

contained herein and funds will be awarded on a competitive basis. Financial assistance will be made available on a reimbursement basis. The QSP is administered by the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS).

Under the QSP, CCC enters into agreements with those entities whose proposals have been accepted. The QSP agreement between CCC and the participant will include the maximum amount of CCC funds that may be used to reimburse certain activity costs that have been approved by CCC and paid by the QSP participant. QSP participants will be responsible for procuring (or arranging for the procurement of) commodity samples, exporting the samples, and providing the technical assistance necessary to facilitate successful use of the samples by importers. Participants that are funded under this announcement may seek reimbursement for the sample purchase price and the costs of transporting the samples domestically to the port of export and then to the foreign port of entry. Transportation costs from the foreign port, or point, of entry to the final destination will not be eligible for reimbursement. CCC will not reimburse the costs incidental to purchasing and transporting samples, for example, inspection or documentation fees. Although providing technical assistance is required for all projects, CCC will not reimburse the costs of providing technical assistance. A QSP participant will be reimbursed after CCC reviews its reimbursement claim and determines that the claim is complete.

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

This notice supercedes any prior notices concerning the QSP.

#### Authority

The QSP is authorized under section 5(f) of the CCC Charter Act, 15 U.S.C. 714c(f).

#### General Scope of QSP Projects

QSP projects are the activities undertaken by a QSP participant to provide an appropriate sample of a U.S. agricultural commodity to a foreign importer, or a group of foreign importers, in a given market. The purpose of the project is to provide information to an appropriate target

audience regarding the attributes, characteristics, and proper use of the U.S. commodity. A QSP project addresses a single market/commodity combination. As a general matter, QSP projects should conform to the following guidelines:

- Projects should benefit the represented U.S. industry and not a specific company or brand;
  - Projects should develop a new market for a U.S. product, promote a new U.S. product, or promote a new use for a U.S. product, rather than promote the substitution of one established U.S. product for another;
  - Sample commodities provided under a QSP project must be in sufficient supply and available on a commercial basis;
  - The QSP project must either subject the commodity sample to further processing or substantial transformation in the importing country, or the sample must be used in technical seminars designed to demonstrate to an appropriate target audience the proper preparation or use of the sample in the creation of an end product;
  - Samples provided in a QSP project shall not be directly used as part of a retail promotion or supplied directly to consumers. However, the end product, that is, the product resulting from further processing, substantial transformation, or a technical seminar, may be provided to end use consumers to demonstrate to importers consumer preference for that end product; and
  - Samples shall be in quantities less than a typical commercial sale and limited to the amount sufficient to achieve the project goal (e.g., not more than a full commercial mill run in the destination country).
- QSP projects shall target foreign importers and target audiences who:
- Have not previously purchased the U.S. commodity which will be transported under the QSP;
  - Are unfamiliar with the variety, quality attribute, or end-use characteristic of the U.S. commodity which will be transported under the QSP;
  - Have been unsuccessful in previous attempts to import, process, and market the U.S. commodity which will be transported under the QSP (e.g., because of improper specification, blending, or formulation; or sanitary or phytosanitary (SPS) issues);
  - Are interested in testing or demonstrating the benefits of the U.S. commodity which will be transported under the QSP; or
  - Need technical assistance in processing or using the U.S. commodity that will be transported under the QSP.

Under this announcement, the number of projects per participant will not be limited. However, individual projects will be limited to \$75,000 of QSP reimbursement. Projects comprised of technical preparation seminars, that is, projects that do not include further processing or substantial transformation, will be limited to \$15,000 of QSP reimbursement as these projects require smaller samples.

#### Proposal Process

In order to be considered for participation in the QSP, interested parties should submit proposals to FAS as described in this notice. QSP proposals must contain complete information about the proposed projects. This notice is complemented by concurrent notices announcing four other foreign market development programs administered by FAS, including the Market Access Program (MAP), the Foreign Market Development Cooperator (Cooperator) Program, the Emerging Markets Program, the Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops Program, and the Section 108 Foreign Currency Program.

The MAP and Cooperator Program notices detail a Unified Export Strategy (UES) application process which provides a means for interested applicants to submit a consolidated and strategically coordinated single proposal that incorporates funding requests for any or all of these programs. Some applicants to the QSP, particularly those who also are applying for funding under the MAP or Cooperator Program, are encouraged to use the UES application process. The Internet-based UES application, including step-by-step instructions for its use, is located at the following URL address: <http://www.fas.usda.gov/cooperators.html>. Other applicants should follow the application procedures contained in this notice.

Entities interested in participating in the QSP are not required to submit proposals in any specific format; however, FAS recommends that proposals contain, at a minimum, the following:

(a) *Organizational information, including:*

- Organization's name, address, Chief Executive Officer (or designee), and Federal Tax Identification Number (TIN);
- Type of organization;
- Name, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address of the primary contact person;
- A description of the organization and its membership;