



**STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE**

CINDY HYDE-SMITH
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Paige Manning, Director of Marketing
Office: (601) 359-1163; Cell: (662) 312-5897
E-mail: paige@mdac.ms.gov

AUGUST 22, 2013

Export Funding and Assistance Available for Mississippi's Food and Agricultural Companies

The Southern United States Trade Association (SUSTA) is now accepting Pre-Qualifications for the 2014 Market Access Program (MAP) Brand Promotion Program and International Marketing Activities. The MAP Brand Promotion 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. The International Marketing Program allows small businesses to exhibit at trade shows and missions at a reduced fee while connecting with global businesspeople.

To be eligible for either MAP Brand Promotion or International Marketing Activities, 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 programs are 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.

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce invites companies interested in learning more about SUSTA to attend a free seminar on September 17, 2013, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. at the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum in Jackson, MS. In addition to SUSTA, the Mississippi Development Authority, and U.S. Department of Commerce will also be in attendance to offer assistance regarding international trade. To register for the seminar, please visit at the following link: http://www.susta.org/services/outreach_events_JacksonMS13.html or contact Susan Head at the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce at susan@mdac.ms.gov or (601) 359-1196 or the SUSTA office at (504) 568-5986.

###