



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE
LESTER SPELL, JR., D.V.M.
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For Immediate Release

Contact: Andy Prosser, Director, Market Development and Public Relations
(601) 359-1158
Email: andy@mdac.state.ms.us

Export Funding Available for Mississippi Agricultural Companies

The Southern United States Trade Association (SUSTA) is now accepting applications for the 2012 Market Access Program (MAP) Branded. The Branded program is designed to help small agricultural companies enter export markets with 50 percent reimbursement for promotional costs like advertising, exhibiting at trade shows, and changes to packaging and labels. Hundreds of companies are already tapping into these resources and growing their businesses despite the slow economic recovery.

When approved, growers, food producers, distributors, and manufacturers can use the Branded program to reimburse 50 percent of their international marketing costs. To be eligible for the Branded program, companies must be considered small according to U.S. Small Business Administration standards, have yearly sales of at least \$100,000, and promote a brand-name product that is at least 50 percent U.S. agricultural origin. MAP Branded is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service and administered to southern U.S. companies by SUSTA. Companies located in any of SUSTA's member states can apply for funding: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Companies applying for MAP Branded funds can download the Pre-Qualification Form on the SUSTA website at www.susta.org. For more information, contact Andy Prosser at the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce at (601) 359-1158 or the SUSTA office at (504) 568-5986.

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