copy the page below and fill out for each of your reimbursement submissions. Otherwise, when submitting your claims online, you can print a similar cover page directly from our website.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS CHECKLIST (CONTINUED)

ALL MUST HAVE ACCOMPANYING TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH, IF APPLICABLE.

1. INVOICE

INVOICE DATE:

INVOICE NUMBER:

PAYMENT DATE:

2. PROOF OF PAYMENT (CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING):

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> CANCELLED CHECK | <input type="checkbox"/> COPY OF CHECK AND COPY OF BANK STATEMENT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CREDIT MEMO | <input type="checkbox"/> WIRE TRANSFER AND COPY OF BANK STATEMENT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BANK STATEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> CASH RECEIPT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CREDIT CARD STATEMENT | |

NOTE: IF THIS EXPENSE WAS PAID FOR BY AN OVERSEAS AGENT, YOU MUST SUBMIT YOUR PROOF OF PAYMENT TO THEM.

3. PROOF OF ACTIVITY* (MUST INCLUDE AT LEAST ONE FOR EACH CLAIM):

- SAMPLE OF PRINTED MATERIAL (WITH U.S. ORIGIN STATEMENT VISIBLE)
- PHOTO (OF BOOTH, DEMO, BILLBOARD, DISPLAY, ADVERTISEMENT, ETC.)
- SAMPLE OF PROMOTIONAL ITEM (I.E., GIVEAWAYS)
- VIDEO/AUDIO/CD (MUST BE IN STANDARD U.S. FORMAT)
- COPY OF FREIGHT INVOICE FOR SAMPLE SHIPMENTS
- SAMPLE OF OLD AND NEW LABELS/PACKAGING
- EXHIBITOR LISTING FROM TRADESHOW CATALOG

* MAKE SURE APPROVED FORM OF U.S. ORIGIN STATEMENT IS VISIBLE.

I CERTIFY THAT THE AMOUNTS STATED AND DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THIS CLAIM ARE TRUE AND CORRECT. I UNDERSTAND THAT FOOD EXPORT–MIDWEST AND FOOD EXPORT–NORTHEAST RESERVE THE RIGHT TO REQUEST ORIGINAL AND/OR ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION WHEN NECESSARY. I UNDERSTAND THAT ALL CLAIMS ARE SUBJECT TO AUDIT, AND THAT MY RECORDS OF THIS TRANSACTION MUST BE KEPT AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW FOR FIVE YEARS.

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

ELIGIBLE INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL EXPENSES

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

• Exhibiting at an International Tradeshow/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 pages 44 and 45 for a list of tradeshows 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 and at least 60 days in advance to Food Export–Midwest or Food Export–Northeast. Requests for exemption will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the USDA.

• Advance Approval of Country Marketing Plan

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



You must send a written notification of your travel plans to the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the USDA overseas office in advance of your trip. To send this notification, log on to www.foodexport.org with your user ID and password, and click on the link “Submit Pre-Travel Notification.” Upon completion of the form, an email will be sent to the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the USDA office, as well as Food Export–Midwest or Food Export–Northeast.

• Must Fly on a U.S. Flag Carrier

A U.S. carrier must be used to and from the international destination in accordance with the Fly America Act. When the final destination cannot be reached by a U.S. flag carrier, you must submit a statement to that fact by a travel agent, and show that all other portions of your flight were on a U.S. carrier. Travelers may only be reimbursed up to the cost of a full-fare, economy (coach) class ticket. If business or first class is used, companies will need to submit a travel agent’s written quotation for the economy ticket for the same dates and itinerary.



Flights on European Union (EU) carriers are now allowed for reimbursement under the Branded Program.

WARNING: Please make sure that the carrier’s country is part of the EU, as not all European countries are members of the EU.



Travel Reimbursement – We can now reimburse for airline ticket change fees, 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.



Travel Reimbursement – Reimbursement for eligible expenses related to travel to exhibit at international tradeshows has been expanded. As a result in addition to full time employees, any agent hired by the participant company is also eligible for reimbursement for travel expenses. 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 http://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 tradeshow exhibit dates.

Days of travel: The eligible travel days include two days prior to the tradeshow, 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. Based on check in/out dates, meals will be calculated on the hotel bill provided. 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.



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.

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.

* 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. You may do this through our website. Log on to the website, and click on the link “Pre-Travel Notification” at the top. A sample can be found on page 40.



* Trip Report

Following your exhibition at the tradeshow, 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. A sample can be found on page 39.



* Airline Itinerary/Invoice

We must have a detailed itinerary/invoice from either a travel agent or airline. We are specifically looking for flight information. It is advised that all participants retain copies of their boarding passes in case further documentation is needed.

Note: Online ordering confirmations are not the same as passenger receipts. It must list the ticket number.



Pre-Travel Notifications must be sent to the FAS Post in the country you are traveling to 30 to 45 days in advance of travel to be eligible for reimbursement of travel expenses. This procedure can be done through our website.

* Passenger Receipt

This document comes from the airline and indicates your ticket number(s) as well as price. While paper tickets are becoming rarer, it is still possible to obtain a receipt upon request when checking in at the airport (including an automated check-in kiosk) or it can be printed when ordering online. Boarding passes are not eligible passenger receipts.

* 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 advise that you still obtain documentation from the hotel itself that verifies your check in/out dates, name of guest, and, if possible, nightly room rate.

* 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 28 for more information).

* Proof of Activity

Photo of booth is acceptable (see pages 29-30 for details).



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)

HOW TO CALCULATE TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENTS

THIS TABLE IS DESIGNED TO HELP YOU CALCULATE YOUR TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT.

- USE THE WEBSITE LISTED BELOW TO FIND THE PER DIEM RATES FOR THE CITY AND COUNTRY OF THE TRADESHOW IN THE MONTH YOU EXHIBITED.
- ELIGIBLE DATES OF TRAVEL INCLUDE TWO DAYS PRIOR TO THE SHOW, AND ONE DAY AFTER (NO EXCEPTIONS).
- TO CALCULATE THE ELIGIBLE HOTEL EXPENSES, ENTER YOUR ACTUAL NIGHTLY RATE IN U.S. DOLLARS OR THE FEDERAL PER DIEM RATE (WHICHEVER IS LOWER).
- FOR M&IE, ENTER 75% OF THE PER DIEM RATE ON THE FIRST AND LAST ELIGIBLE DAYS, AND THE FULL RATE FOR THE MIDDLE DAYS.
- ENTER YOUR ECONOMY CLASS AIRFARE AMOUNT.
- ADD YOUR HOTEL, M&IE, AND AIRFARE TOTALS TOGETHER TO GET THE TOTAL ELIGIBLE EXPENSE.
- YOUR REIMBURSEMENT WILL BE 50% OF THIS AMOUNT.

NAME OF SHOW: _____

SHOW START DATE: _____ END DATE: _____

SHOW START DATE: _____ END DATE: _____

ELIGIBLE DAYS: _____

EXCHANGE RATE: FOREIGN CURRENCY _____ EQUALS _____ USD \$ (EX: 1 EURO=1.20 USD\$)

PER DIEM: (PER DIEM RATES CAN BE FOUND AT [HTTP://AOPRALS.STATE.GOV/WEB920/PER_DIEM.ASP](http://AOPRALS.STATE.GOV/WEB920/PER_DIEM.ASP))

CITY: _____

COUNTRY: _____

M&IE: _____

LODGING: _____

TOTAL: _____

EXPENSES:

DATE: _____ LODGING: _____ M&IE: _____ AIRFARE: _____

TOTALS: _____

COVER SHEET FOR TRAVEL CLAIMS

If you do not have internet access please copy the page below and fill out for each of your reimbursement submissions. Otherwise, when submitting your claims online, you can print a similar cover page directly from our website.

COMPANY: _____

TRAVEL ITEM #: (OFFICE USE ONLY) _____

NAME OF FOREIGN TRADESHOW: _____

CITY: _____

COUNTRY: _____

NAME OF TRAVELER: _____

DATES OF SHOW: _____

DATES OF TRAVEL: _____

TOTAL ELIGIBLE DAYS (MAX. ELIGIBLE INCLUDES 2 DAYS PRIOR AND 1 DAY AFTER): _____

1. AIRFARE* (COACH ONLY): _____

* IF NOT A U.S. FLAG CARRIER, AIRFARE IS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR REIMBURSEMENT.

2. LODGING NIGHTLY RATE X ELIGIBLE DAYS*: _____

* OR PER DIEM RATE, WHICHEVER IS LOWER

(VISIT [HTTP://AOPRALS.STATE.GOV/WEB920/PER_DIEM.ASP](http://AOPRALS.STATE.GOV/WEB920/PER_DIEM.ASP) FOR CURRENT RATE)

3. MEALS AND INCIDENTALS AT PER DIEM RATE:

A. FIRST AND LAST DAYS AT 75% OF PER DIEM RATE: _____

B. REMAINING DAYS AT FULL PER DIEM RATE: _____

C. TOTAL ELIGIBLE M&IE (A + B): _____

TOTAL ELIGIBLE TRAVEL EXPENSES (ADD ITEMS 1, 2, AND 3): _____

REIMBURSEMENT RATE: 50%

TOTAL REIMBURSEMENTS REQUESTED: _____

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL SERVICE (FAS) OF THE USDA:

- PRE-TRAVEL NOTIFICATION
- TRIP REPORT INCLUDING A LIST OF CONTACTS MADE

LODGING:

- HOTEL BILL
- PROOF OF PAYMENT

AIRFARE:

- ITINERARY FOR FLIGHT
- PASSENGER RECEIPT
- PROOF OF PAYMENT

PROOF OF ACTIVITY:

- PHOTO OF BOOTH
- LISTING IN TRADESHOW GUIDE

If you do not have internet access please copy the page below and fill out for each of your reimbursement submissions. Otherwise, when submitting your claims online, you can print a similar cover page directly from our website.

COMPANY PARTICIPANT

YOU MAY SUBMIT A SINGLE TRIP REPORT COMBINING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF TWO TRAVELERS. SECTIONS MARKED WITH AN * ARE REQUIRED. PLEASE ATTACH A LIST OF CONTACTS MADE DURING TRIP.

COMPANY NAME*:

SUBMITTED BY*:

NAME OF TRAVELER #1*:

TITLE OF TRAVELER #1*:

NAME OF TRAVELER #2:

TITLE OF TRAVELER #2:

TRADESHOW ATTENDED:

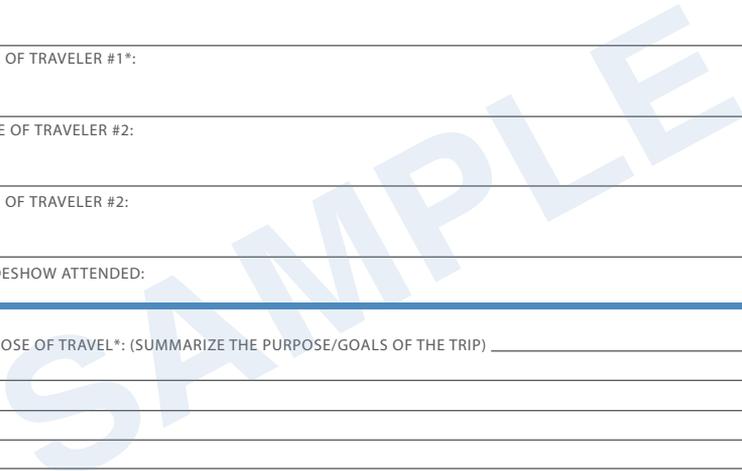
PURPOSE OF TRAVEL*: (SUMMARIZE THE PURPOSE/GOALS OF THE TRIP)

DATES OF TRAVEL*: (INCLUDE TO/FROM INFORMATION AND SUMMARIZE THE ITINERARY)

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS*: (INCLUDE AN OVERVIEW OF THE CURRENT MARKET SITUATION)

RECOMMENDATIONS AND/OR ACCOMPLISHMENTS*: (OUTLINE RECOMMENDATIONS OR ACCOMPLISHMENTS RELATIVE TO THE GOALS/PURPOSE OF THE TRIP)

LIST OF CONTACTS MADE*:



PRE-TRAVEL NOTIFICATION FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL TO EXHIBIT AT A TRADESHOW

THIS FORM MUST BE SENT TO THE FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL SERVICE (FAS) OF THE USDA OFFICE IN THE DESTINATION COUNTRY AT LEAST 30 DAYS IN ADVANCE OF TRAVEL. ADDRESSES AND FAX NUMBERS CAN BE FOUND ON THE FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL SERVICE (FAS) OF THE USDA WEBSITE AT WWW.FAS.USDA.GOV/OFSO/OVERSEAS_POST_DIRECTORY/OVS_DIRECTORY_SEARCH.ASP AND SELECTING THE APPROPRIATE COUNTRY.

THIS FORM WILL SERVE AS NOTICE OF BRANDED COMPANY PARTICIPANT PLANS TO VISIT YOUR MARKET TO EXHIBIT AT AN INTERNATIONAL TRADESHOW.

PLEASE RETAIN YOUR PRE-TRAVEL NOTIFICATION FAX CONFIRMATION SHEET SO YOU CAN SUBMIT IT WITH YOUR CLAIMS. WE CAN NOT REIMBURSE YOUR TRAVEL EXPENSES WITHOUT A COPY OF THIS NOTIFICATION.

COUNTRY OF TRADESHOW: _____

NAME OF INTERNATIONAL TRADESHOW: _____

NAME OF TRAVELER: _____

TITLE OF TRAVELER: _____

COMPANY NAME: _____

DATES OF TRADESHOW: _____

PRODUCTS TO BE PROMOTED: _____

COMMENTS: _____

SPECIAL REQUESTS: _____



If your Pre-Travel Notification is not submitted online, you will be unable to submit your travel reimbursement worksheet. Please contact our office for assistance.

INTERNATIONAL TRADESHOWS EXEMPTED FROM THE BRANDED PROGRAM GRADUATION REQUIREMENT

The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the USDA has determined that certain approved international tradeshow activities in foreign countries may be exempt from the Branded Program graduation. These shows include:

- A1 Fares
- ANUGA Cologne*
- Asia Fruit Logistica
- Asia Pacific Leather Fair
- BETA International (equestrian)
- BioFach
- China Fisheries & Seafood Expo 
- Seafood Expo Global*
- Fiera Cavelli (equestrian)
- Fish International
- Food and Hotel Asia*
- Food Ingredients Asia
- Food Ingredients Europe
- Food Ingredients South America
- FOODEX Japan*
- Fruit Logistica (Berlin)
- Gulfood*
- HOFEX
- Interzoo
- IPM (horticultural)
- ISM Cologne
- Prowein
- Seafood Expo Asia 
- SIAL Brazil
- SIAL Paris*
- Vinexpo Asia
- Vinexpo Bordeaux
- VinItaly
- Zoomark

* Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast will offer Food Show PLUS!™ services at these events. To learn about our Food Show PLUS!™ activities please see page 57 of the Branded Program Exporter Manual. Visit our website to register for these activities.

 NEW

U.S. TRADESHOWS ELIGIBLE FOR REIMBURSEMENT

The United States and its possessions are treated as a country for the purposes of the five-year graduation requirement. A Branded Program participant may receive funding for THE UNITED STATES FOR UP TO FIVE YEARS. 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 tradeshow 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.

American Food Fair (U.S. Pavilion) at the National Restaurant Association Show nasdatradeshow.com	May 21-24, 2016	Chicago, Illinois
American Pet Products Association, Global Pet Expo americanpetproducts.org	Mar. 22-24, 2016	Orlando, Florida
BrewExpo America	May 3-6, 2016	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Dairy-Deli-Bakery Seminar and Expo idda.org	Jun. 5-7, 2016	Houston, Texas
Duty Free Show of the Americas iaadfs.org	Apr. 3-6, 2016	Orlando, Florida
Expo Alimentos	TBD	San Juan, Puerto Rico*
Inflight Food Service Association Expo ifsanet.com	September/October	TBD
Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) Expo ift.org	Jul. 16-19, 2016	Chicago, Illinois
International Baking Industry Exposition	Oct. 8-11, 2016	Las Vegas, Nevada
International Floriculture Expo co-located with FMI Connect	Jun. 20-22, 2016	Chicago, Illinois
International Builders' Show buildersshow.com	Jan. 19-21, 2016	Las Vegas, Nevada
International Feed Expo afia.org	Jan. 26-28, 2016	Atlanta, Georgia
International Home and Housewares Show housewares.org	Mar. 5-8, 2016	Chicago, Illinois
Kosherfest kosherfest.com	November	Secaucus, New Jersey
National Association of Convenience Stores (NACS) Show nacsonline.com	Oct. 18-21, 2016	Atlanta, Georgia
Natural Products Expo East expoeast.com	Sep. 21-24, 2016	Baltimore, Maryland

* *Travel expenses are not eligible for reimbursement*

U.S. TRADESHOWS ELIGIBLE FOR REIMBURSEMENT

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Natural Products Expo West expowest.com	Mar. 10-13, 2016	Anaheim, California
NCA Sweets & Snacks Expo sweetsandsnacks.com	May 24-26, 2016	Chicago, Illinois
Nightclub & Bar Convention & Tradeshow ncbshow.com	Mar. 7-9, 2016	Las Vegas, Nevada
North American Veterinary Community (NAVC) Conference tnavc.org	Jan. 16-20, 2016	Orlando, Florida
Organic Trade Association's All Things Organic Show co-located with Natural Products Expo East	Sep. 21-24, 2016	Baltimore, Maryland
Peanut and Tree Nut Processors Association Convention ptnpa.org	Jan. 15-18, 2016	Palm Beach Garden, Florida
Petfood Forum petfoodindustry.com	Apr. 18-20, 2016	Kansas City, Missouri
Private Label Manufacturers Association (PLMA) Show plma.com	Nov. 2016	Rosemont, Illinois
Produce Marketing Association Fresh Summit Convention & Expo pma.com	Oct. 15-16, 2016	Orlando, Florida
Seafood Expo North America seafoodexpo.com/north-america	Mar. 6-8, 2016	Boston, Massachusetts
Snack Food Association (SNAXPO) sfa.org	Mar. 19-22, 2016	Houston, Texas
Southern Nursery Association sna.org	TBD	TBD
Specialty Coffee Association of America Annual Exposition	Apr. 14-17, 2016	Atlanta, Georgia
Specialty Food Association's Summer Fancy Food Show fancyfoodshows.com	Jun. 26-28, 2016	New York, New York
Specialty Food Association's Winter Fancy Food Show fancyfoodshows.com	Jan. 17-19, 2016	San Francisco, California
United Fresh co-located with FMI Connect unitedfresh.org	Jun. 20-23, 2016	Chicago, Illinois
U.S. Food Showcase co-located with FMI Connect Show fmiconnect.net	Jun. 20-23, 2016	Chicago, Illinois
U.S.A. Pavilion at the Americas Food & Beverage Show nasdatradeshow.com	Oct. 2016	Miami, Florida
World Floral Expo	Mar. 9-11, 2016	Los Angeles, California

TRADESHOWS WITH USA PAVILIONS

Companies must exhibit within the USA Pavilion at the eligible tradeshow listed below in order to receive reimbursement for tradeshow*. This includes your distributor representing your products at shows. Below is a list of major tradeshow with U.S. Pavilions taking place in the 2016 Program Year (list and dates are subject to change.)

**If no USA pavilion exists at a tradeshow, 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 <http://www.fas.usda.gov/topics/trade-shows>.

NORTH & SOUTH AMERICA

ANTAD	Mar. 16-18, 2016	Guadalajara, Mexico
SIAL Canada	Apr. 13-15, 2016	Montreal, Canada
American Food Fair (USA Pavilion) at the National Restaurant Association Show	May 21-24, 2016	Chicago, Illinois
USA Pavilion at the Americas Food & Beverage	Oct. 2016	Miami, Florida

MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA

Gulfood	Feb. 21-25, 2016	Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Food & Hospitality Africa (formerly IFEA Africa)	May 3-5, 2016	Johannesburg, South Africa
SIAL Middle East	TBD	Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

AUSTRALIA

Fine Food Australia	Sep. 2016	Melbourne, Australia
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EUROPE & RUSSIA

Fruit Logistica	Feb. 3-5, 2016	Berlin, Germany
BioFach (organics)	Feb.10-13, 2016	Nuremberg, Germany
Seafood Expo Global	Apr. 26-28, 2016	Brussels, Belgium
SIAL Paris	Oct. 16-20, 2016	Paris, France

ASIA

Supermarket Trade Show	Feb. 10-12, 2016	Tokyo, Japan
FOODEX JAPAN	Mar. 8-11, 2016	Tokyo, Japan
Food Ingredients China	Mar. 23-25, 2016	Shanghai, China
Food & Hotel Asia	Apr. 12-15, 2016	Singapore
SIAL China	May 5-7, 2016	Shanghai, China
Seoul Food & Hotel	May 10-13, 2016	Seoul, Korea
Asian Fruit Logistica	Sep. 2016	Hong Kong
Food Ingredients Asia (FI Asia)	Sep. 21-23, 2016	Jakarta, Indonesia
Food and Hotel China–Shanghai	Nov. 2016	Shanghai, China
VIV China	Sep. 6-8, 2016	Beijing, China
Annapoorna	Sep. 2016	Mumbai, India

WHO TO CONTACT FOR FURTHER ASSISTANCE: FOOD EXPORT–MIDWEST

Illinois Department of Agriculture

Kim Hamilton

tel 217.782.5809

fax 217.524.5960

email kim.hamilton@illinois.gov

Indiana State Department of Agriculture

Daniel Spellacy

tel 317.460.0428

fax 317.232.1362

email dspellacy@isda.in.gov

Iowa Economic Development Authority

Lisa Longman

tel 515.725.3139

fax 515.725.3010

email lisa.longman@iowa.gov

Kansas Department of Agriculture

Suzanne Ryan

tel 785.564.6704

fax 785.296.8389

email suzanne.ryan@kda.ks.gov

Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development

Jamie Zmitko-Somers

tel 517.241.3628

fax 517.335.0628

email ZmitkoJ@michigan.gov

Minnesota Department of Agriculture

Jeffrey Phillips

tel 651.201.6220

fax 651.201.6120

email jeffrey.phillips@state.mn.us

Missouri Department of Agriculture

Tristan Asbury

tel 573.751.5611

fax 573.751.2868

email tristan.asbury@mda.mo.gov

Nebraska Department of Agriculture

Stan Garbacz

tel 402.471.4876

fax 402.471.2759

email stan.garbacz@nebraska.gov

North Dakota Department of Agriculture

Erin Markestad

tel 701.239.7211

fax 701.328.4567

email emarkestad@nd.gov

Ohio Development Services Agency

Wesley Aubihl

tel 614.644.9759

fax 614.463.1540

email wesley.aubihl@development.ohio.gov

South Dakota Department of Agriculture

Chase McGrath

tel 605.295.1635

fax 605.773.3481

email chase.mcgrath@state.sd.us

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

Lisa Stout

tel 608.224.5126

fax 608.224.5111

email lisa.stout@wisconsin.gov

WHO TO CONTACT FOR FURTHER ASSISTANCE:
FOOD EXPORT–NORTHEAST

Connecticut Department
of Agriculture

Jaime Lizee Smith

tel 860.713.2559

fax 860.713.2516

email jaime.smith@ct.gov

Delaware Department of Agriculture

David Smith

tel 302.698.4522

fax 302.697.6287

email davidm.smith@state.de.us

Maine Department of Agriculture,
Food and Rural Resources

Jeff Bennett

tel 207.990.3161

fax 207.541.7420

email jbennett@mitc.com

Massachusetts Department
of Agricultural Resources

Bonita Oehlke

tel 617.626.1753

fax 617.626.1850

email bonita.oehlke@state.ma.us

New Hampshire Department
of Agriculture, Markets and Food

Gail McWilliam-Jellie

tel 603.271.3788

fax 603.271.1109

email gmcwilliam@agr.state.nh.us

New Jersey Department of Agriculture

Logan Brown

tel 609.292.8856

fax 609.341.3212

email logan.brown@ag.state.nj.us

New York State Department
of Agriculture and Markets

Steve McGrattan

tel 518.457.7076

fax 518.457.2716

email steve.mcgrattan@agriculture.ny.gov

Pennsylvania Department
of Agriculture

Thomas Mainzer

tel 717.783.1394

fax 717.787.5643

email tmainzer@state.pa.us

Rhode Island Economic
Development Corporation

Kathy Therieau

tel 401.278.9100

fax 401.273.8270

email ktufts@riedc.com

Vermont Agency of Agriculture,
Food and Markets

Chelsea Lewis

tel 802.990.3161

fax 802.828.2361

email chelsea.lewis@state.vt.us

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 language 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. The reimbursement time is solely dependent on your ability to provide us with the information/documentation that we require. Your reimbursement request can be processed more quickly if you:

- Submit all documents in a complete and orderly package, including proof of activities.
- Provide English translations for all foreign language documents, and convert all payments to U.S. dollars if payments were made in another currency.
- Submit claims within 60 days after the expense is incurred.

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: Here are the most common reasons why claims are denied:

- U.S. origin statement is missing from the proof of activity documentation
- Insufficient or missing documentation
- Expenses were for ineligible activities
- Expenses were incurred for an ineligible or non-approved country
- Transactions were not documented by cancelled 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. 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 via the Internet: just log-in using your User ID and password, then click on the tab marked, "Evaluation." Once you have completed the entire form, click "Submit." 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. 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, package and label modifications are only reimbursable if the changes are necessary to meet importing country requirements. Modification of an existing label should be used in that program year.

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

A: No, travel costs are not eligible for tradeshow 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 tradeshow overseas and ones held in the U.S.

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

A: No, none of these are eligible.

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 tradeshow? For a maximum of three years?

A: No and no. All international tradeshow are eligible for reimbursement. Please make sure you exhibit in the USA pavilion if one exists at the show. Branded Program participants may receive reimbursement in a given country for a total of five years. However, as of 2009 there are some tradeshow that are exempt from graduation. Please see page 41 for a list of these shows. We do not track graduation by activity but rather by country.

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 tradeshow that have a USA pavilion on pages 44 and 45. 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 tradeshow.

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: One of the main points of the program is to help promote U.S. made products in foreign markets. The sign provided serves as an identifier for your booth if you have no other signage. 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 tradeshow held in the U.S.

Agreement Changes

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 change request, as stated in your approval letter(s), Program Agreement, and any Program Agreement 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 28th 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 \$100, the \$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.

Exclusivity Agreement

The U.S. applicant must own the brand name of the products to be promoted or have the brand owner sign the exclusivity agreement 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.

Graduation

Since 1994, MAP regulations state that Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast will not provide assistance to a single company for brand promotion in a single country for more than five years. After the five-year period has been reached, the company is considered a “graduate” from the country and, thus, no longer eligible to be reimbursed for its market development expenses in that country. Companies applying for the Branded Program are required to provide complete graduation information by country if applicable at the time of the application submission. In 2009, the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the USDA determined that certain approved international tradeshow activities in international countries may be exempt from the Branded Program graduation. Please see page 41 for a list of those shows.



The five years do not have to be consecutive but they are inclusive of any Branded Program funds received for that country from organizations other than Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast. Additionally we are barred from allocating beyond five years per country to entities that have reorganized or reincorporated under the same or different name if the reorganized or reincorporated entity is substantially similar to the original entity.

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: tradeshow 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 \$100, the company has actually contributed \$50 into their own overseas marketing budget. The \$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, SUSTA and WUSATA, provide similar services for companies based in or sourcing product from the Southern and Western U.S. regions, respectively. See page 9 for SUSTA and WUSATA contact information.



OUTREACH AND EXPORTER EDUCATION

Food Export Helpline™

This free service provides Midwestern and Northeastern companies with customized, one-on-one assistance on a wide variety of export-related topics including a product's top Product/Market Evaluation.

Export Essentials Online

This service is an educational introduction to the fundamentals and logistics of exporting. Each section tackles an important subject and provides detailed information to assist in answering your questions about exporting.

Educational Seminars and Webinars

Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast staff, in conjunction with their Member States, as well as their network of international marketing representatives and Food Export Helpline™ Counselor, share their extensive experience and expertise in seminars held throughout the year in various locations. Webinars are designed to help companies learn about the export process and the resources available to assist with expanding their business.

MARKET PROMOTION

Branded Program

This cost-share funding program 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.

In-Market Promotions

Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast sponsor in-store or on-site promotions around the world that promote Midwestern and Northeastern food and agricultural products.

MARKET ENTRY

Buyers Missions

Buyers Missions bring qualified, international buyers to the U.S. to meet with U.S. suppliers. Participating companies meet one-on-one with these buyers to make potential business connections and gain important feedback about their product's exporting potential.

Food Show PLUS!™

Food Show PLUS!™ is a tradeshow enhancement service that provides assistance to U.S. suppliers to be a more prepared and effective exhibitor. The program is customized per tradeshow but may include competitive product research, onsite interpreters, translation of up to two pages of marketing materials, one-on-one buyer meetings, an in-market briefing on trading logistics, local retailer tours, and assistance with qualifying top leads.

Focused Trade Missions

Focused Trade Missions bring a group of U.S. suppliers to a country to learn firsthand about the market and meet face-to-face with local buyers. It's an organized trip with services that help navigate a different culture and assist with business meetings.

Online Product Catalog

This web-based catalog is an effective way to promote your products to international buyers from around the world. By including your products in this virtual directory, buyers will easily be able to locate your company when searching by product, company name, or other criteria.

Market Builder

This customized package of services helps U.S. suppliers find the right market and international buyer for their products through importer feedback on their products, competitive market research and importation analysis, distributor referrals and importer lists, and assistance with in-market meetings.

Export Advisor Program

The Export Advisor Program is a year-long service which provides custom assistance from an experienced advisor to help your company kick start or improve your exporting efforts. It's a customized approach, unique to your business whether you're just starting out or need to refresh your strategy.

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:

Food Export–Midwest or Food Export–Northeast do not discriminate on the basis of age, disability, national origin or ancestry, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, political affiliation or military status. Persons with disabilities or who otherwise require alternate means for communication of program information can contact us.

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. (www.foodexport.org/ethicspoint).

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 & 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

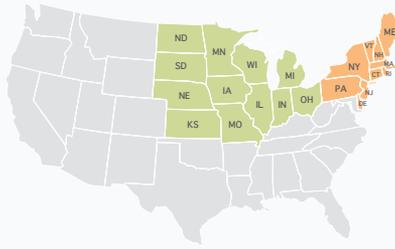
It is expected that Food Export–Midwest & Food Export–Northeast Staff, Members, Contractors, and Participants in our activities:

- 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 & 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 & 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 & Food Export USA–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 Development Services Agency
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, Food and Rural Resources
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 22 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.



Food Export Association of the Midwest USA®

309 W. Washington, Suite 600
Chicago, IL 60606
tel 312.334.9200 fax 312.334.9230
web www.foodexport.org email info@foodexport.org



Food Export USA®—Northeast

One Penn Center
1617 JFK Boulevard, Suite 420
Philadelphia, PA 19103
tel 215.829.9111 fax 215.829.9777
web www.foodexport.org email info@foodexport.org