

# MAP Branded Manual



## Introduction

The Market Access Program (MAP) Branded was designed for businesses that desire financial support to build brand-name recognition of U.S. agricultural-based products around the globe. The goal of this program is to build U.S. trade value and support small U.S. companies. MAP Branded helps small businesses and farmer cooperatives market products overseas. Processors, packers, manufacturers, wholesalers, export agents, and trading companies apply to receive up to 50% reimbursement for eligible marketing expenses. Only pre-approved marketing activities are eligible for reimbursement through MAP Branded.

The Southern United States Trade Association (SUSTA) administers the Branded program for companies located in the southern U.S. SUSTA works closely with each state Department of Agriculture (see page 44 for member state information) located in the south.

The aim of our non-profit organization is to increase the export of southern U.S. food and agricultural products and to enhance the economic wellbeing of the region. SUSTA serves the companies in our region and acts as an advocate to secure maximum cost reimbursement. Learn more about SUSTA on page 48 and online at [www.susta.org](http://www.susta.org).

This manual will help you understand the program and teach you how to get the reimbursement your company deserves. The federal regulations of the MAP Branded, provided to SUSTA by the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), are detailed. Use this manual to ensure your promotional activities are conducted according to the regulations.

## Table of Contents

Important Dates . . . . .	2
Program Eligibility	
Applicants . . . . .	3
Products . . . . .	5
Countries . . . . .	7
Activities . . . . .	8
Ineligible Activities . . . . .	9
Branded Application . . . . .	10
Branded Approval Process . . . . .	13
Activity Plan Amendment Requests (APAR) . . . . .	15
Reimbursement Requests . . . . .	16
Promotional Activity Reimbursement Requests . . . . .	17
Expense Claim Organization . . . . .	18
Expense Claim Checklist . . . . .	19
Common Reimbursement Questions . . . . .	41
Common Errors . . . . .	42
Branded Evaluation . . . . .	43
Glossary of Terms . . . . .	43
SUSTA Member States . . . . .	44
FAS Cooperator Groups . . . . .	45
International Trade Shows . . . . .	46
Approved U.S. Trade Shows . . . . .	47
SUSTA Services . . . . .	48

## Important Dates

### Apply for Branded Program

**August 1 – October 15**

Apply to the MAP Branded program the fall before each program year. Once all funding is allocated, the application process is over until the next year.

### Program Year

**January 1 – December 31**

Program runs on a calendar year basis

### Conduct Export Marketing Activities

**Approval Date – December 31**

Conduct eligible activities between your approval date and the last day of the program year.

### Request Reimbursement

**Approval Date – February 28**

Submit reimbursement requests and supporting documentation to SUSTA within 90 days of the conclusion of an eligible activity. Final year-end claims must be received in SUSTA's office no later than February 28 of the following year.

### End of the Year Program Evaluations

**February 28**

Branded Program Evaluations are due to SUSTA after the end of each program year. Evaluations are used to document program results and lobby for continued funding.

## Program Eligibility – Applicants

To qualify for MAP Branded, a company must:

### 1. Meet the Regional Requirement

A company must have a corporate office or production facility located in the SUSTA region. The SUSTA region includes the following member states:



Companies located outside of the SUSTA region may apply through another State Regional Trade Group (SRTG), as listed below.

**Midwest:** Food Export Association of the Midwest USA

Phone: (312) 334-9200

Website: [www.foodexport.org](http://www.foodexport.org)

Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin

**Northeast:** Food Export USA Northeast

Phone: (215) 829-9111

Website: [www.foodexportusa.org](http://www.foodexportusa.org)

Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont

**West:** Western United States Agricultural Trade Association (WUSATA)

Phone: (360) 693-3373

Website: [www.wusata.org](http://www.wusata.org)

Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming

## 2. Be Small

Companies applying for funds, except agricultural farm cooperatives, must be considered “small” under the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) definition. Agricultural farm cooperatives are exempt from size restrictions. Information on SBA guidelines can be found at: [www.sba.gov/idc/groups/public/documents/sba\\_homepage/serv\\_sstd\\_tablepdf.pdf](http://www.sba.gov/idc/groups/public/documents/sba_homepage/serv_sstd_tablepdf.pdf)

## 3. Be a U.S. Business Entity

Companies applying for funds must be a registered business entity in good standing in the United States.

## 4. Have Sufficient Gross Sales and Resources

Companies applying for funds must have at least \$100,000 in gross sales during the previous year and adequate management and financial resources for export market development.

## 5. Have Continuous Supply

Companies should control sufficient quantity to assure uninterrupted supply to international buyers.

## Program Eligibility – Products

To qualify for MAP Branded, a product **must**:

### 1. Be a Value-added Agricultural Product

A value-added product is created from processing, repackaging, or adding special features to an existing agricultural product. Examples include consumer food products, fresh produce, snack foods, condiments, sauces, specialty food items, beverages, aquaculture, some wood products, hides & skins, pet foods, ornamental horticulture, etc.

### 2. Be of U.S. Origin

Products must contain at least 50% U.S. agricultural content. The U.S. content of food and agricultural products is determined by the percentage of finished product (measured by weight) that originates in the United States, excluding water or packaging. Products must be grown in the U.S. Products that are only processed in the U.S. are not eligible.

If you are unsure whether your product(s) meet the 50% U.S. origin requirement, follow these steps to determine eligibility:

CALCULATE THE U.S. CONTENT OF EACH PRODUCT:

**STEP 1:** Calculate the weight of each product ingredient as a percentage of total product weight.


**STEP 2:** Determine the percentage sourced from within the United States for each ingredient.

**STEP 3:** Multiply the two percentages to determine the U.S. content level for each ingredient.

**STEP 4:** Total the percentages to determine the U.S. content level for the total product. The percentage must be 50% or greater to be eligible for funding in the MAP Branded Program.

### Example

#### Product: Cookie Mix

Ingredients	Step 1: Ingredient as Percent of Total Product Weight	Step 2: Percent of Ingredient Sourced in U.S.	Step 3: MULTIPLY Step 1 Column by Step 2 Column	Step 4: TOTAL Step 3 Column for U.S. Content
Flour	70%	80%	56%	
Sugar	20%	0%	0%	
Eggs	8%	100%	8%	
Spices	2%	0%	0%	
Total:	100%		64%	

### 3. Be Clearly Labeled as Product of the U.S.A

Product packaging/labels must identify the origin of the product as any of the following: “Product of U.S.A.,” “Grown in U.S.A.,” “Made in U.S.A.,” “Product of America,” “Grown in America,” “Made in America,” “Product of (state),” “Grown in (state)” or “Made in (state).” The full name of a U.S. state must be spelled out in its entirety; it cannot be abbreviated.

*Example:* “Product of Louisiana,” “Grown in Louisiana” or “Made in Louisiana”; cannot show “LA”

References to any of below statements do not satisfy the U.S. origin requirement:

- Brand names that include “U.S.,” “America,” or state name
- Address line that includes state’s name and USA

Origin identifications must conform to the U.S. standard of 1/6 inch (.42 cm) in height based on the lowercase letter “o”. The Branded Program cannot, under any circumstances, reimburse expenses if the U.S. supplier does not label its products with the U.S.A. origin statement.

### 4. Not Be Covered by Another MAP Cooperator

Companies can participate in SUSTA’s MAP Branded Program only if funding assistance is not available for their product(s) through another MAP Cooperator. If a company promotes multiple product lines (example: chocolate and snack chips) and only a few products are covered by another Cooperator, the company may apply through SUSTA. If a Cooperator is unable to assist, the company may apply through SUSTA.

A list of other Cooperators that have a Branded Program, and the products they represent, can be found on page 45.

## Program Eligibility – Countries

Participants may conduct activities for reimbursement in almost all countries, except:

### Federally Prohibited Countries

Cuba, North Korea, Iran, Iraq, Libya and Sudan

### U.S. Territories and Outlying Areas

American Samoa, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Midway Islands, Puerto Rico, and U.S. Virgin Islands

### Countries in which the Company Was Reimbursed for 5 Years

According to the FAS regulations, MAP Branded funding assistance will not be provided to a single company in a single country for more than five years. This rule became effective for program year 1994. After the five year period of receiving reimbursements, a company is considered “graduated” from the country and ineligible for expenses.\* However, even after graduating from one country market, a company can apply for funding and request reimbursement for promotions in other markets. The five years do not have to be consecutive. See below example:

#### 1998

“Texas Salsa” is approved for MAP Branded funds for Germany, submits expenses, and receives reimbursements. This counts as one year of eligibility used in the country market.

#### 2004

“Texas Salsa” is approved for MAP Branded funds for Germany, submits expenses, and receives reimbursements. This counts as two years of eligibility used in the country market.

Agricultural farm cooperatives are exempt from the five-year graduation rule.

#### \*Graduation Exemption:

Certain overseas trade shows that attract buyers from multiple countries are exempt from the five-year graduation rule. A list of these shows can be found on page 46.

**Note:** Reimbursements in a market from which a company has graduated are eligible for expenses related only to the exempt trade show(s). Other expenses in that market not related to these shows are ineligible for reimbursements.

## United States

### Approved U.S. Trade Shows

The only promotional activity in the United States which is reimbursable under MAP Branded is exhibiting at select USDA-approved trade shows. Expenses are only eligible if the applicant is exhibiting for the first time or if the applicant has not exhibited in the past three years with their own funds at that show. If a company received Branded funds to exhibit at a given show, the company can continue to use funds for that show. Five year graduation rule applies.

A list of U.S. trade shows approved for MAP Branded can be found on page 47.

## Program Eligibility – Eligible Activities

The international marketing activities listed below are eligible under MAP Branded. More details about each activity can be found starting on page 19.

- Required Packaging/Label Changes
- Advertising
- In-Store Demonstrations/In-Store Displays
- Promotional Materials/Posters/Signage
- Freight
- Direct Mailing to Foreign Buyers
- Promotional Giveaway Items
- International Trade Seminars
- Approved Overseas Trade Missions
- International Trade Shows
- Travel Expenses to International Trade Shows/  
Approved Trade Missions (airfare, lodging, and meals)
- Approved U.S. Trade Shows
- Event Support Assistance: Translator/Demonstrator/  
Chef/Hostess (Part-Time Contractors)

## Program Eligibility – Ineligible Activities

SUSTA cannot reimburse the costs associated with any activity or product not specifically included and approved as part of the participant's Country Marketing Plan, Program Contract, or Activity Plan Amendment Request (APAR). In addition, expenses related to activities that occur before the approval date of the activity or APAR are ineligible for reimbursement. Also, all activities must promote the brand name and U.S. origin.

Expenses considered costs of doing business fall outside the objectives of MAP Branded and therefore are not eligible for reimbursement. The goal of the program is to help companies access new international markets.

The list below is a general guide of **ineligible expenses**:

### 1. Administration

- Office costs
- Communication costs (phone, fax, internet)
- Parking fees
- Subscriptions to publications
- Advertisements in company published periodicals
- Business cards
- Membership fees in clubs, trade associations, and professional organizations

### 2. Business Development

- Seasonal greeting cards
- Internet website development and maintenance
- Slotting and shelf-space fees
- Licensing fees
- Product registration
- Container loads of product shipment
- Shelf trays and other product merchandise
- Coupon design, printing, and redemption
- Price discounts, sweepstakes, or marketing activities that reduce the selling prices of a product

- Awards, prizes, or giveaways exceeding \$1 or dependent upon product purchase

### 3. Capital Expenditures

- Purchase of items with a useful life of one year or more
- Purchase, construction, and lease of space for permanent displays
- Appliances
- Office equipment
- Rental, lease or purchase of warehouse space

### 4. Personnel, Consultants, or Buyers

- Salaries
- Allowances
- Living expenses
- Meals, receptions, or entertainment
- Management consultant fees
- Transportation
- Travel expenses

### 5. Products

- Research
- Development
- Samples

## Applying for Branded Program

Take the following steps to apply for MAP Branded funds:

### 1. Gather Materials

Before applying for the program, collect the following:

#### a. North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) Code

Code identifies the applicant's industry. The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) determines size standards by the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) code. Size standards are expressed in either number of employees (NAICS that fall without the "\$") or average annual receipts\* (NAICS that fall with the "\$"). Small business size standards define the maximum size that a business, together with all of its subsidiaries and affiliates, may be to be eligible to participate in Federal Government programs.

\* Annual Receipts – receipts mean "total income" (or in the case of a sole proprietorship, "gross income") plus "cost of goods sold" as these terms are defined and reported on Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tax return forms.

NAICS codes can be obtained at: [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov).

#### b. Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS)

Used by Dun & Bradstreet to track companies. Numbers and reports may be obtained at [www.dnb.com](http://www.dnb.com). D&B numbers and reports are required for all companies requesting government funding.

#### c. Sales Figures

Confirms total sales and gross export sales for 4 individual calendar years. SUSTA needs your actual sales for 2 years prior to the application, projected sales for the year of the application, and projected sales for the following year.

#### d. Brand Name Products

Include all brand names/private label names of products to be promoted. If you do not own the brand, the certification of exclusivity and/or private label agreement must be completed. Additional information about these forms can be found on page 12.

#### e. Country Information

Refer to SUSTA's list of eligible activities on page 8 to develop a marketing plan for each country. Obtain details for each activity you will conduct (names, dates, and costs). Determine the amount of matching funds you will request per country.

#### f. Company Brochure or Fact Sheet

Brochure or literature about applicant and brand-name products.

## 2. Pre-Qualification & Application

The MAP Branded Pre-Qualification Worksheet and Application are available beginning on August 1 each year. Companies must apply and pay the required fees each year. The Pre-Qualification and a sample Application can be found at [www.susta.org/services/map\\_application.html](http://www.susta.org/services/map_application.html).

Applicants must submit the Pre-Qualification Worksheet as the first step to apply for MAP Branded. Once the Pre-Qualification Worksheet is approved by SUSTA, then the application can be completed. Documentation is reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis.

The application includes:

#### Pre-Qualification (First Step before Completing Application)

Verifies the applicant qualifies for the MAP Branded program.

#### Application (After Approval of Pre-Qualification)

Requires basic information including: company information, product information for brand name/private label items to be promoted, sales figures, total funding request for each country marketing plan for overseas markets, USA country marketing plan for approved U.S. trade shows, marketing plan budget summary, certification statement, meeting the U.S. origin requirement (if uncertain of product eligibility), and certification of exclusivity/private label agreement (if applicable).

#### Country Marketing Plan for Overseas Markets

Must be completed for each country in which the applicant is requesting MAP Branded reimbursement. To support the request, indicate each proposed promotional activity, and foreign third party (FTP) contact information if applicable. Activities must occur between the approval date and the last day of the program year.

### USA Country Marketing Plan (U.S. Approved Trade Shows Only)

Companies may apply for funds to exhibit at a U.S. approved trade show if it is the first time they are exhibiting at the show or if they have not exhibited at the show any time over the last three years at their own expense. If a company received Branded funding for a given show, the company can continue to receive funding for five years in this market. See list of approved shows on page 47.

#### Notes

A company can apply for:

- Only overseas country market(s) (except federally prohibited countries and U.S. territories and outlying areas as listed on page 7) *or*
- Only U.S. country market for approved show(s) as listed on page 48 *or*
- Overseas country market(s) and U.S. country market

Company can apply for up to 10 country markets total.

Five year graduation applies (see page 7).

#### Certification of Exclusivity

Must be completed and submitted if the U.S. applicant does not own the brand name of the products to be promoted. The brand owner must sign the form, which is part of the application. It certifies that the brand owner gives the applicant permission to request MAP Branded funds to promote the specified product(s) in the specified country market(s). The certification of exclusivity is required for all products for which the applicant does not own the brand name.

#### Private Label Agreement

Must be completed and submitted if an applicant packs or manufactures for private label. The retailer/owner of the label must sign the form, which is part of the application. It certifies that the applicant is the exclusive supplier of the product in the specific country market(s) for the duration of the program year. It also confirms that the private label item(s) promoted by the applicant are at all times manufactured with product(s) from the USA.

### 3. Completion of Application

Once application is completed, send the following required documentation to:

Deneen Wiltz, Branded Program Director  
Southern U.S. Trade Association (SUSTA)  
701 Poydras Street  
Suite 3725  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70139 USA

#### a. Check or Money Order for \$250 Application Fee

The fee is required to apply for Branded. An application submitted without the fee will not be processed. The \$250 fee is non-refundable.

#### b. Product Packaging/Label

Actual product packaging/label (mock-ups are not accepted) for each brand name/private label name product you will promote as listed in the application. The packaging/label must indicate the brand, U.S. origin statement, and ingredients of product(s).

### Branded Approval Process

SUSTA allocates funds on a first-come, first-approved, first-served basis. Once all funding is allocated, the application process is over until the next year. Approval of applications can take up to three weeks.

Once an application is completed, the allocation amount and the approval date are determined. Companies are notified of approval, and a contract and an invoice for the 6% administrative fee are issued to the company.

#### Allocation

Funds are allocated to companies based on their experience.

- The minimum amount a Branded applicant can request is \$2,500. Because Branded is a cost share 50% reimbursement program, this means a company must spend \$5,000 for promotional activities to be reimbursed \$2,500 (50%) by SUSTA.
- A first-time applicant with no export experience may be eligible to receive a maximum allocation of \$25,000.
- A first-time applicant demonstrating more than one year of export experience may be eligible to receive a maximum allocation of \$50,000.
- The maximum allocation for a returning applicant that has previously participated in the Market Access Program (MAP) Branded is \$300,000.

Allocations are determined based on a variety of factors, including:

- Quality of a company's application
- Prior program performance (for returning applicants). Not all applicants receive the full amount requested. SUSTA reserves the right to accept or reject any application, or to limit allocations to any applicant.
- Amount of total funding available

### Approval

Applications received and approved prior to the beginning of the program year will receive an approval date of January 1, the first day of the program year. Applications received throughout the program year will be given an approval date corresponding to the day the application was approved. Applications with missing or incomplete information can delay the approval process. A Branded application will not be approved until all required information is on file with SUSTA.

Reimbursement requests cannot be filed for expenses incurred before your documented approval date. All promotional activities and related expenses must occur within the program year. Expenses incurred before the approval date are not reimbursable, with the exception of the following:

- Trade Show Booth Deposits
- Airfare and Hotel Bookings

Trade show booth deposits and advance payments are reimbursable, provided the date of the trade show (rather than the date of the invoice or payment) falls within the approved program year. Expenses must be submitted after the show takes place.

The rule above applies to all initial requests, additional requests, and amended requests.

### Program Contract

Each approved applicant is issued a contract for the program year. The contract must be signed and returned to SUSTA within 30 days of receipt. If the signed contract is not received within 30 days, approved funding will be withdrawn. Once you receive the MAP Branded contract:

- Read contract thoroughly
- Sign contract and make a copy for your files
- Send actual contract in its entirety to SUSTA ; actual signature is required for SUSTA files

### Administrative Fee

Approved applicants are charged a non-refundable administrative fee equal to 6% of the approved funding allocation (Example: A company approved for \$20,000 must pay \$1,200). An invoice for this fee will accompany the program contract. Payment is due within 30 days of receipt. If payment is not received within 30 days, approved funding will be withdrawn.

**Note:** Companies are not considered "participants" and may not file reimbursement requests until the signed contract and administrative fee are received.

## Activity Plan Amendment Requests (APARs)

Often companies need to make changes to their plans after the program contract has been signed and administrative fees have been paid. Changes to existing program contracts are accomplished through Activity Plan Amendment Requests (APARs). APARs can be submitted anytime during the program year. If additional funding is requested, approval is based on availability of funds. Contact SUSTA in advance. If funds are available, you are required to pay the 6% administrative fee based on approved additional funding.

If your promotion involves a country, product, or activity not listed on your company's application, you must submit an APAR to SUSTA before the activity occurs. If an APAR is not submitted in advance for approval, the activity will not be eligible for reimbursement.

The APAR form can be found at [www.susta.org/services/map\\_forms.html](http://www.susta.org/services/map_forms.html).

Amendments can be used to:

- Add
  - Additional approved U.S. trade shows
  - Countries
  - Foreign third party contacts
  - Brand name products
  - Additional funds (a 6% administrative fee is required on additional funds)
- Remove funding from a country
- Withdraw from the program

Send APARs to:

Deneen Wiltz, Branded Program Director  
Southern U.S. Trade Association (SUSTA)  
701 Poydras Street  
Suite 3725  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70139 USA

## Reimbursement Requests

Once the signed MAP Branded contract and administrative fee are received in SUSTA's office, companies will be eligible to submit requests for reimbursements.

### Pre-Approval

Verify that the activity, promoted brand/private label name product(s), and the country are listed in the approved Branded application. If not, submit an APAR and receive approval before the activity takes place.

### Timing

Reimbursement requests may be filed for eligible expenses that occur between the approval date and the end of the program year (December 31). Claims are to be submitted within 90 days of the completion of the activity. Final year end claims must be received in SUSTA's office no later than February 28 of the following year.

### Brand Name

All promotional activities and materials (product labels, point of sale materials, advertising, booth signage, etc.) must identify the brand name(s) listed in the approved application.

### U.S. Origin

All promotional activities and materials (product labels, promotional materials, advertising, booth signage, etc.) must identify the U.S. origin as any of the following: "Product of U.S.A.," "Grown in the U.S.A.," "Made in U.S.A.," "Product of America," "Grown in America," "Made in America," "Product of (state)," "Grown in (state)" or "Made in (state)."

Example: "Product of Louisiana," "Grown in Louisiana" or "Made in Louisiana." The full name of a U.S. state must be spelled out in its entirety; it cannot be abbreviated ("LA").

### Ensure Activity Eligibility

Before commencing any marketing activity, verify that the activity is eligible. If you are uncertain, contact SUSTA to confirm eligibility for proposed promotions in advance of incurring expenditures.

## Promotional Activity Reimbursement Requests

Must include the following:

**Reimbursement Claim Form 202** must be completed, signed, and submitted as a cover page and summary with requests for reimbursements.

**Expense Item Summary Form** must be completed and submitted for each expense item for which you are requesting reimbursement. Form is only required for expenses that are not related to travel (separate forms are required for travel expenses)

Each expense that is not related to travel must include the following documentation:

1. Vendor's Invoice
2. Proof of Payment
3. Proof of Activity

The *entire* paper trail must lead back to the original vendor, whether the vendor is in the United States or in a foreign country. Invoices, proofs of payment and a sample of what was paid are required for all promotional activities.

If a third party is involved in a promotional activity, the following must be on file:

- Invoice from the original vendor of the good or service to third party
- Proof of payment from third party to the original vendor of the good or service
- Invoice from the third party to Branded participant
- Proof of payment from the Branded participant to the third party

Should more parties be involved, the same information must be present to demonstrate payment.

**Note:** Third party's expenses are eligible only if they are submitted through the participant. SUSTA does not pay a third party directly. We accept proof of payment as any of the following:

- The participant's full proof of payment to the third party
- The third party's full proof of payment for the expense and the participant's 50% reimbursement to the third party

**Travel expenses** can be reimbursed only if they are related to international trade shows or approved trade missions overseas. Companies must exhibit in a booth for trade shows or tabletop display for trade missions.

Travel Expenses require all the following documentation:

- Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) Post Notification
- Trip Report
- Contacts made at the trade show or approved trade mission
- Travel Expense Summary Form
- Airline Itinerary/Invoice
- Passenger receipt or E-ticket receipt
- Proof of payment for airfare
- Itemized Hotel Bill
- Proof of payment for hotel

Travel expenses cannot be submitted independently. They must be accompanied by supporting documentation that proves you exhibited at the trade show or approved trade mission.

## Expense Claim Organization

Organize each expense claim item in an orderly fashion. Expense claims submitted in disarray will not be reviewed and will be returned to the company.

1. **Reimbursement Claim Form 202** - cover page summary form for item(s) requested for reimbursement.

2. **Expense Item Summary Form** - complete for each expense item submitted for reimbursement, accompanied by supporting documentation:

- 1) Vendor's Invoice
- 2) Proof of Payment
- 3) Proof of Activity

Note: If more parties are involved in a promotional activity, the entire paper trail must be submitted with expenses as detailed above.

3. If submitting expenses for travel related to exhibiting at international trade shows or approved overseas trade missions, submit supporting documentation:

- 1) Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) Post Notification
- 2) Trip Report and attached list of contacts made
- 3) **Travel Expense Summary form** (calculate total airfare, lodging, and meals & incidental expenses on form), accompanied by supporting documentation:
  - Airline Itinerary/Invoice
  - Passenger receipt or E-ticket receipt

- Proof of payment for airfare
- Itemized Hotel Bill
- Proof of payment for hotel

**Note:** Do not submit itemized receipts for Meals & Incidentals (M&IE). M&IE is based on the federal per diem allowance per country.

Reimbursement forms can be found on SUSTA's website at:

[www.susta.org/services/map\\_forms.html](http://www.susta.org/services/map_forms.html)

Expenses are reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis.

Submit expense claims to the following:

Branded Department – Expense Claims  
 Southern U.S. Trade Association (SUSTA)  
 701 Poydras Street  
 Suite 3725  
 New Orleans, Louisiana 70139 USA

## Expense Claim Checklist – Required Documentation

This checklist will help you before, during, and after the promotional activity.

- **Invoice** must show details of expense; SUSTA must be able to determine what is requested for reimbursement (summary invoices are not acceptable). Invoices must describe services rendered, English translation if in another language, exchange rate for U.S.\$ if in a foreign currency, date(s) of promotional activity, and charges for services. See further details of requirements per promotional activity descriptions below.
- **Proof of payment** is required for all expenses. Payment can be any of the following:
  - **Check** – copy of front of check accompanied by bank statement showing check cleared the account
  - **Bank draft** accompanied by bank statement showing funds were deducted from account
  - **Wire transfer confirmation accompanied by bank statement** (the request alone is not sufficient): must show documentation came from the bank showing the originator, beneficiary, date, amount, and bank of originator and beneficiary

- **Credit card statement** (signature slips are not accepted). Must see the credit card statement of card holder that shows the charges to vendor(s). The proof of payment to the credit card company is not required
- **Cash receipt** (only acceptable for payments under \$2,000). Must be marked “paid” and show a zero balance
- **Credit memo** - If you are paying an overseas agent in-product, the following must be provided:
  - **Invoice** from Branded participant to vendor (example: grocery store) or Foreign Third Party (FTP) involved in promotional activity showing a sale of the Branded participant’s product to vendor or FTP
  - **Credit memo** from Branded participant to vendor or FTP showing the cost of the promotional activity was subtracted from a specific invoice for Branded participant’s product
  - If a balance remains after applying the credit, the proof of payment from vendor or FTP is required in any of the below forms of payment: check, bank draft, wire transfer confirmation (see details above)
  - If there is no balance after applying the credit, freight or airway bill must be provided showing the Branded Participant or FTP shipped product.

**Note:** Only showing a credit is not sufficient.

### Credit Memo Example

Branded Participant: “**Texas Salsa**” Vendor: “**Safeway**”

“**Texas Salsa**” had an in-store demonstration at “**Safeway**” in Mexico, and the cost for the promotion was \$500

“**Safeway**” purchased from “**Texas Salsa**” \$5,000 worth of products

“**Texas Salsa**” invoiced **Safeway** \$4,500

“**Texas Salsa**” credited **Safeway** \$500 for cost of in-store demonstration

\$5,000

- \$500

\$4,500

**Safeway** paid “**Texas Salsa**” \$4,500 remaining balance after applying credit

Contact the Branded Department if you have questions about using Credit Memos as a form of payment.

- **Proof of activity** - All promotional activities and materials must show the approved brands and the required U.S. origin statement (see page 5 for more

information on brands and U.S. origin). Additional details for proof of activity requirements per activity listed below.

#### Notes:

- Brands and country markets that are not listed in the approved application will be ineligible for reimbursements.
- Items that are only partially reimbursable will be pro-rated at SUSTA’s discretion in accordance with the regulations.
- Portions of expenses promoting the company rather than products will be considered ineligible.

### Promotional Activity Descriptions

Promotional activities must be related to overseas markets as specified in the approved application or Activity Plan Amendment Request (APAR). Eligible promotional activities in the U.S. must be expenses related to exhibiting at approved U.S. trade shows as specified in the approved application or APAR.

### Required Packaging/Label Changes

**Note:** Old and new packaging/labels must include the brand and the required U.S. origin statement (see page 6).

Reimbursement can be requested for design modifications and production of packaging, labels or stickers only if:

1. Existing packaging and labels do not comply with the foreign label regulations and changes are necessary to meet the country’s import requirements
2. Changes in foreign label regulations make existing packaging and labels non-compliant with the import requirements of a foreign country. Therefore, updated packaging and labels must be created to meet the new requirements

Foreign country label regulations are required with expenses. Packaging/label regulations are available at the following link: [www.fas.usda.gov/scripts/attacherep/](http://www.fas.usda.gov/scripts/attacherep/)

SUSTA’s Branded Department and the appropriate Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) overseas office may also be able to help obtain packaging/labeling reports.

### Eligible Expenses

- Translation Services
- Graphic Design to change layout if necessary to accommodate required import changes
- Plates, set-up, printing of a one-year supply of packaging/labels *or* stickers\*
- Labor to attach stickers (if outsourced)

\* A company can request reimbursement for the cost of packaging/labels *or* stickers. The costs for both cannot be claimed.

### Ineligible Expenses

- Production of packaging/labels for new brands, sizes, and flavors of products. Packaging/label revisions are only eligible for existing products
- Cost to reprint packaging/labels already in use. Reimbursement of printing expenses is limited to a one-year supply. The expenses must be claimed in conjunction with the revision charges (formatting, plates, etc.)
- Aesthetic or marketing changes to the design of packaging/labels
- Importer/Distributor's request for changes

### Design/Formatting/Translation Expenses

#### Documentation Required

Itemized Invoice from vendor that includes the following:

- Invoice date
- Vendor's name, address, and phone number
- English translation and exchange rate for U.S.\$ (if applicable)
- Description of promotional activity
  - **Example:** 53 gram Peach/Granola Bar French Labels
- Itemized details of charges

**Proof of Payment** – see page 19 for a list of eligible proofs of payment

**Proof of Activity** must include all of the following

- Actual old packaging/label before the changes were made (mock-up versions are not accepted)
- Actual new packaging/label or sticker that shows the required changes identified (mock-up versions are not accepted)
- Copy of the foreign label regulations showing the changes required. Highlight the sections of the documentation that identify the changes required

### Printing/Plate/Set-Up Expenses

#### Documentation Required

Itemized Invoice from the vendor that includes the following:

- Invoice date
- Vendor's name, address, and phone number
- English translation and exchange rate for U.S.\$ (if applicable)
- Packaging/labeling or sticker printed
- Quantity produced must be listed for printing charges
  - **Example:** Quantity 100 53 gram Peach/Granola Bar French Labels
- Itemized details of charges that make up the total invoice amount (set-up, plates, etc.)

**Proof of Payment** – see page 19 for a list of eligible proofs of payment

**Proof of Activity** must include all of the following:

- Actual old packaging/label before the changes were made (mock-up versions are not accepted)
- Actual new packaging/label or sticker that shows the required changes identified (mock-up versions are not accepted)
- Copy of the foreign label regulations showing the changes required. Highlight the sections of the documentation that identify the required changes

**Note:** Printing charges cannot be reimbursed without proof that revisions were made in conjunction with the printing of the packaging/label or sticker. The expense claim must include copies of the translation, formatting, or plate charge invoices showing the date changes were made.

### Stickering Expenses for Labor (If Outsourced)

#### Documentation Required

Itemized Invoice from the vendor that includes the following:

- Invoice Date
- Vendor's name, address, and phone number
- English translation and exchange rate for U.S.\$ (if applicable)
- Description of the product and quantity that was stickered
- Example: Quantity 100 53 gram Peach/Granola Bar Stickers
- Labor charges for stickers placed on products must be expressed by:
  - Rate per hour x number of hours worked x number of days worked (Example: \$15.00 x 6 hours x 3 days = \$270.00). Reimbursement may not exceed the maximum daily rate determined by the U.S. government. The maximum eligible expense is \$59.42 per hour or \$475.36 per day
- Set rate for each item stickered x amount of products stickered

**Proof of Payment** – see page 19 for a list of eligible proofs of payment

**Proof of Activity** must include all of the following:

- Actual old packaging/label before the changes were made (mock-up versions are not accepted)
- Actual completed new sticker that shows the required changes clearly identified (mock-up versions are not accepted)
- Copy of the foreign label regulations showing the changes required. Highlight the sections of the documentation that identify the required changes

**Note:** Labor charges cannot be claimed without the proof revisions made in conjunction with the printing of stickers. The claim must include copies of the translation, formatting, or plate charge invoices showing the changes made.

## Advertising

Magazines/Newspapers/Grocery Circulars/Television (TV)/Radio/Billboards/Website, etc.

**Note:** Advertisement must include the brand and the required U.S. origin statement (see page 6)

### Eligible Expenses

- Cost to design, produce, and place advertisements
- Cost to produce and broadcast advertisements

### Ineligible Expenses

- Coupon redemption
- Price discounts
- Design, distribution and printing of coupons
- Website development and maintenance

## Design/Formatting/Photography Expenses

### Documentation Required

**Itemized Invoice** from the vendor includes that includes the following:

- Invoice date
- Vendor's name, address, and phone number
- English translation and exchange rate for U.S.\$ (if applicable)
- Description of promotional activity
  - **Example:** Farmer's Fruit Jam Ad
- Itemized details of charges

**Proof of Payment** – see page 19 for a list of eligible proofs of payment

### Proof of Activity

- Actual advertisement
- English translation if advertisement in a foreign language (if applicable)

**Note:** A “proof” or draft of the artwork for the advertisement is not eligible as proof of activity.

## Advertisement Placement Expenses

### Documentation Required

**Itemized Invoice** from the media agency or publication that includes the following:

- Invoice date
- Vendor's name, address, and phone number
- English translation and exchange rate for U.S.\$ (if applicable)

- Location of ad placement
  - Publication name for magazines and newspapers
  - Geographical location for billboards
- Date of ad placement
  - Example: “July (Year) issue” for magazines
  - Example: “Issue 13 April (Year)” for magazines
  - Example: “Monday, July 23, (Year)” for newspapers
  - Example: “Month of April (Year)” for billboards
  - Itemized details of charges

**Proof of Payment** – see page 19 for a list of eligible proofs of payment

### Proof of Activity

- **Newspaper, Magazine, Grocery Circulars**
  - Cover page showing the date and name of publication
  - Actual advertisement
  - Circulation information for newspapers or magazines that target more than one country. The information must show that at least one issue of the newspaper or magazine is circulated in an approved country
- **Billboards, Advertisement Displays on Buildings/Vehicles/Signage, etc.**
  - Legible photograph of advertisement
- **Website advertisement**
  - Printout of the advertisement from the web page of the organization hosting the ad
  - Note:** Website advertisement cannot be on a Branded company's website
- English translation if advertisement is in a foreign language

## Television (TV)/Radio Advertisement

### Production Expenses

Production services cannot be reimbursed without proof that the advertisements were broadcast. Production costs must be claimed in conjunction with the purchase of radio and television broadcast time.

### Documentation Required

**Itemized Invoice** from the vendor that includes the following:

- Invoice date
- Vendor's name, address, and phone number
- English translation and exchange rate for U.S.\$ (if applicable)
- Description of promotional activity
  - **Example:** 30-second Crunchy Breakfast Cereal Ad
- Itemized details of charges

**Proof of Payment** – see page 19 for a list of eligible proofs of payment

**Proof of Activity**

- Radio Advertisement
- Cassette tape, CD
- Television (TV) Advertisement
- VHS tape, CD or DVD
- English translation if advertisement in a foreign language

**Broadcast Time Expenses****Documentation Required**

**Itemized Invoice** from the media agency or radio station that includes the following:

- Invoice date
- Vendor's name, address, and phone number
- English translation and exchange rate for U.S.\$ (if applicable)
- Location of ad placement
  - TV/Radio station name
  - Geographical location of TV/radio station
- Rundown of ad spots
  - Name of ad (Example: 30 second Pet Food Ad)
  - Date the spots ran
- Itemized details of charges

**Proof of Payment** – see page 19 for a list of eligible proofs of payment

**Proof of Activity**

- Radio Advertisement
  - Cassette tape, CD
- Television Advertisement
  - VHS, CD or DVD
- English transcript if advertisements in a foreign language

**In-Store Demonstrations/Demonstrator Uniforms/Displays/Promotional Materials**

**Note:** Promotional activities and materials must include the brand and the required U.S. origin statement (see page 6)

**Eligible Expenses**

- Demonstrator Wages: hourly wages of independent demonstrator conducting tasting
- Demonstrator Uniforms: T-shirts, aprons, caps, etc.
- Demonstration Supplies: purchase of disposable cups, spoons, napkins, as well as food purchased to enhance company's product

- **Example:** meat purchased to demonstrate company's brand of barbecue sauce
- Rental of floor space for promotion of products, such as end of aisle/gondola displays, and space rental for promotional materials (demonstration booths, freestanding cardboard displays, signage, etc.)
- Equipment Rental: rental of hot plates, toasters, freezers, etc.
- Demonstration Booths constructed of temporary materials
- Shippers: shipping cartons that convert to a shelf display
- Freestanding Displays constructed of temporary materials (example: cardboard bins and shelving units)
- Posters and banners
- Shelf talkers
- Promotional sales sheets, brochures, leaflets, and recipe cards
- Giveaway items: pens, T-shirts, key chains, mugs, calendars, etc. (eligible up to \$1.00 or the actual cost per item; items must be given away free)
  - Items cannot be included with the purchase of product
- Freight: cost to transport products, materials, and equipment to the demonstration location

**Note:** Promotional materials must be constructed out of TEMPORARY MATERIALS such as paper, cardboard, fiberboard, etc. "Temporary" under the Branded program is defined as not lasting more than one year (metal racks, wood shelving units, or Plexiglas displays are not eligible)

**Ineligible Expenses**

- Company's employee or importer/distributor wages
- Cost of demonstrator transportation and meals
- Wages over 8 hours per day and sales commission
- Cost of company product used in demonstrations
- Purchase of non-disposable supplies such as metal bowls, equipment, reusable utensils, etc.
- Purchase of equipment
- Slotting and listing fees
- Custom booth displays constructed of permanent materials (wood, Plexiglas, metal, etc.) created for multiple uses
- Rental, lease or purchase of warehouse space

**In-Store Demonstrations****Documentation Required**

**Itemized Invoice** from the vendor that includes the following:

- Invoice date

- Vendor's name, address, and phone number
- English translation and exchange rate for U.S.\$ (if applicable)
- Description of promotional activity
  - Date of each demonstration
  - Location of each demonstration
  - Product(s) demonstrated
- Demonstration wages must be expressed as the following:  
Rate per hour x number of hours worked x number of days worked  
(**Example:** \$15.00 x 6 hours x 3 days = \$270.00). Reimbursement may not exceed the maximum daily rate determined by the U.S. government. The maximum eligible expense is \$59.42 per hour or \$475.36 per day

#### Demonstration Supplies/Shipment of Samples/Equipment Rental

- Itemization of any other charges that make up the total invoice amount, such as demonstration supplies, shipping of samples, equipment rental, etc.

**Proof of Payment** – see page 19 for a list of eligible proofs of payment

**Proof of Activity** must include all of the following:

- Photos of demonstrations (one photo per 25 demos for each location)
  - Note:** If stores do not allow photos to be taken, an official memo from store must be provided with expenses
- Copies of demonstration reports listing the demonstrator's name, date, hours, products demonstrated, and consumer comments

#### Demonstrator Uniforms

**Itemized Invoice** that includes the following:

- Invoice date
- Vendor's name, address, and phone number
- English translation and exchange rate for U.S.\$ (if applicable)
- Quantity and description of items produced
  - **Example:** 8 Aprons
  - **Example:** 8 T-shirts
  - **Example:** 8 Caps
- Itemized details of charges

**Proof of Payment** – see page 19 for a list of eligible proofs of payment

**Proof of Activity:**

- Legible photos of in-store demonstrators wearing uniforms
  - Note:** If we are unable to clearly see uniforms in photos, we may request the actual uniforms

#### In-Store Displays

End of Aisle/Gondola Displays/Space Rental for Promotional Materials (Demonstration Booths/Freestanding Cardboard Displays/Signage)

#### Documentation Required

**Itemized Invoice** from the retailer that includes the following:

- Invoice date
- Vendor's name, address, and phone number
- English translation and exchange rate for U.S.\$ (if applicable)
- Description of promotional activity
  - Date of floor space rental
  - Store location(s) of each display
  - Product(s) promoted on display
- Itemized details of charges

**Proof of Payment** – see page 19 for a list of eligible proofs of payment

**Proof of Activity**

- Photo of display at each store location

#### Posters/Signage, Printed Sales Materials, Promotional Giveaway Items

For In-Store Demonstrations/Displays, International Trade Seminars, International Trade Shows, Approved U.S. Trade Shows, and Approved Overseas Trade Missions

**Note:** Promotional materials must include the brand and the required U.S. origin statement (see page 6)

#### Eligible Expenses

- Posters, banners, and signage made of temporary materials
- Shelf talkers
- Printed Sales materials - promotional sales sheets, brochures, leaflets, recipe cards, etc.
- Promotional giveaway items – pens, T-shirts, key chains, mugs, calendars, etc. (eligible up to \$1.00 or the actual cost per item; items must be given away free)

#### Ineligible Expenses

- Giveaway items included with the purchase of product
- Giveaway items that cost more than \$1.00
- Product samples used as giveaway items

## Design/Formatting/Photography Expenses

### Documentation Required

**Itemized Invoice** from the vendor must include the following:

- Invoice date
- Vendor's name, address, and phone number
- English translation and exchange rate for U.S.\$ (if applicable)
- Description of items produced
  - **Example:** Dog Food Posters
  - **Example:** Nutrition Bar Shelf Talker
  - **Example:** Beverage Brochure
  - **Example:** Ink Pens
- Itemized details of charges

**Proof of Payment** – see page 19 for a list of eligible proofs of payment

### Proof of Activity

- Posters/Signage: actual items or legible photograph for larger items
- Printed Sales Materials: actual sales materials or legible photograph for larger items
- Promotional Giveaways: actual giveaway items or legible photograph for larger items

**Note:** A “proof” or draft of the artwork for the advertisement is not eligible as proof of activity

## Production/Printing Expenses

### Documentation Required

**Itemized Invoice** must include the following:

- Invoice date
- Vendor's name, address, and phone number
- English translation and exchange rate for U.S.\$ (if applicable)
- Quantity and description of items produced (prorate the amount used for promotional activity)
  - **Example:** 10% Dog Food Posters
  - **Example:** 120 Nutrition Bar Shelf Talkers
  - **Example:** 1,000 Beverage Brochure
  - **Example:** 2,000 Ink Pens
- Itemized details of charges (printing, plates, set up, cutting dies, etc.)

**Proof of Payment** – see page 19 for a list of eligible proofs of payment

### Proof of Activity

- Posters/Signage: actual item or legible photograph for larger items
- Printed Sales Materials: actual sales materials or legible photograph for larger items
- Promotional Giveaways: actual giveaway item or legible photograph for larger items

**Note:** A “proof” or draft of the artwork for the advertisement is not eligible as proof of activity

## Direct Mailing to Foreign Buyers

**Note:** Promotional materials must include the brand and the required U.S. origin statement (see page 6)

### Eligible Expenses

- Mailing to foreign buyers only
- Costs to design, produce, print, and mail materials

### Ineligible Expenses

- Mailing to customers in the U.S.

## Direct Mail Expenses

### Documentation Required

**Itemized Invoice** from the post office or other mail service carrier that includes the following:

- Mailing date
- Vendor's name, address, and phone number
- Quantity of items posted or picked up
- Itemized details of charges

**Proof of Payment** – see page 19 for a list of eligible proofs of payment

**Proof of Activity** must include all the following:

- Copy of the distribution list showing addresses of foreign buyers
- Actual promotional sales materials

## Freight

For International Trade Seminars, International Trade Shows, Approved U.S. Trade Shows, Approved Overseas Trade Missions, and Product Samples to Foreign Buyers

### Eligible Expenses

- Shipping booth, product samples, supplies, and promotional materials to and from international and U.S. approved trade show locations, approved trade missions, and international trade seminars
- Shipping product samples and promotional materials to international customers

### Ineligible Expenses

- Transportation on company-owned trucks or rented vehicles
- Container loads of products to overseas buyers

### Documentation Required

Itemized Invoice from the vendor must show the following:

- Invoice date
- Vendor's name, address, and phone number
- Name of sender
- Date of shipment
  - Shipped From: (location)
  - Shipped To: (destination)
  - Description of items shipped
  - Itemized details of charges

**Proof of Payment** – see page 19 for a list of eligible proofs of payment

### Proof of Activity

Shipments for International Trade Seminars/International Trade Shows/Approved U.S. Trade Shows/Approved Trade Missions:

- Shipping company's documentation that indicates contents shipped or
- Waybill or bill of lading that indicates contents shipped
  - **Example** - UPS Reference: Product Samples
  - **Example** - FedEx Reference: Brochures
- If shipping promotional materials, provide items shipped or a legible photograph for larger items
- Photographs of booth or tabletop with the products on display
- Trade show directory listing the company as an exhibitor

**Shipments** for Overseas Customers:

- Shipping company's documentation that indicates contents shipped or
- Waybill or bill of lading that indicates contents shipped
  - **Example** - UPS Reference: Product Samples
  - **Example** - FedEx Reference: Brochures
- If shipping promotional materials, actual item or legible photograph for larger items shipped

#### Notes:

- Courier, Shipping Company, or Freight Forwarder must be used
- Product Samples must be sent separate from regular product shipments
- Proof of Activity is not required for shipping samples

### International Trade Seminars

**Note:** Promotional activities and materials must include the brand and the required U.S. origin statement (see page 6)

### Eligible Expenses

- Costs to conduct international seminars that provide information and demonstration of branded products
- Seminar Room Rental
- Freight for Samples and Promotional Materials to and from the seminar location
- Rental of Equipment – hot plates, freezers
- Translator/Demonstrator/Chef/Speaker Wages
- Demonstration Supplies – The purchase of disposable cups, spoons, napkins, etc., as well as food purchased to enhance your product. (example: Meat purchased to demo your brand of barbecue sauce)
- Posters or Signage - Production costs for items made of temporary materials
- Printed Sales Materials - Invitations, promotional materials, presentation notes, etc.

### Ineligible Expenses

- Costs to conduct international seminars that provide information only about the company
- Translator/Demonstrator/Chef/Speaker Travel Costs and Meals
- Wages over 8 hours per day
- Product samples being promoted
- Purchase of Equipment
- Refreshments, catering, etc.
- Purchase of non-disposable supplies such as metal bowls, equipment, reusable utensils, etc.
- Purchase of equipment

### Seminar Room Rental/Rental of Equipment

#### Documentation Required

**Itemized Invoice** from the hotel or service provider including the following:

- Invoice date
- Vendor's name, address, and phone number
- English translation and exchange rate for U.S.\$ (if applicable)
- Title and date of seminar
- Itemized details of charges

**Proof of Payment** – see page 19 for a list of eligible proofs of payment

**Proof of Activity** must include all of the following:

- Photos of the seminar
- Actual presentation materials

### Freight

See page 31

### Posters/Signage/Printed Sales Materials

See page 29

### Temporary Part-Time Independent Contractor (Translator/Demonstrator/ Chef/ Hostess/Speaker) Wages/Uniforms

For International Trade Shows, Approved U.S. Trade Shows, International Trade Seminars

**Note:** In Store Demonstrator information provided on page 26-28

- Promotional activities and materials must include the brand and the required U.S. origin statement (see page 6)

### Eligible Expenses

- Hourly wages of independent service provider or contractor
- Event Support Assistance Uniforms - T-Shirts, aprons, caps, etc.

**Ineligible Expenses**

- Employee, importer and distributor wages
- Cost of demonstrator transportation and meals
- Wages over 8 hours per day and sales commission

**Temporary Part-Time Independent Contractor Wages**

(Translator/Demonstrator/Chef/Hostess/Speaker)

**Documentation Required**

**Itemized Invoice** from the service provider or contractor including the following:

- Date
- Vendor's name, address, and phone number
- English translation and exchange rate for U.S.\$ (if applicable)
- Name and dates of promotional activity
- Date(s) individuals worked (dates the promotional activity took place are only eligible)
- Wages must be expressed as the following:

Rate per hour x number of hours worked x number of days worked  
(Example: \$15.00 x 6 hours x 3 days = \$270.00). Reimbursement may not exceed the maximum daily rate determined by the U.S. government. The maximum eligible expense is \$59.42 per hour or \$475.36 per day

**Demonstration Supplies/Equipment Rental**

**Itemized invoices/receipts** for supplies

**Proof of Payment** – see page 19 for a list of eligible proofs of payment

**Proof of Activity:**

- Trade Show
  - Photographs of the booth with products on display
- Trade Seminar must include all of the following:
  - Photographs of international trade seminar
  - Actual samples of the presentation materials

**Temporary Part-Time Independent Contractor Uniforms**

(Translator/Demonstrator/Chef/Hostess)

See page 28

**International Trade Shows/Exhibits****Notes:**

- Products must be exhibited within the U.S. Pavilion if present at the trade show. If no U.S. Pavilion is present at the show, this rule does not apply. A list of shows with U.S. Pavilions can be found at [www.fas.usda.gov/agx/trade\\_events/trade\\_events.asp](http://www.fas.usda.gov/agx/trade_events/trade_events.asp)
- Promotional activities and materials must include the brand and the required U.S. origin statement (see page 6)

**Eligible Expenses**

- Exhibition Fees
- Booth space rental
- Temporary booth construction and design\*
- Freight for samples and booth materials to and from the show location
- Rental of equipment (hot plates, freezers, electrical/water supply, furniture, shelving, carpet, etc.) and the labor charges to install them
- Travel Costs for two company representatives (airfare, lodging, and meals only) –See Pre-Travel Checklist and Post-Travel Reimbursement Requirements
- Translator/Demonstrator/Chef/Hostess Wages (hourly wages of the independent contractor providing booth assistance)
- Demonstration Supplies (purchase of disposable cups, spoons, napkins, etc.)
- Posters or Signage (production costs for items made of temporary materials)
- Directory Listing or Advertisement
- Promotional Giveaway Items (T-shirts, pens, mugs, key fobs, etc.)
- Giveaways cannot be more than \$1.00 per item to be eligible. If item is less than \$1.00, the actual cost per item will be eligible
- Printed Sales Materials

\* Promotional materials must be constructed out of TEMPORARY MATERIALS such as paper, cardboard, fiberboard, etc. Under the Branded program, “temporary” is defined as lasting not more than a year (metal racks, wood shelving units, or Plexiglas displays are not eligible)

**Ineligible Expenses**

- Purchase of equipment
- Fees that are subsidized at a reduced cost through SUSTA's Generic Program or other State Regional Trade Group (SRTG) programs are ineligible for reimbursement. (See pages 3-4 for information on other groups)
- Company or foreign distributor employee wages
- Translator/demonstrator travel costs and meals
- Translator/demonstrator wages over 8 hours per day
- The cost of your product exhibited at the show
- Custom booth displays constructed of permanent materials (wood, Plexiglas, metal, etc.) created for use at multiple show locations
- Rental, lease or purchase of warehouse space

## Booth Fees/Booth Construction/ Booth Design/Rental of Equipment

### Documentation Required

**Itemized Invoice** from show organizer or service provider that includes the following:

- Invoice date
- Vendor's name, address, and phone number
- English translation and exchange rate for U.S.\$ (if applicable)
- Name and dates of trade show
- Details of promotional activity
- Itemized details of charges

### Demonstration Supplies

- Itemized invoices/receipts for supplies

**Proof of Payment** – see page 19 for a list of eligible proofs of payment

**Proof of Activity** must be all of the following:

- Photographs of the booth showing brand products and the required U.S. origin identification clearly visible on display
 

**Note:** Exhibiting in the U.S. Pavilion constitutes the U.S. origin identification when applicable. If a U.S. Pavilion is not present at the show, a sign showing “Made in U.S.” or “Product of U.S.” must be visible in the booth
- Photographs of employees staffing the booth
- Listing in Trade Show Exhibitor's Guide

### Temporary Part-Time Independent Contractor Wages

See page 33

### Temporary Part-Time Independent Contractor Uniforms

See page 28

### Posters/Signage/Printed Sales Materials/Give Away Items

See page 29

### Travel Expenses

Only for International Trade Show/Approved Trade Mission

- Travel expenses are only eligible for international trade shows and trade missions to exhibit products in a booth (trade shows) or tabletop display (trade missions)
- Travelers are subject to U.S. Federal Travel Regulations when claiming reimbursement for international travel. Since there is no flexibility in these regulations, please carefully read through the list of required documentation

### Eligible Expenses

Up to only two company employees

- Airfare (must travel on U.S. carrier coach/economy class flight)
- Lodging and meals per diem

### Ineligible Expenses

- Importer/distributor, agent, consultant, demonstrator, translator/interpreter travel expenses
- Travel to conduct other activities or meet customers
- Taxis, rental cars, and transportation other than airfare

## Pre-Travel Checklist for Overseas Travel to International Trade Shows/Approved Trade Missions

### Requirements

- Products must be exhibited within the U.S. Pavilion if a U.S. Pavilion is present at the trade show. If no U.S. Pavilion is present at the show, this rule does not apply. A list of shows with U.S. Pavilions can be found at the following link: [www.fas.usda.gov/agx/trade\\_events/trade\\_events.asp](http://www.fas.usda.gov/agx/trade_events/trade_events.asp)
- Reimbursement will be made for no more than two company representatives per event
  - FAS Foreign Post Notification form must be completed and sent before traveling. Company must notify the FAS office in the country of travel plans prior to the show. Complete, email or fax the form at least two weeks prior to the trade show. This form can be found at [www.susta.org/downloads/FAS\\_Post\\_Notification.doc](http://www.susta.org/downloads/FAS_Post_Notification.doc)
  - Contact information for overseas FAS offices is available at [www.fas.usda.gov/scripts/w/fasfield/ovs\\_directory\\_search.asp](http://www.fas.usda.gov/scripts/w/fasfield/ovs_directory_search.asp)
- Travelers must fly a U.S. Flag carrier: a U.S. carrier must be used to and from the destination in accordance with the Fly America Act. When a U.S. flag carrier cannot reach the final destination, at least the major portion of the itinerary must be on a U.S. carrier. Several U.S. airlines have formed partnerships with foreign carriers. Please be certain the airline coding is for a U.S. carrier and the ticket is purchased from a U.S. flag carrier. A Passenger Receipt will confirm the name of the U.S. flag carrier
- Coach/economy class ticket: travelers will be reimbursed up to 50% of the cost of a full fare coach/economy class ticket. Therefore, business or first class travelers must submit a quotation of the coach/economy class fare. The quote must be obtained around the same date the business or first class ticket was purchased. The quote cannot be obtained after the trip takes place
- Direct flight: travelers must fly directly to and from the approved trade show/trade mission destination. If a traveler flies to other non-trade show-related destinations or extends the trip before or after the show, a quote must be obtained showing the cost of coach/economy class fare directly to and from the

trade show. The quote must be obtained around the same date the ticket was purchased and must be for the same U.S. carrier as the purchased ticket. The quote cannot be obtained after the trip takes place

- SUSTA is only able to pay per diem for two days before the show and one day after the show according to the documentation provided for travel
- Be sure to take several photos of the booth at the trade show or tabletop display at the approved trade mission to protect against photo processing problems. Brand products and the U.S. origin identification must clearly be displayed
- Photographs are still required when participating in an event with the state Department of Agriculture, FAS/USDA or SUSTA

IF THERE ARE QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS CHECKLIST,  
CONTACT SUSTA'S BRANDED DEPARTMENT PRIOR TO TRAVEL!

### Post-Travel Reimbursement Checklist for International Travel to Trade Shows and Approved Trade Missions

- Travel expenses cannot be submitted independently; travel expenses must be accompanied with supporting documentation for the event, such as booth fees, freight for shipment, etc.

#### Documentation Required

##### Proof of Activity

- A copy of the FAS Foreign Post Notification that was completed, emailed or faxed prior to travel to the show
- The above is still required when participating in an event with the state Department of Agriculture, FAS/USDA or SUSTA
- Completed and signed Participant Trip Report Form with copies of contacts attached. The form can be found at [www.susta.org/services/map\\_forms.html](http://www.susta.org/services/map_forms.html)
- Photographs of the booth showing branded products and the required U.S. origin identification clearly visible on display
- Exhibiting in the U.S. Pavilion constitutes the U.S. origin identification. If a U.S. Pavilion is not present at the show, a sign of "Made in U.S." or "Product of U.S." must be visible in the booth
- The photo of the booth is still required when participating in an event with the state Department of Agriculture, FAS/USDA or SUSTA
- Travel expenses may not be reimbursed without photographs
- Trade Show Exhibitor's Guide that shows company's listing

### Airfare Documentation

- Passenger receipt: cardstock ticket receipt listing the travel information for all flights and the price of the airfare or
- E-ticket receipt if airfare was purchased on the internet
- Documentation must include:
  - complete routing codes, including layover and flight segments, and
  - the fare amount charged (i.e., point-to-point faring)

- Online ordering confirmations are not the same as passenger receipts; documentation must list the ticket number
- Only submitting the boarding pass does not constitute as proof of activity for the airfare
- Airline itinerary/invoice: included with the ticket and lists each leg of the flight, airports, flight numbers, dates, and times

**Proof of payment** may be any of the following:

- Credit card statement (signature slips are not accepted). Must see the credit card statement of card holder that shows the charge for airfare. The proof of payment to the credit card company is not required
- If using a travel agent, a signed receipt from the travel agent listing the ticket number and amount received

### Hotel Documentation

- **Hotel bill** must show the following details: the occupant's name, room rate per night, and arrival and departure dates
  - If the room was reserved and prepaid through a travel agent or similar service provider, a detailed invoice from the travel agent listing the nightly room rate and documentation from the hotel detailing the occupant's name, arrival and departure dates. The statement listing auxiliary room charges (phone calls, laundry, room service, etc.) is acceptable documentation to show the reservation was kept
  - English translation and exchange rate for U.S.\$ (if applicable)

**Proof of payment** may be any of the following

- Credit card statement (signature slips are not accepted). Must see the credit card statement of card holder that shows the charges for the room. The proof of payment to the credit card company is not required
- Check made out to travel agent – copy of front of check accompanied by bank statement showing check cleared the account
- A signed receipt from the hotel or travel agent

### Lodging and Meals (Per Diem Allowance)

- Per diem rates are published for both lodging costs and meals. Federal per diem rates are updated regularly and are available at [http://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per\\_diem.asp](http://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp)
- **Lodging (Hotel):** Travelers are reimbursed based on their actual lodging costs up to the maximum per diem lodging allowance. Dates must correspond with trade show/approved trade mission exhibit dates. Two nights before the show are allowed for set-up, and one additional night after the show is allowed for breakdown. All other additional days are at the company's own expense.

- **Meals:** Travelers are eligible for a per diem meals allowance based on proof of their hotel stay in the city of the trade show. Travelers receive 75% of the federal rate on the first and last day of eligible travel days (two days before and up to one day after the show) and 100% on remaining days.

**Note:** Itemized receipts are not required for meals; expenses are always based on the per diem allowance for the city.

## U.S. Approved Trade Shows

### Eligible Expenses

- Exhibition Fees
  - Booth space rental
  - Temporary booth construction and design\*
  - Freight for samples and booth materials to and from the show location
  - Rental of equipment (hot plates, freezers, electrical/water supply, furniture, shelving, carpet, etc.) and the labor charges to install them
  - Demonstrator/Chef/Hostess Wages (hourly wages of the independent contractor providing booth assistance)
  - Demonstration Supplies (purchase of disposable cups, spoons, napkins, etc.)
  - Posters or Signage (production costs for items made of temporary materials)
  - Directory Listing or Advertisement
  - Promotional Giveaway Items (T-shirts, pens, mugs, key fobs, etc.)
    - Giveaways cannot be more than \$1.00 per item to be eligible. If item is less than \$1.00, the actual cost per item will be eligible
  - Printed Sales Materials
- \* Promotional materials must be constructed out of TEMPORARY MATERIALS such as paper, cardboard, fiberboard, etc. Under the Branded program, “temporary” is defined as lasting not more than a year (metal racks, wood shelving units, or Plexiglas displays are not eligible)

### Ineligible Expenses

- Travel expenses (airfare, lodging, and meals)
- Purchase of equipment
- Company or foreign distributor employee wages
- Translator/demonstrator travel costs and meals
- Translator/demonstrator wages over 8 hours per day
- Cost of product samples
- Custom booth displays constructed of permanent materials (wood, Plexiglas, metal, etc.) created for use at multiple show locations
- Rental, lease or purchase of warehouse space

## Booth Fees/Booth Construction/ Booth Design/Rental of Equipment

### Documentation Required

**Itemized Invoice** from show organizer or service provider must show the following:

- Invoice date
- Vendor’s name, address, and phone number
- Name and dates of trade show
- Details of promotional activity
- Itemized details of charges

### Demonstration Supplies

- Itemized invoices/receipts for supplies

**Proof of Payment** – see page 19 for a list of eligible proofs of payment

**Proof of Activity** must be all of the following:

- Photographs of the booth showing branded products and the required U.S. origin identification clearly visible on display

**Note:** Exhibiting in the U.S. Pavilion constitutes the U.S. origin identification. If a U.S. Pavilion is not present at the show, a sign of “Made in U.S.” or “Product of U.S.” must be visible in the booth

- Photographs of employees staffing the booth
- Listing in Trade Show Exhibitor’s Guide

## Temporary Part-Time Independent Contractor Wages

See page 33

## Temporary Part-Time Independent Contractor Uniforms

See page 28

## Posters/Signage/Printed Sales Materials/Give Away Items

See page 29

## Common Reimbursement Questions

### Can a foreign representative be reimbursed for expenses?

Foreign Third Parties (FTP) can be reimbursed, but not directly. The U.S. participant in the Branded Program must first pay their foreign agent or representative before they can submit the eligible expenses to SUSTA for 50% cost reimbursement.

**How long does it take to get reimbursed for an eligible expense?**

SUSTA receives hundreds of requests for reimbursements each year. Expense claims must be submitted within 90 days of the conclusion of an eligible activity. All claims must be submitted before February 28 of the next year for the end of the program year.

Requests are processed in the order they are received. Generally, if we do not require any additional information or documentation from a company, we strive to reimburse approved expenses in 3-4 weeks.

This takes into account the following:

- Expense workload in the SUSTA office
- Time for SUSTA to request and receive a company's funding from the USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)

If additional information is needed to process your request, you will be notified as soon as possible. In this instance, the time it takes us to reimburse you is solely dependent upon your ability to provide us with the additional information or documentation that we require. The more quickly you submit the additional information, the more quickly we will be able to reimburse you. You must submit additional information within 30 days. If we require additional information to process your reimbursement request, it may take longer than 30 days to process your request.

**Common Errors - Reimbursement Requests**

- Brands not shown on promotional materials and/or promotional activities
- U.S. origin not shown on promotional materials and/or promotional activities
- Expenses for non-reimbursable promotional activities
- Expenses for non-approved brands, products or countries
- Lack of sufficient documentation (entire paper trail not present): invoice, proof of activity, and/or proof of payment
- If a third party is involved, entire paper trail back to the original vendor not present
- Promotional activity occurred before the company's approval date or after the end of the program year
- Documentation in a foreign language without English translation
- Documentation in a foreign currency without exchange rate for U.S.\$
- Travel expenses calculated incorrectly
- Expense claims in disarray
- Expense claims not submitted in a timely manner

**End of the Year Branded Program Evaluation**

At the end of the program year, participants are required to complete a program evaluation. SUSTA tracks how the Branded Program has positively affected companies' export sales and the economic impact of U.S. exports. The evaluation is kept strictly confidential and results are used in aggregate form to determine the effectiveness of the Branded Program in raising the level of U.S. exports.

Companies that participated in promotional activities and submitted reimbursements for the program year will be notified when evaluations are due. Future applications, allocations, and reimbursements may be held until the required complete evaluations are on file with SUSTA's Branded Department.

**Glossary of Terms**

**State Regional Trade Groups (SRTGs):** The four State Regional Groups (Food Export Association of the Midwest USA, Food Export USA Northeast, Southern United States Trade Association (SUSTA) and Western United States Agricultural Trade Association (WUSATA) that assist companies with export promotions in their respective regions of the U.S.

**Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS):** Division of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). U.S. government agency that provides Market Access Program (MAP) funding for SUSTA programs, including the Branded Program.

**Market Access Program (MAP):** The federally funded program that provides financial assistance to U.S. exporters for the promotion of U.S. agricultural products in foreign markets.

**Brand Promotion:** Activity that involves the exclusive or predominant use of a single company's name, logo(s) or brand name(s).

**Agricultural Cooperative:** A society or union of persons for the production and/or distribution of agricultural goods, in which profits are shared by all contributing members.

**Foreign Third Party (FTP):** Distributors, agents, brokers, and representatives in foreign markets where Branded Program funds are used. Typically, FTPs conduct Branded Program activities on behalf of the U.S. applicant.

If there are questions after reading this manual, please contact SUSTA's Branded Department.

## SUSTA Member States

### Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries

Website: [www.agi.alabama.gov](http://www.agi.alabama.gov)

### Arkansas Agriculture Department

Website: [www.aad.arkansas.gov](http://www.aad.arkansas.gov)

### Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Website: [www.freshfromflorida.com](http://www.freshfromflorida.com)

### Georgia Department of Agriculture

Website: [www.agr.georgia.gov](http://www.agr.georgia.gov)

### Kentucky Department of Agriculture

Website: [www.kyagr.com](http://www.kyagr.com)

### Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry

Website: [www.ldaf.state.la.us](http://www.ldaf.state.la.us)

### Maryland Department of Agriculture

Website: [www.mda.state.md.us](http://www.mda.state.md.us)

### Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce

Website: [www.mdac.state.ms.us](http://www.mdac.state.ms.us)

### North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Website: [www.ncagexports.com](http://www.ncagexports.com)

### Oklahoma Department of Agriculture

Website: [www.oda.state.ok.us](http://www.oda.state.ok.us)

### Puerto Rico Department of Agriculture

Website: [www.agricultura.gobierno.pr](http://www.agricultura.gobierno.pr)

### South Carolina Department of Agriculture

Website: <http://agriculture.sc.gov>

### Tennessee Department of Agriculture

Website: [www.state.tn.us/agriculture](http://www.state.tn.us/agriculture)

### Texas Department of Agriculture

Website: [www.texasagriculture.gov](http://www.texasagriculture.gov)

### Virginia Department of Agriculture

Website: [www.vdacs.virginia.gov/international](http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/international)

### West Virginia Department of Agriculture

Website: [www.wvagriculture.org](http://www.wvagriculture.org)

## FAS Cooperator Groups with Branded Programs

### *Almonds*

#### **Almond Board of California**

Phone: (209) 549-8262

Website: [www.almondboard.com](http://www.almondboard.com)

### *Prunes*

#### **California Dried Plum Board/ California Prune Board**

Phone: (916) 565-6232

Website:  
[www.californiadriedplums.org](http://www.californiadriedplums.org)

### *Pistachios (raw)*

#### **Western Pistachio Association**

Phone: (559) 475-0435

Website: [www.westernpistachio.org](http://www.westernpistachio.org)

### *Cranberries and cranberry juice*

#### **Cranberry Marketing Committee**

Phone: (508) 291-1510

### *Candy*

#### **National Confectioners Association (NCA)**

Phone: (703) 790-5750

Website: [www.candyusa.org](http://www.candyusa.org)

### *New York wines and grape products (juice)*

#### **New York Wine and Grape Foundation**

Phone: (585) 394-3620

### *Raisins*

#### **Raisin Administrative Committee**

Phone (559) 225-0520

Website: [www.raisins.org](http://www.raisins.org)

### *Cattle, animal semen and embryos*

#### **U.S. Livestock Genetics Export, Inc. (USLGE)**

Phone: (618) 548-9154

Website: [www.uslge.org](http://www.uslge.org)

### *Beef, pork, lamb, and veal*

#### **U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF)**

Phone: (303) 623-6328

Website: [www.usmef.org](http://www.usmef.org)

### *California Wine*

#### **Wine Institute**

Phone: (415) 512-0151

Website: [www.wineinstitute.org](http://www.wineinstitute.org)

## International Trade Shows Exempt from 5-Year Graduation as of March 2009

Al Fares	HOFEX
ANUGA Cologne	IFIA Japan (Food Ingredients)
BETA International (Equestrian)	Interzoo
BioFach	IPM (horticultural)
European Seafood Exposition	ISM Cologne
Food & Hotel Asia	London International Wine and Spirits Fair
Fiera Cavelli (Equestrian)	Prowein
Fish International	SIAL Mercosur
Food Ingredients Asia	SIAL Paris
Food Ingredients Europe	Vinexpo Asia
Food Ingredients South America	Vinexpo Bordeaux
FOODEX Japan	VinItaly
Fruit Logistica	Zoomark
Gulfood	

Above list of exempt trade shows is subject to change per FAS.

## Approved U.S. Trade Shows As of July 2008

AFIA/American Feed Industry Association International Feed Expo	National Association of Convenience Stores (NACS)
All Things Organic Show/OTA	National Confectioners Association (NCA)/All Candy Expo
American Food Fair at National Restaurant Association (NRA) Show	Natural Products Exposition East
American Pet Products Manufacturers Association (APPMA) Global Pet Expo	Natural Products Exposition West
Duty Free Show of the Americas (IAADF Stores)	Nightclub & Bar Beverage and Food Trade Show
Expo Alimentos	North American Veterinary Conference
IFE Americas Food & Beverage Show	Petfood Forum
In Flight	Private Label Manufacturers Assoc. (PLMA)
Institute of Food Technologists (IFT)	Produce Marketing Association (PMA)
International Boston Seafood Show	Snack Food Association (SNAXPO)
International Dairy-Deli-Bakery Show	Southern Nursery Association
International Grocery Show (ECRM)	The International Builders' Show
International Home & Housewares Show	Tree Nut Show
Kosherfest	United Fresh
NASFT/Fancy Food Show, Summer	U.S. Food Export Showcase
NASFT/Fancy Food Show, Winter	USMEF Product Showcase

Above list of approved trade shows is subject to change per FAS.  
The most current list can be found at [www.susta.org/services/map.html](http://www.susta.org/services/map.html).





## **Southern United States Trade Association**

701 Poydras Street  
Suite 3725

New Orleans, Louisiana 70139 USA

Phone: (504) 568-5986 • Fax: (504) 568-6010

E-mail: [susta@susta.org](mailto:susta@susta.org) • Website: [www.susta.org](http://www.susta.org)

*The MAP Branded regulations are continually updated by FAS. For this reason, this manual is not all-inclusive. For the most up-to-date information, reference MAP Program Notices posted on the USDA web site.*

*SUSTA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation or marital/family status. Persons with disabilities, who require alternative means for communication of program information, should contact us.*