

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Commodity Credit Corporation and Foreign Agricultural Service

Emerging Markets Program

Summary

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service, Global Programs, announces this funding opportunity to support the Emerging Markets Program by issuing new awards. This opportunity is available to U.S. entities to develop, maintain, or expand markets for exports of United States agricultural commodities and to promote cooperation and exchange of information between agricultural institutions and agribusinesses in the United States and emerging markets.

A. Program Description

Issued By: Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) and Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)

Assistance Listing Number: 10.603

Notice of Funding Opportunity Title: 2025 Emerging Markets Program

Funding Opportunity Number: USDA–FAS–EMP–2025

Authorizing Legislation: The Emerging Markets Program (EMP) is authorized by Section 203(d) of the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978 (7 U.S.C. 5623(d)), as amended.

Program Overview, Objectives, and Priorities: The EMP is established to develop, maintain, or expand markets for exports of United States agricultural commodities and to promote cooperation and exchange of information between agricultural institutions and agribusinesses in the United States and emerging markets. The EMP assists U.S. entities in developing, maintaining, or expanding exports of U.S. agricultural commodities and products by funding activities that enhance emerging markets' food and rural business systems, including reducing

trade barriers. The EMP is intended primarily to support export market development efforts of the private sector, but EMP resources may also be used to assist public organizations.

B. Federal Award Information

Available Funding for this Announcement: The Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 provided no more than \$8 million in funding for each of the fiscal years FY 2019 through FY 2023.

Congress has not yet determined funding levels for FY 2025. This NOFO is being released prior to Congress appropriating funding for the EMP program for FY 2025. USDA makes no commitment to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards regardless of whether or at what level program funding for FY 2025 is provided.

Total Available Federal Funding: Anticipated to be no more than \$8 million.

Anticipated Number of Awards: 20–30 awards. Funding per award under EMP is anticipated to range up to \$500,000 per eligible application, subject to programmatic approval, review, and available funding.

Projected Period of Performance: Awards will be generally granted for a period of performance of three years. FAS will entertain requests to extend an agreement's expiration date up to a maximum of five years. Any extension requests must include a justification for why the extension is necessary and how the extension would effectively support the program's purpose.

Projected Period of Performance Start Date(s): 10/01/2024

Projected Period of Performance End Date(s): 09/30/2027

Type of Assistance Instrument: USDA/FAS anticipates that grants will be funded pursuant to this funding opportunity. In this type of agreement, the recipient is expected to implement the project autonomously with little programmatic involvement from USDA/FAS. However,

USDA/FAS maintains an oversight role, and the recipient must ensure that USDA/FAS is kept apprised of project activities and progress.

C. Eligibility Information

Eligible Applicants: To participate in the EMP program, an entity must be a U.S. private or government entity (e.g., universities, trade associations, agricultural cooperatives, state regional trade groups, state departments of agriculture, federal agencies, for-profit entities, or consulting businesses) with a demonstrated role or interest in the export of U.S. agricultural commodities or products. Applications from research and consulting organizations will be considered if they provide evidence of participation by and financial support from the U.S. industry. Foreign organizations, whether government or private, may participate as third parties in activities carried out by U.S. organizations but are not eligible for direct funding assistance through the program.

All applicants must have an active registration in the U.S. Government System for Award Management (www.sam.gov) before the application submission deadline of the announcement. Applicants with inactive, expired, pending, or excluded listings will be deemed ineligible. Exceptions, waivers, or extensions will not be considered. Please contact the program officer(s) listed in Section G, Federal Awarding Agency Contact, if you have questions about this requirement. Applicants that do not meet the eligibility criteria will be considered ineligible.

Eligibility Criteria

Eligible Commodities: All U.S. agricultural commodities, except tobacco, are eligible for consideration. Agricultural product(s) must be comprised of at least 50 percent U.S. origin content by weight, exclusive of added water, to be eligible for funding. Applications that seek support for multiple U.S. commodities are also eligible.

Eligible Markets: Only applications that target countries or regional groups made up of countries classified below the World Bank's threshold for high income economies will be considered for funding. Countries classified as high income are not eligible markets under EMP. World Bank income limits and country classifications can change from year to year, with the result that a given country may qualify one year, but not the next. Therefore, applicants should consult the current World Bank country classification list for guidance. The World Bank's list of countries by income can be found at

<https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups>. Countries that are eligible for EMP funding per the World Bank classification

but are otherwise off limits for funding due to U.S. sanctions or other restrictions are ineligible, so applicants should check U.S. sanctions lists before submitting an application.

Eligible Activities: All EMP projects must fall into at least one of the following four categories:

(a) Market Assessments: Assistance to teams (consisting primarily of agricultural consultants, agricultural producers, other persons from the private sector, and government officials expert in assessing the food and rural business systems of other countries) to enable those teams to make assessments of the food and rural business systems needs of the target market. This type of EMP project must accomplish all three of the following elements:

1. Conduct an assessment of the food and rural business system needs of an emerging market;
2. Make recommendations on measures necessary to enhance the effectiveness of those systems, including potential reductions in trade barriers; and
3. Identify opportunities and projects to enhance the effectiveness of the emerging market's food and rural business systems.

To be eligible, such applications must clearly demonstrate that the team of experts consists primarily of agricultural consultants, agricultural producers, other persons from the private sector, or government officials and that they have expertise in assessing the food and rural business systems of other countries.

(b) Subsistence Travel to Emerging Markets: Assistance to enable United States food and rural business system experts, including United States agricultural producers and other United States individuals knowledgeable in agricultural and agribusiness matters, to assist in transferring knowledge and expertise to entities from emerging markets.

(c) Subsistence Travel to the United States: Assistance to enable individuals designated by emerging markets to consult with such United States experts to enhance the food and rural business systems of such emerging markets and to transfer knowledge and expertise to such emerging markets.

(d) Technical Training: Technical assistance to enable individuals or other entities to carry out recommendations, projects, and opportunities in emerging markets.

Applications that do not fall into one or more of the four categories above, regardless of previous guidance provided regarding the EMP, are not eligible for consideration under the program.

Limits on Funding: The EMP is intended to support focused projects that implement specific activities, rather than expansive concept papers that contain only broad ideas. Therefore, applications that request more than \$500,000 in total funding will not be considered. Funding for continuing and substantially similar projects is capped at a maximum of three years. After that time, the project is assumed to have proven its viability and, if necessary, should be continued by the recipient with its own or with alternative sources of funding. EMP funds awarded to

government agencies must be expended or otherwise obligated by close of business September 30, 2025.

Cost Share/Match Requirement

As the EMP is intended to complement, not supplant, the efforts of the U.S. private sector, all private sector applications must include a cost share element from the applicant and/or U.S. partners. Cost share may be actual cash invested or in-kind contributions to the project. While there is no minimum or maximum amount of cost share, the degree of commitment to a proposed project, represented by the amount and type of private funding, is one factor used in determining which applications will be approved for funding. Applications for which private industry is willing to commit cash, rather than in-kind contributions such as staff resources, will be given priority consideration. Contributions from USDA or other government agencies or programs may not be counted as cost share by other applicants. Similarly, contributions from foreign (non-U.S.) organizations may not be counted toward the cost share requirement but may be counted in the total cost of the project. Cost share is not required for applications from Federal, state, or local government agencies.

Other Submission Requirements and Information

Organizations interested in applying to EMP are encouraged to submit their application through the web-based Unified Export Strategy (UES) system. The UES system is accessible at <https://apps.fas.usda.gov/ues/webapp/>. The suggested UES format encourages applicants to examine the constraints or barriers to trade that they face, identify activities that would help overcome such impediments, consider the entire pool of complementary marketing tools and program resources, and establish realistic export goals. Although FAS highly recommends

applying via the UES, applicants also have the option of submitting an electronic application in MS Word format to FAS via email to podadmin@usda.gov.

Organizations that do not have UES access may request access from FAS by following this 3–step process:

- 1) Navigate to the UES at: <https://apps.fas.usda.gov/ues/WebApp/> and, when prompted, use the “Customer” option to create an account at [Login.gov](https://login.gov).
- 2) Return to the [UES](#) and create a new account in the system.
- 3) Submit a [UES User Access Request Form](#) to the Program Operations Division (POD) UES team via email at uesadmin@usda.gov, who will verify the information and activate your UES account.

Substantial Compliance

All applications will be reviewed for eligibility and must meet the eligibility requirements described in Section C to be considered eligible. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified within 30 calendar days of the application deadline of the ineligibility determination.

Applications must substantially comply with the application submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section D of this solicitation or they will be rejected. In the event a page limit is expressed in Section D with respect to the application, or parts thereof, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed.

D. Application and Submission Information

This announcement contains all information necessary to apply to this funding opportunity.

Application Submission Deadline: FAS will track the time and date of receipt of all applications. The initial application submission deadline is 5 p.m. Eastern Time, Friday, June 14,

2024. All applications received by the initial application submission deadline will be considered for funding in the initial allocation tranche. Applications will continue to be accepted after the initial application submission deadline and will be considered for funding in the order received on the following dates as long as funding remains available: Tranche II deadline – December 31, 2024; Tranche III deadline – March 31, 2025; Tranche IV deadline – June 30, 2025. No applications will be accepted after June 30, 2025.

Content and Form of Application Submission

To be considered for EMP, an applicant must submit to FAS an application package consisting of:

- (1) An EMP project application that includes the information contained in this notice;
- (2) Standard Form 424, “Application for Federal Assistance” (SF-424). Please email the completed SF-424 to PODAdmin@usda.gov with the subject: “2025 EMP SF-424”; and
- (3) A completed SF-LLL (Disclosure of Lobbying Activities) form if the entity applying to this announcement is required to disclose their lobbying activities under 31 USC 1352.

EMP applications should be no longer than ten (10) pages and must include the following information:

- (1) Date of application
- (2) Name of organization submitting application
- (3) Tax ID number
- (4) Project title
- (5) Address of organization
- (6) Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) issued by SAM.gov
- (7) Chief Executive Officer

- (8) Primary contact name and contact information
- (9) Description of the organization and its membership
- (10) Collaborating organizations
- (11) Target country(ies)
- (12) Promoted commodity
- (13) Current conditions and market analysis in the target market(s)
- (14) Description of the problem(s) or constraint(s) to be addressed by the project
- (15) Project objectives
- (16) Description of the proposed activity
- (17) Performance measures. FAS requires the use of standard performance indicators, which are tailored to the type of EMP proposal:

For Market Assessment proposals:

- Number of stakeholders that received the assessment report in the first 30 days after publication
- Percentage of stakeholders that received the assessment report that indicate an increased interest in the market

For Technical Assistance proposals:

- Activities must be measured by an appropriate metric (e.g., % change in understanding, number of targets adopting new behavior, number of new installations, etc.) that is tailored to the nature of the activity and can measure the impact of the technical assistance activity

For Subsistence Travel proposals

- Number of participants from the foreign market

- Percentage of those participants with improved understanding of the concepts that the U.S. experts are presenting

Applicants may also include custom performance measures for quantifying progress and demonstrating results. The proposed custom performance measures must meet the following criteria:

- **Aligned:** The indicator should, as closely as possible, measure exactly the relevant result.
- **Clear:** The indicator should be precise and unambiguous about what is being measured. There should be no doubt on how to measure or interpret the indicator and who will collect the data for the indicator.
- **Quantifiable:** The indicator(s) should sufficiently capture all the elements of a result.
- **Include an identified methodology:** The data can be obtained (for example, in the form of survey) to inform the indicator in a timely and efficient manner and the data are of high-quality.

(18) Timeline(s) for implementation of activity, including start and end dates

(19) Description of how the project will benefit the whole U.S. industry, not just the applicant

(20) Description of how the project will benefit the emerging market's food and rural business systems

(21) Information on whether similar activities are or have previously been funded with USDA or other U.S. Government resources in the target country(ies) (e.g., under other

FAS market development programs, Food Aid, Cochran, Borlaug, and/or conducted by other U.S. government agencies); and

(22) Detailed line item activity budgets that include calculations and justifications that provide sufficient detail to enable FAS to determine that the costs are reasonable and allowable for the project:

- Individual expense items (e.g., salaries, travel expenses, consultant fees, administrative costs, etc.) should be listed on separate line items, each clearly indicating:
 - Which items are to be covered by EMP funding;
 - Which are to be covered by the participating U.S. organization(s); and
 - Which are to be covered by foreign third parties (if applicable);
- Cost line items for consultant fees should show the calculation of the daily rate and the number of days;
- Cost line items for travel expenses should show the number of trips and the destination, the number of travelers, cost, and objective for each trip;

If FAS determines that an applicant made a good faith effort to submit the required application information by the application deadline but identifies that a clarification on the submission is needed, FAS will notify the applicant and request that the applicant provide the clarification within 15 business days. FAS will not review applications until they are complete, which could delay application processing. FAS will not consider any applications that remain incomplete after the 15 business days.

Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

As part of the application evaluation process outlined in Section E, FAS will consider an applicant's past performance under the FAS market development programs and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from USDA/FAS files and from current/prior grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If an applicant has not previously participated in an FAS market development program, they may submit a list of no more than five federally-funded (preferably USDA or USDA/FAS) assistance agreements (assistance agreements include Federal grants and cooperative agreements but not Federal contracts) that your organization performed within the last three years and describe:

- i) whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements;
- ii) your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements, including whether you adequately and timely reported on your progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes of those agreements (and if not, explain why not) and whether you submitted acceptable final technical reports under the agreements; and
- iii) your organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of your proposed EMP project, and your staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources (or the ability to obtain them) to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in the application and you will receive a neutral score for these

factors (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.

Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM)

Each applicant is required to:

- i) Have an active registration in SAM before submitting its application;
- ii) Have assented to the federal assistance certifications in the SAM platform;
- iii) Provide a valid Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) in its application; and
- iv) Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all

times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.

SAM.gov Registration Instructions

Organizations applying to this funding opportunity must have an active SAM.gov registration. If you have never done business with the Federal Government, you will need to register your organization in SAM.gov. If you do not have a SAM.gov account, then you will create an account using login.gov¹ to complete your SAM.gov registration. SAM.gov registration is FREE. The process for entity registrations includes obtaining a UEI and requires assertions, representations, certifications, and other information about your organization. Please review the [Entity Registration Checklist](#) on SAM.gov for details on this process.

If you have done business with the Federal Government previously, you can check your entity status using your government issued UEI to determine if your registration is active.

SAM.gov requires you renew your registration every 365 days to keep it active.

¹ Login.gov is a secure sign in service used by the public to sign into Federal Agency systems including SAM.gov and Grants.gov. For help with login.gov accounts you should visit [http://login.gov/help](https://login.gov/help).

Please note that SAM.gov registration is different than obtaining a UEI only. Obtaining an UEI only validates your organization's legal business name and address. Please review the [Frequently Asked Question](#) on the difference for additional details.

Contact the [Federal Service Desk](#) for help with your SAM.gov account, to resolve technical issues, or to chat with a help desk agent: (866) 606–8220. The Federal Service desk hours of operation are Monday – Friday 8am – 8pm ET.

Applicants must maintain an active SAM.gov registration at all times during which they have active Federal awards or an application under consideration by FAS. FAS will not make an award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM.gov requirements, and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time FAS is ready to make the award, FAS may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

Intergovernmental Review

Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs, may be applicable to awards resulting from this announcement. USDA implemented the Executive Order in 2 CFR 415.5. USDA/FAS may require applicants selected for funding to provide a copy of their application to their State Point of Contact (SPOC) for review. These reviews are not required before submitting an application. Only applicants that USDA/FAS selects for funding under this announcement are subject to the Intergovernmental Review requirement. For more information about USDA's implementation for Intergovernmental Review, please visit <https://www.usda.gov/ocfo/federal-financial-assistance-policy/intergovernmental->

[review#:~:text=Executive%20Order%20\(EO\)%2012372%2C,of%20proposed%20Federal%20financial%20assistance.](#)

Funding Restrictions

Ineligible Activities: EMP funding may only be used for generic activities. For-profit entities may not use program funds to conduct private business, promote private self-interests, supplement the costs of normal sales activities, or promote their own products or services beyond specific uses approved by FAS in a given project. EMP funds may not be used to support normal operating costs of individual organizations, including government organizations, nor as a source to recover pre-award costs or prior expenses from previous or ongoing projects. Per [7 CFR 1486.404](#), certain types of expenses are not eligible for reimbursement by the program, and there are limits on other categories of expenses, such as indirect charges, travel expenses, and consulting fees. Unreasonable expenditures and expenditures made prior to the beginning of a period of performance for an award are not reimbursable. For a complete description of ineligible expenditures, please refer to 2 CFR parts 200 and 400 and the EMP regulations at 7 CFR part 1486. EMP funding may not be used to support the export of another country's products to the United States, or to promote the development of a foreign economy as a primary objective. Applications that counter national strategies or duplicate activities planned or already underway by U.S. non-profit agricultural commodity or trade associations will not be considered.

In general, EMP funds may not be used in any manner that is prohibited by 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR Part 400, the program regulations at 7 CFR 1486, or this Notice of Funding Opportunity. FAS grant agreement funds may only be used for the purpose set forth in the award and must be consistent with the statutory authority for the award. Grant agreement funds and

non-monetary support may not be used for matching contributions for other federal grants or cooperative agreements, lobbying, or intervention in federal regulatory or adjudicatory proceedings. Also, EMP program funds may not be used for expenses, fines, settlements, judgements, or payments to legal suits, challenges, or disputes filed against the U.S. Government or any other government entity.

E. Application Review Information

FAS will review all applications for eligibility and completeness. FAS will, subject to the availability of funds, approve those applications that it considers to best meet the objectives outlined in this announcement. When appropriate to the subject matter of the application, FAS may also request the assistance of other U.S. Government experts in evaluating applications.

Conflict of Interest

The applicant's Conflict of Interest (COI) Point of Contact as defined in the USDA/FAS Conflict of Interest Policy, must notify the USDA/FAS contact identified in Section G of this solicitation of any actual or potential conflict of interest that they are aware of that may provide the applicant with an unfair competitive advantage in competing for USDA/FAS financial assistance awards within 10 calendar days of becoming aware of the conflict of interest.

Examples of an unfair competitive advantage include, but are not limited to, situations in which an USDA/FAS employee reviewed and commented on or drafted all or part of an applicant's application prior to submission. Note that USDA/FAS does not generally consider receiving information from an USDA/FAS employee limited to whether the applicant or the applicant's proposed project is eligible to compete for funding to confer an unfair competitive advantage. In addition, assistance agreements made under this solicitation will include a term and condition notifying recipients of their COI disclosure obligations and responsibilities under the award,

including the need to have systems in place to address, resolve, and disclose COIs to USDA/FAS.

Integrity in Performance

Prior to making a Federal award, the Federal awarding agency is required by [31 USC 3321](#) and [41 USC 2313](#) to review information available through any OMB–designated repositories of government–wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information. Therefore, application evaluation criteria may include the following risk–based considerations of the applicant: (1) financial stability; (2) quality of management systems and ability to meet management standards; (3) history of performance in managing federal awards; (4) reports and findings from audits; and (5) ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.

Prior to making a Federal award with a total amount of Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, currently \$250,000, the federal agency is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.gov (currently FAPIIS).

- An applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM.gov and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.gov.
- The Federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant’s integrity, business ethics, and record of performance

under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in [2 CFR 200.206](#).

Review and Selection Process

The purpose of the application evaluation is to recommend an appropriate funding level for each application and submit the funding recommendations to the appropriate officials for decision making. The agency will convene a review panel, which may include both federal and non-federal reviewers, to review the eligible applications against the evaluation criteria described below. The reviewers will ensure that the applicant is capable of delivering the programs/activities as described in the announcement based on the applicant's marketing plan and assign a score and provide summary comments based on the evaluation criteria identified below. The review panel will prepare a recommendation list and present it to the selecting official, who is not a member of the panel.

The selecting official may select applications out of rank order in consideration of strategic program priorities, such as geographical distribution, incorporation of minority-serving institutions, or congressional directive. Selection determinations are final and cannot be appealed.

Throughout the evaluation process, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project considering their:

- i) past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in response to Section D of the solicitation,
- ii) history of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in response to Section D of the solicitation, including whether the applicant submitted acceptable final technical reports under those agreements and the extent to which the applicant

adequately and timely reported on their progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under those agreements and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately reported why not,

iii) organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and

iv) staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

Note: In evaluating applicants under items (i) and (ii) of this criterion, USDA/FAS will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in the application and you will receive a neutral score for these subfactors (items (i) and (ii) above); a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points. If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.

FAS conducts the following process in reviewing applications and allocating available EMP program funds:

Sufficiency Review (Phase I): In Phase 1, FAS conducts an initial review (sufficiency check) of all applications received to determine the completeness of the application and responsiveness to this announcement. If an applicant is determined to be ineligible per Section C, “Eligibility Information,” of this announcement, FAS will not consider the application and will take no further action on it. The agency will notify applicants determined to be ineligible. An applicant that feels such a determination is made in error may request reconsideration,

highlighting evidence supporting their claim, by email to the program officer(s) listed in Section G, Federal Awarding Agency Contact, within 3 business days of notification. Applications that meet the requirements and are found to be responsive to this announcement will move on to the Phase 2 Agency review.

Agency Review (Phase 2): An EMP review committee comprised of representatives from the FAS Program Areas will review each eligible application and will score and recommend approval for each application using the following criteria, with the numbers in parenthesis indicating the weight attached to each criterion:

1. Appropriateness of the Activity (30 points), which will vary based on the type of application but will include:
 - i. For assessment applications: Does the application present a methodology that is likely to result in the needed recommendations and identification of specific opportunities and projects? Is the assessment team comprised of credible U.S. experts with experience in assessing food and rural business systems?
 - ii. For subsistence travel applications: Is the exchange of knowledge and expertise clearly described in terms of enhancements to the emerging market's food and rural business systems? Do we understand how travelers are selected?
 - iii. For technical assistance applications: Is the potential for the proposed activities to enhance the effectiveness of the emerging market's food and rural business systems sufficiently justified?
2. Market Impact (50 points), including the degree to which the proposed project is likely to contribute to the development, maintenance, or expansion of U.S. agricultural exports to emerging markets; the conditions or constraints affecting the level of U.S. exports and

market share for the agricultural commodity/product; and the demonstration of how a proposed project will benefit the industry as a whole; and

3. Completeness and Viability of the application (20 points), including evidence that the organization has the knowledge, expertise, ability, and resources to successfully implement the project; the entity's willingness to contribute resources to the project; and the applicant's reported past EMP results and evaluations, if applicable. If you do not have any relevant or available past EMP performance information, you may provide past performance information from similar Federal grants, or you can simply indicate that no information is available. If you indicate that no information is available, you will receive a neutral score for this factor (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If you do not provide any response for this item, you may receive a score of 0 for this factor.

The EMP review committee may also solicit and consider feedback on the applications from appropriate overseas Posts in their review and in determining approval recommendations for each applicant. FAS may, when appropriate, request the assistance of other U.S. government subject area experts in evaluating applications.

Development of Funding Recommendations (Phase 3): In this phase of the review, a combined average score for each of the applications will be calculated from the individual scores provided by the EMP review committee members. The applications will be ranked highest to lowest by combined score, and the available funding will be allocated to the applications in order until all applications are funded or until the available funding is exhausted. Applications that receive an average score of less than 70 points will not be considered for funding. In addition to

the scores, comments received from the reviewers will be considered when developing the funding recommendations.

Final Review and Allocation Decision Making (Phase 4): A summary of all applications and the recommended funding levels for each will be provided to the Office of the Deputy Administrator, Global Programs for the purpose of finalizing the funding recommendations. Once finalized, the recommendations will be presented to the FAS Administrator for final deliberation, determination, and approval. FAS leadership (including the Deputy Administrator, Associate Administrator, and Administrator) may elect to review and adjust the funding recommendations based on factors including, but not limited to: agency priorities, priority markets, program impact, the record of performance of the organization in managing past market development funds, and the organization's likelihood of success.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

Notice of Award

FAS will approve those applications that it determines best satisfy the criteria and factors specified in this announcement. Successful applicants will be notified of the status of their application/award by email. This notification is not authorization to proceed, and such notification should be construed as provisional. Funding for successful applications will be provided through specific agreements. FAS will send an agreement and an approval letter to each successful applicant.

The approval letter and agreement will specify the terms and conditions applicable to the project, including the details of each project, when the project is approved to begin and end, responsibilities of the Recipient, levels of funding, and reporting requirements.

Administrative and National Policy Requirements

All successful applicants for all grant and cooperative agreements are required to comply with the applicable General Administrative Terms and Conditions, which can be found at https://www.fas.usda.gov/grants/general_terms_and_conditions/default.asp. The applicant is presumed to have read, understood, and accepted these terms when accepting a USDA/FAS award. Applicants with questions about the applicable terms should contact the program officer(s) listed in Section G, Federal Awarding Agency Contact.

The applicable Terms and Conditions will be for the last year specified at that URL. Before accepting an award, the applicant should carefully read the award package (agreement and approval letter) for instructions on administering the award and the terms and conditions associated with responsibilities under Federal Awards. Recipients must accept all conditions in this NOFO as well as any Special Terms and Conditions in the Notice of Award to receive an award under this program.

Subaward and Executive Compensation Reporting

Applicants must ensure that they have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the subaward and executive total compensation reporting requirements established at [2 CFR 170](#), unless they qualify for an exception from the requirements, should they be selected for funding.

Mandatory Disclosures

As required by [2 CFR 200.113](#), non-federal entities or applicants for a Federal award must disclose, in a timely manner, in writing to the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the Federal award. Failure to make required disclosures can result in any of the remedies described in [2 CFR 200.339](#) including suspension and debarment.

Reporting

EMP Recipients must provide interim and final performance and financial reports as specified by the terms and conditions of their award. All reports must be submitted through the UES and must cover the program performance and financial status for each approved project.

Each report, whether interim or final, must evaluate the progress of the EMP project using the performance measures approved in the written program agreement and provide an accounting of all project expenditures by cost category and actual contributions made to the project by the Recipient and all other participating entities. Unusual deviations from activity budget amounts or lagging progress on performance measures should be noted and explained.

Monitoring

USDA/FAS, through its authorized representatives, has the right, at all reasonable times, to make site visits to review project accomplishments and management control systems and to provide such technical assistance as may be appropriate. During site visits, USDA/FAS will review recipients' files related to the program.

As part of any monitoring and program evaluation activities, grant recipients must permit USDA/FAS, upon reasonable notice, to review assistance agreement–related records and to interview the organization's staff and clients regarding the program, and to respond in a timely and accurate manner to FAS requests for information relating to the program.

Closeout

Within 120 days after the agreement completion date, or after an amendment has been issued to close out a grant, whichever comes first, FAS will confirm that the Recipient has provided all of the required reports and will review the reports for completeness and content. Once the required reports are approved, FAS will prepare a closeout letter that advises the

Recipient of the award closeout procedures. The notice will indicate that the period of performance has closed, note that any remaining funds will be de-obligated, and address any additional closeout requirements.

G. Awarding Agency Contact Information

Contact and Resource Information

For additional information and assistance regarding this announcement, please contact the following during regular working hours 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Eastern Time: Curt Alt, Senior Director, Program Operations Division, Global Programs, Foreign Agricultural Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture *by phone*: (202) 690–4784, or *by email* at Curt.Alt@usda.gov.

H. Additional Information

(1) *Extensions*. Extensions to this program are allowed. Recipients may request a no-cost extension to complete all project activities. The request must be submitted 60 days prior to the expiration of the performance period and must include a justification for why the extension is necessary and how the extension would effectively support the program’s purpose. Requests for extensions are subject to review and approval by FAS.

(2) *Preaward Costs*. The Recipient shall not request reimbursement, incur costs, or obligate funds for any purpose pertaining to the operation of the project, program, or activities prior to the start of the approved budget period/performance period.

(3) *Project Modifications*. All requests for project modifications, including budget revisions, activity changes, and new activities, must be reviewed and approved by FAS. Upon approval, FAS will issue an amendment to the agreement, which must be signed by FAS and the Recipient. The Recipient may not implement the proposed modifications until the amendment approving the changes is finalized.

(4) *Program Income.* [7 CFR 1486.504](#) of the EMP regulations defines program income as gross income earned by the Recipient that is directly generated by a supported activity or earned as a result of the Federal award during the period of performance. Program income generated from an activity, the expenditures for which have been wholly or partially reimbursed with EMP funds, shall be used by the Recipient in furtherance of its approved activities in the program period during which the EMP funds are available for obligation by the Recipient, or must be returned to CCC.

(5) *Electronic Signatures.* Consistent with the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act (ESIGN Act), USDA/FAS uses and accepts electronic signatures for application and award documents. USDA/FAS will neither solicit nor send physical copies of documents.