FAS – Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops (TASC)

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Farm & Foreign Agricultural Services
USDA Mission Areas

- Farm & Foreign Agricultural Services
- Food, Nutrition & Consumer Services
- Food Safety
- Marketing & Regulatory Programs
- Natural Resources & Environment
- Research, Education & Economics
- Rural Development

- Farm Service Agency
- Foreign Agricultural Service
- Risk Management Agency
Role of the Foreign Agricultural Service

- FAS is one of the leading agricultural trade agencies for the USDA
- FAS represents the interests of U.S. agricultural industry overseas
- Develop, expand, and maintain export markets
Overseas Field Offices

- Three + FSOs
- Two FSOs
- One FSO
- None
Grant Programs Branch of OTP

EMP – $10,000,000

QSP - $2,500,000

TASC - $9,000,000

FY 15 proposals still being accepted!
The Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops (TASC) program provides funding to U.S. organizations for projects that address sanitary, phytosanitary and technical barriers that prohibit or threaten the export of U.S. specialty crops.
Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops (TASC)

- The 2014 Farm Bill amended the existing TASC statute to clarify that the program funds projects that address “sanitary and phytosanitary and technical barriers to trade” rather than “sanitary and phytosanitary and related barriers.”
TASC Proposal Checklist

- Is the primary objective to increase U.S. exports?
- Do you have a clear constraint and a technical trade barrier?
- Have you discussed the idea with FAS Overseas, OASA, or marketing specialist?
- Do you have realistic and quantifiable performance measures?
Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops (TASC)

- Nature of barrier and extent to which proposal will ‘remove, resolve or mitigate’ it
- Impact on market retention, access, and expansion
- Can staff provide expertise to execute the proposal?
- Potential for expanding sales
- Broad base of producer representation
- Cost sharing is encouraged
- **Specialty crop**: all cultivated plants, or the products thereof, produced in the United States, except wheat, feed grains, oilseeds, cotton, rice, peanuts, sugar, and tobacco.
Examples of activities include, but are not limited to:

- Initial pre-clearance programs
- Irradiation research
- Export protocol and work plan support
- Seminars and workshops, study tours, field surveys
- Development of pest lists
- Pest and disease research
- Seminars and other plant health related projects
TASC: What type of activities are eligible?

- **Irradiation treatment:** e.g. Develop irradiation quarantine treatments for invasive insects of exported fruit crops
- **IPR and labeling issues:** Unauthorized use of U.S. trademarks on Chinese fruit
- **Labeling and packaging issues:** e.g. Almond labels and packages after the Chinese changed the name of almonds
- **Sustainability issues, organic standard issues, and quality and grading issues**
TASC: What type of activities are eligible?

- **Sustainability and Eco labels:** ie. EU demanding too much information on environmental sustainability

- **Quality and grading issues:** ie. The loss of sensory characteristics of extra virgin olive oil could inhibit olive oil access in the EU, or grapefruit being rejected because the image is not perfect

- **Geographical indicators:** e.g. The EU restrictions on certain geographical terms
TASC: Are there any limits on the scope of proposals?

- **Funding cap:** $500,000 in a given year
- **Length of activities:** Up to five years in duration
- **Multiple proposals:** Applicants may submit multiple proposals but no TASC program participant may have more than five approved projects underway at any given time
- **Certain types of expenses are not eligible:** for reimbursement by the program, including the costs of market research, advertising, or other promotional expenses, unreasonable expenditures or any expenditure made prior to approval of a proposal
- **Indirect Costs (overhead):** We must accept the negotiated indirect (F&A) cost rate for a non-federal entity
Best Business Practices: A good audit trail consists of a general ledger or summary spreadsheet that ties with supporting documentation to each line item, invoices, and original receipts, contracts and agreements, and proof of payment.
Questions?

THANK YOU

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