

**Foreign Agricultural Service**  
**Supporting Statement - Exporter Assistance Programs**  
**(0551-0031)**

**TERMS OF CLEARANCE:** On March 30, 2009, in accordance with 5 CFR 1320, OMB determined “with the exception of the surveys of Trade Show, American Café, and the Export Directory, the information collection is approved for three years”. In this information collection, FAS is withdrawing the Trade Show Evaluation Form and will submit this form under a separate ICR. The Export Directory Evaluation Form and the American Café Evaluation Form have been discontinued. We are not seeking OMB approval for the Export Directory Evaluation or the American Café Evaluation forms.

**SUMMARY:**

The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture is mandated by Congress to encourage and promote the marketing of agricultural commodities of the United States (7 USC § 1761) and increase the effectiveness of agricultural export promotion efforts (7 USC § 1765b). The FAS accomplishes this by providing programs and services to help U.S. firms export and conduct business overseas. This information collection package enables FAS to provide appropriate export services to U.S. exporters and foreign importers.

The forms in this submission are used by FAS’ Office of Trade Programs/Trade Services Staff (OTP/TSS) to implement exporter assistance programs that help U.S. exporters develop and maintain markets overseas for hundreds of food and agricultural products. Participation in these programs is voluntary and U.S. exporters can participate in some or all aspects of programs.

The four forms in this renewal request include U.S. Supplier List Registration (USL), Foreign Buyer List Request (FBL), Madigan Export Award Application (Madigan), and U.S. Exporter Directory of U.S. Food Distribution Companies Registration (Export Directory). These forms are used by U.S. companies to either request information on export markets, register their companies to increase their exposure to a larger customer base, or apply for consideration for the Madigan Export Award. Details on information collected on each form can be found in question #2 below.

**1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.**

The Office of Trade Programs (OTP) provides vital services within the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). It facilitates trade contacts between U.S. exporters and foreign buyers seeking U.S. food and agricultural products. All of the assistance offered is designed to promote U.S. agricultural exports by helping American exporters make contact with export agents, trading companies, importers, and foreign buyers, thus creating opportunities to sell their products in overseas markets. The specific programs covered by this request for OMB information collection authority are: U.S. Suppliers List, Foreign Buyers List, Export Directory of U.S. Food Distribution Companies, and the Edward R. Madigan United States Agricultural Export Excellence Award.

As FAS is mandated by Congress to encourage and promote the marketing of agricultural commodities of the United States (7 USC § 1761) and increase the effectiveness of agricultural export promotion efforts (7 USC § 1765b) and FAS accomplishes this by providing programs and services to help U.S. firms export and conduct business overseas. The information collected on the

above forms provides vital information to report accomplishments progress towards goals set forth in USDA's and FAS' Strategic Plan. Additionally, this information is used to support USDA's requirements in support of the President's National Export Initiative.

Authority for these programs falls under:

- a) 7 USC §1761 "Foreign Market Development",
- b) 7 U.S.C. 5693 "Export Promotion – Foreign Agricultural Service – Functions of the Foreign Agricultural Service",
- c) 7 U.S.C. 1765b "Functions of the U.S. Agricultural Trade Offices"; and,
- d) 7 USC §5678 "Export Promotion - Edward R. Madigan United States Agricultural Export Excellence Award".

It is voluntary for U.S. companies to participate.

In the case of the Madigan Award, FAS collects information relevant to the nominations for this award. Authority for this award falls under 7 U.S.C. 5678 and it is voluntary for entities to participate.

**2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used.**

**Summary Table:**

Program	How	Whom	What Purpose
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<p>U.S Suppliers' List</p>	<p>The U.S. Supplier list is an on-line searchable database by product including full contact information, email, web address, size of firm, type of firm, products and regions of the world. The U.S. Suppliers online database is hosted and maintained by the National Association of State Department of Agriculture (NASDA) in cooperation with FAS.</p>	<p>Used by FAS overseas offices and cooperators to respond to inquiries from importers asking for assistance to find a U.S exporter. Foreign importers and buyers can access the database with no access restrictions.</p>	<p>Foreign firms interested in importing U.S. products can access this database to retrieve contact information for U.S. Suppliers. The U.S. suppliers listed in the database have self-registered to be included in the database and have full access to their information via a user name and password they created during the registration process.</p>
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Foreign Buyers' List	<p>The Foreign Buyers' List is a searchable database by country and product, including full contact information and products. FAS overseas offices maintain and update the database with foreign firms interested in importing U.S. products. U.S. exporters request lists from FAS at no cost by completing the FBL form.</p>	<p>Used by the FAS to provide lists to U.S. exporters seeking a list of foreign buyers.</p>	<p>U.S. firms interested in finding foreign buyers of their products fill out the FBL form to request contact information of possible interested buyers located in foreign countries. The completed form is faxed, emailed or mailed to FAS. The information on the form is only used to provide the U.S. firm with the requested list of foreign buyer contact data.</p>
Export Directory of U.S. Food Distribution Companies/Registration Form	<p>Export Directory of U.S. Food Distribution Companies is an on-line searchable database containing full contact information, email, web addresses, size and type of firm, products, and export regions of U.S. suppliers that can provide mixed containers of grocery and/or food service products.</p>	<p>FAS overseas offices provide this information to buyers looking for mixed container loads of grocery products. U.S. exporters their information by submitting a registration form available on FAS Online.</p>	<p>Information is voluntarily provided by U.S. companies that wish to be included in the database. The contact information of these U.S. exporters is provided to foreign entities that are interested in importing U.S. products.</p>

Madigan Award	Public solicitation for nominations, followed by a formal application.	Used by USDA and review board to make awards.	Recognize exporters who have made significant contributions to the export of agricultural products.
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**Detailed Response:**

*U.S Suppliers List:*

The U.S. Supplier registration form is used by U.S. exporters to self register their companies in a database that can be accessed by foreign entities interested in importing U.S. products. Companies can register at <http://fas1.agexportservices.org/apps/membership/register/mEnter3.asp>. There is no cost to the companies to register and they can access their information at any time after registration to edit, update, or delete by entering their user name and password they created at the time of registration.

The database is also used by more than 80 USDA/FAS Overseas and Washington offices to respond to inquiries from export agents, trading companies, importers, and foreign buyers to locate U.S. exporters. The information is provided directly to importers, foreign buyers, and interested parties at [http://www.fas.usda.gov/agx/partners\\_trade\\_leads/partners\\_trade\\_leads.asp](http://www.fas.usda.gov/agx/partners_trade_leads/partners_trade_leads.asp). The ultimate use of the information is determined by the recipient. In most cases, the information is used by importers and foreign buyers to contact U.S. exporters.

The U.S. Suppliers online database is hosted and maintained by the National Association of State Department of Agriculture (NASDA) in cooperation with FAS.

*Foreign Buyers List*

The Foreign Buyers List request form is used by U.S. firms to solicit FAS for the contact information of foreign buyers interested in importing U.S. products. U.S. exporters use the form to specify the countries and products they are interested in free of charge. The company submits the form via fax or email to FAS/Washington. The response is sent to the exporter via email. U.S. exporters use these lists to contact foreign buyers and promote their U.S. agricultural and food products and increase their company sales. The order form may be downloaded from FAS Online at <http://www.fas.usda.gov/agexport/forbuy.html>.

*Export Directory of U.S. Food Distribution Companies/Registration Form*

U.S. exporters capable of providing mixed containers of grocery and/or food service products to foreign buyers use this registration form to provide their contact information to FAS. FAS enters the information on the form into a database that can be used to respond to enquiries by foreign buyers interested in buying U.S. products. There is no charge for this service.

FAS recruits for the directory via partners and cooperators, FAS Online, and trade shows. The registration form is found at

[www.fas.usda.gov/agx/partners\\_trade\\_leads/ExportDirectoryRegistrationForm.pdf](http://www.fas.usda.gov/agx/partners_trade_leads/ExportDirectoryRegistrationForm.pdf),

The *Export Directory of U.S. Food Distribution Companies* is available to the general public, specifically foreign buyers seeking U.S. products, via FAS online at <http://usdistributors.agexportservices.org/Apps/StoreFronts/search.asp>.

### Madigan Award

The information is collected to be used by the Madigan Award Selection Committee to determine awardees.

The Edward R. Madigan United States Agricultural Export Excellence Award was established by Congress in the Federal Improvement and Reform (FAIR) Act of 1996. The award commemorates Edward R. Madigan who, as a congressman from Illinois and later as Secretary of Agriculture, played a major role in reshaping U.S. agricultural policy to enable farmers and ranchers to respond more effectively to market signals and pursue export opportunities.

The Madigan Award is designed to help increase U.S. agricultural exports by:

- identifying efforts of U.S. entities to develop and expand markets through new products and services and innovative marketing techniques;
- recognizing achievements of those who have demonstrated or supported entrepreneurial efforts to expand and create new markets for, or increase the value or volume of, agricultural exports; and,
- disseminating information on successful methods for developing and expanding markets for U.S. agricultural exports.

### **3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.**

#### **Detailed Response:**

#### U.S. Suppliers List

U.S. Exporters of agricultural products can register on-line to be included in the U.S. Suppliers List. The form is available from FAS online at <http://fas1.agexportservices.org/apps/logon3.asp>.

#### Foreign Buyers List

The order form may be downloaded from FAS online at <http://www.fas.usda.gov/agexport/fblists.pdf>. The exporter submits the form via fax or email.

#### Export Directory of U.S. Food Distribution Companies – Registration Form

The registration form for the *Export Directory of U.S. Food Distribution Companies* is available via FAS online at [http://www.fas.usda.gov/agx/partners\\_trade\\_leads/partners\\_trade\\_leads.asp](http://www.fas.usda.gov/agx/partners_trade_leads/partners_trade_leads.asp) and can be accepted by email or fax.

### Madigan Award

Applicants submit their applications via fax, email, or mail.

**4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.**

Similar registration forms are needed for our services as U.S. exporters use Exporter Assistance Programs on an “a la carte” basis. In other words, users may participate in all, some, or none of our services.

**5. If the collection of information impacts small business or other small entities, describe any method used to minimize burden.**

The volume of information requested is minimal and the forms can be completed without excessive research or review of company records.

**6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.**

FAS would not be able to operate these programs if the information is not collected, as its sole reason for existence is exchange of exporter/importer information.

**7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secret, or other confidential information, unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information’s confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.**

Proprietary information is provided by U.S. exporters on a voluntary basis and is only used for internal processing and analyses.

*Madigan Award:* Disclosure of tax information is necessary as part of the process used to evaluate Madigan award applicants. All entities applying for the Madigan Award must undergo a background check to disclose such factors as the entity’s financial status, debarment, or suspension from Government programs, and violations of Federal laws and regulations.

**8. Federal Register Notice and consultations with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the Information Collection.**

On December 23, 2011, FAS published (76 FR 80329) a notice soliciting comments on the “Request for Revision of a Currently Approved Information Collection”. No comments were received as a result of this notice.

**9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.**

No payments or gifts are provided to respondents of this information collection.

**10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.**

**11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.**

No questions of this nature are asked.

**12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.**

The estimated number of respondents is 452 and the estimated annual responses 802. The estimated total reporting burden is 131.5 hours.

**13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information.**

The annual cost to respondents is \$6,183 (based on an estimated hourly wage of \$47 per hour).

**14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal Government.**

The annualized cost to the Federal government is estimated at \$7,343.

**15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in items 13 or 14 of the OMB Form 83-I.**

Our previous OMB submission (March 2009) showed an overall annual burden of 3,524 hours. We have withdrawn one form from this collection to be submitted under a separate ICR (Trade Show Evaluation Form) and four forms, detailed in table below, have been discontinued. Because this submission now only includes 4 forms the current burden is reduced to 131.50 hours, a reduction of 3,392 hours. The number of respondents decreased from 31,910 to 452, a reduction of 31,458, and the responses decreased from 30,680 to 802 a reduction of -29,878, also due to the removal of some forms in this collection.

The following table summarizes changes resulting in reduced burden hours reported on OMB Form 83-I:

<b>Service</b>	<b>Changes</b>	<b>Previous Burden Hours</b>	<b>New Burden Hours</b>
U.S. Suppliers' List	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ No change to format of form.</li> <li>□ Significant reduction in the amount of updates to supplier list information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ 990</li> </ul>	33.80
Foreign Buyers' List	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ New table format to request reports.</li> <li>□ Revise detailed list of commodities to a new, more general list.</li> <li>□ Update contact information to new office location and name due to FAS reorganization.</li> <li>□ Significant increase in number of electronic submissions decreased</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ 2212.50</li> </ul>	78.75



	<p>burden hours.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Significant decrease in updates to information also decreased burden hours.</li> </ul>		
Madigan Award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Update contact information to new office location and name due to FAS reorganization.</li> <li>□ Correction to methodology used to calculate burden hours and significant reduction to number of applications received resulted in a significant decrease of burden hours.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ 200</li> </ul>	18
Export Directory of U.S. Food Distribution Companies – Registration Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Update contact information to new office location and name due to FAS reorganization.</li> <li>□ Reduction in number of applicants and updates performed each year resulted in significant reduction of burden hours.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ 37</li> </ul>	1
Trade Show Evaluation Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ This form to be submitted in new ICR.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ 8</li> </ul>	0
Foreign Buyer Registration Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ This form has been discontinued.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□</li> </ul>	□
Exporter Directory Evaluation Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ This form has been discontinued.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□</li> </ul>	□
Registration/Application and Evaluation Forms for the American Cafe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ This form has been discontinued.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□</li> </ul>	□
Sample Registration Form for Trade Events/American Cafe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ This form has been discontinued.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□</li> </ul>	□

**16. For collection of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation, and publication.**

Publication of information is limited to aggregated results for internal annual reports. The Madigan Export Award results may be published with the consent of the awardee.

**17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.**

Approval is not being sought to not display the expiration date for OMB approval.

**18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in item 19, "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions," of OMB Form 83-I.**

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.