

USDA AGRIBUSINESS TRADE AND INVESTMENT MISSION TO NORTH AFRICA

USDA is sponsoring a Regional Agribusiness Trade and Investment Mission to North Africa, tentatively scheduled for April 20-24, 2008, in Rabat, Morocco. The Regional Mission will include six (6) countries in the North Africa corridor.

We are looking to attract U.S. businesses who are interested in opening or extending market access opportunities in the North Africa Region. The formal announcement will be available within the upcoming weeks. In the meantime, if you or a colleague are interested in this opportunity, please don't hesitate to contact me as soon as possible and I will provide additional information.

Mission Goal

The goal of the North Africa Region Agribusiness Trade and Investment Mission is to provide U.S. participants with first-hand market information, access to government decision makers, and one-on-one meetings with business contacts, including potential agents, distributors and partners, so they can position themselves to enter or expand their presence in the African market.

Mission Scenario

The North Africa Regional Trade and Investment Mission will be held in Rabat, Morocco. African entrepreneurs from Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia will travel to Rabat, Morocco to meet with selected U.S. agribusiness participants. Meetings with Moroccan, U.S. Government and Industry Officials; Presentations by Public/Private Sector Experts; One-on-one business meetings and Site Visits will be scheduled during the Mission. Additional business meetings can be arranged by USDA contracted facilitator for your convenience.

USDA will cover lodging, breakfast & lunch meals, and all on-ground expenses (transportation, translation, conference venue, reception costs, etc.) during the Mission. Participants are responsible for their travel costs to and from Rabat, Morocco.

The Trade Mission is being scheduled in conjunction with the International Agricultural Fair being held in Meknes, Morocco, April 23 - 27, 2008. The Agricultural Fair event is designed to facilitate knowledge-sharing on new technological and technique developments in the production of agricultural products. The fair will provide a forum for agricultural operators from different regions of Morocco to showcase their products and network with national and foreign participants representing different value chains. The fair will be inaugurated by His Majesty King Mohamed IV.

Proposed Timetable

Rabat, Morocco

Saturday, April 19, 2008	Participants Arrive; Reside at Hotel (TBD)
Sunday, April 20, 2008	Meetings with Government and Industry Officials Presentations by Public and Private Sector Officials Reception
Monday, April 21, 2008	One-on-One Business Appointments & Site Visits
Tuesday, April 22, 2008	One-on-One Business Appointments & Site Visits
Wednesday, April 23, 2008	One-on-One Business Appointments or Ag Fair Site Visit
Thursday, April 24, 2008	Ag Fair Site Visit

Mission concludes Thursday afternoon. Participants may return to United States or remain in Morocco for additional appointments arranged by USDA Staff or Contractor or attend additional days at the Agricultural Fair.

Criteria For Participants' Selection

- Relevance of a company's business line to mission goals.
- Minimum of 15 and a maximum of 18 participating companies on the mission.
- Potential for business in the North Africa Region for the company.
- Provision of adequate information on the company's products and/or services, and the company's primary market objectives, in order to facilitate appropriate matching with potential business partners.
- Certification that the company meets Departmental guidelines for participation. Generally, a company's products or services should be either produced in the United States, or, if not, marketed under the name of a U.S. firm and have at least 51 percent U.S. content of the value of the finished product or service.

Recruitment for the mission began November 26, 2007, and will conclude December 15, 2007. Applications received after December 15, will be considered only if space and scheduling constraints permit.

I look forward to hearing from you and again thank you for your interest and participation.

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