

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT -**

**OMB Control Number 0551-0050**

**Trade Missions and Shows Revised Applications and Post- Event Surveys**

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## SUPPORTING STATEMENT PART A

**1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.**

The purpose of this information collection is to gather important information from U.S. companies and trade associations that attend USDA-endorsed Trade Shows, USDA Agribusiness Trade Missions (ATMs), and USDA Virtual Trade Events (VTEs). Two of the five forms (Agribusiness Trade Mission (ATM) Application Form and Virtual Trade Event (VTE) Application Form) are applications for participants to register for ATMs and VTEs. The remaining forms are post-event surveys (U.S. Exhibitor Survey Form for Trade Shows, U.S.- [Country] ATM Survey, and U.S.- [Country] VTE Survey), which are used for feedback on how to improve FAS trade events, and to gather data for Trade Missions and Shows' Key Performance Indicators (KPI). KPI is quantitatively measured using 12-month projected sales and on-site sales reported by businesses and the number of business-to-business meetings that occurred from the trade event. At the beginning of every fiscal year, a new KPI target is set for 12-month projected sales, and the post-event survey provides the only way to measure progress towards it.

The updated surveys have more focused questions to prompt responses that will be used to implement effective trade promotion events and ensure that program objectives are met. For example, the updated surveys will now ask fewer qualitative questions about how participants felt about the event and more questions relating to the type of organizations participating in the program (e.g. whether an organization is a USDA Cooperator or State and Regional Trade Group). The surveys will collect relevant data on each organization and their connection to USDA initiatives and programs. All revised surveys are expected to positively contribute to FAS' strategic goals related to promoting U.S. agricultural exports.

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"

**2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.**

Annually, USDA implements 6-8 trade missions, 1-4 virtual trade events, and endorse 22-26 international trade shows. Trade Missions and Shows expects representatives of U.S. Companies, USDA Cooperators, State Departments of Agriculture, and Agricultural Advocacy Groups to participate in these trade events, so they are the target audience for these surveys and applications. To participate in ATMs and VTEs, participants submit an

application USDA uses to determine the eligibility of applicant to take part in the event. At the conclusion of the event, FAS staff will send out voluntary surveys to the participants regarding their satisfaction with the event and to collect pertinent quantitative data resulting from their participation in the program. The information obtained from post-event surveys will be used to measure the benefits of these activities for participants, participant satisfaction with the activities, and how activities can be improved. This information will also be reported as KPI, showcasing the value of agricultural exports resulting from participation in USDA trade events. Information obtained from these forms is ultimately used by FAS staff, contractors implementing ATMs overseas, and senior officials at FAS, TFAA, and OSEC.

The previously approved surveys and applications have been utilized since 2022 and are a crucial tool to keep programs running smoothly. Since 2022, the post-event survey was used for collecting information approximately 60 times, totaling roughly 1400 respondents, and the applications for VTEs and ATMs were used 19 times, totaling roughly 1150 applications received. Quantitative data derived from these post-event surveys are often reported to senior officials at FAS, TFAA, and OSEC to be used in talking points at major stakeholder events. The feedback received from Trade Show participants is used to adjust which shows FAS should continue endorsing. The information submitted on the applications to ATMs and VTEs are needed by contractors on the ground to register participants and ensure that good quality business-to-business meetings are scheduled. These forms play a vital role in how TMS trade events functions.

**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 technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also, describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.**

FAS makes every effort to comply with the E-Government Act, 2002 (E-Gov) and to provide for alternative submission of information collections. FAS deploys an electronic web-based/ digital system for respondents to submit requested data. FAS anticipates that approximately 95% of participants will fill out an application to attend a VTE or ATM, and more than 70% of Trade Show, ATM, and VTE participants will respond to the post-event survey. The 5% of applicants that do not use the electronic application are usually VIP attendees (commissioners for example) that prefer to email FAS directly about attending a Trade Mission.

Please see below for the Microsoft Forms templates to be deployed at every Trade Show, ATM, and VTE:

Form Name	Link
U.S.- [COUNTRY] Agribusiness Trade Mission (ATM) Survey	<a href="https://forms.office.com/g/0A3xHk3i3q">https://forms.office.com/g/0A3xHk3i3q</a>

Agribusiness Trade Mission (ATM) Application Form	<a href="https://forms.office.com/g/yR44LsTmKy">https://forms.office.com/g/yR44LsTmKy</a>
U.S. Exhibitor Survey Form for Trade Shows	<a href="https://forms.office.com/g/HXX5EDRQzq">https://forms.office.com/g/HXX5EDRQzq</a>
Virtual Trade Event (VTE) Application Form	<a href="https://forms.office.com/g/AJvHzsfJxJ">https://forms.office.com/g/AJvHzsfJxJ</a>
U.S.- [COUNTRY] VTE Survey	<a href="https://forms.office.com/g/Jexi7f66mr">https://forms.office.com/g/Jexi7f66mr</a>

**4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in item 2 above.**

There is no similar data collection available. Every effort has been made to avoid duplication. The information being collected is unique to each of the given activities and not collected elsewhere.

**5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities (Item 5 of OMB Form 83-1), describe any methods used to minimize burden.**

There is a range in the size of businesses that participate in our events. TMS classifies a small and medium enterprise (SME) as one that has below 500 employees, and in 2024, approximately 320 SMEs attended ATMs, VTEs, and Trade Shows.

The method used to obtain information is minimized to ensure all respondents, including small businesses, will incur a minimal burden. All that is requested is to submit a digital survey or application online. FAS anticipates that approximately 100 % of small businesses interested in attending an ATM or VTE will fill out an application, and more than 70% of small businesses that attended a Trade Show, ATM, and VTE will respond to the post-event survey.

**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.**

Without this information collection, FAS would lack a mechanism to gain an understanding of how participants experience these unique USDA trade events and the impact it has on their businesses. FAS would not receive valuable feedback to inform continuous improvement of these activities. Additionally, these surveys provide the only way to collect the information needed to track progress towards TMS' KPI target.

These surveys and applications are a one-time data collection tool, and are voluntary.

7. **Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:**
- **requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;**
  - **requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;**
  - **requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;**
  - **requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years;**
  - **in connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study;**
  - **requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;**
  - **that includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or**
  - **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.**

There are no special circumstances. The collection of information is conducted in a manner consistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5.'

8. **If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.**

FAS published a [60-day Notice of Request for Revision of a Currently Approved Information Collections](#) for public comments in the *Federal Register*, Volume 89; Page 51871- 51872 on June 20, 2024. The public was given until August 19, 2024 to submit comments on the proposed information collection. There was one comment received on June 20<sup>th</sup>, however it warranted no response because it wasn't related to actions being taken to revise currently approved information collection.

**Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements**

**to be recorded, disclosed, or reported. Consultation with representatives of those from whom information is to be obtained or those who must compile records should occur at least once every 3 years even if the collection of information activity is the same as in prior periods. There may be circumstances that may preclude consultation in a specific situation. These circumstances should be explained.**

FAS has consulted with and continues to consult with participants of each of these programs and has obtained their views on collecting information, to include:

Name: Allison Tuszynski  
Company: North Carolina Department of Agriculture  
Tel: (984) 297-2202  
Email: [Allison.Tuszynski@ncagr.gov](mailto:Allison.Tuszynski@ncagr.gov)

Name: Wade Byram  
Company: Western United States Agricultural Trade Association  
Tel: (360) 693-3373  
Email: [wade@wusata.org](mailto:wade@wusata.org)

Name: Katie Losito  
Company: Jasper Hill Farm  
Tel: (802) 424-7576  
Email: [katie@jasperhillfarm.com](mailto:katie@jasperhillfarm.com)

Name: Jaycob Robinson  
Company: Red Lake, Inc  
Tel: (218) 368- 2310  
Email: [jrobinson@redlakeinc.com](mailto:jrobinson@redlakeinc.com)

These customers attended 2024 trade shows and missions, and all stated that the revised forms take at most 15 minutes to complete. SRTGs, USDA cooperators, and SDOAs took less time to fill these out because they no longer need to report their results from the trade event (e.g. projected 12-month sales, on-site sales, and number of B2B meetings).

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

This information collection activity involves no payments or gifts to respondents.

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

All data collection forms will note that individual data is kept private and will only be reported as an aggregate and not attributable to any individual respondent. The confidentiality of information is protected under FOIA ([5 U.S.C. 552](#)) and the Trade Secrets Act ([18 U.S.C. 1905](#)). This information was reviewed and cleared by Office of General Counsel (OGC) as well as the Cybersecurity and Privacy Operations Center (CPOC) by Quanisha Jones on April 2, 2024.

**11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior or attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.**

Proprietary sales information is collected, and that information is kept private, secure, and safeguarded. That information is only reported as an aggregate and is not identifiable as any individual respondent.

**12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated.**

- **Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated. If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burden in Item 13 of OMB Form 83-I.**

Trade Missions and Shows forecasts that there will 1,790 total respondents annually contributing to a total of 1,980 responses on these surveys and applications. The average estimate for each application and survey is estimated to take a respondent 15 minutes to complete, leading to a total annual burden of 495 hours. Trade Missions and Shows estimates that Federal employees will spend 50 hours administering and analyzing survey results. This means that the total burden estimate for the public and USG administrative support will be 545 hours annually. More information about this can be seen in the Trade Missions and Shows Program Annual Reporting Burden Hours table attached.



**Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using appropriate wage rate categories.**

The annual estimated cost is \$12,681.90. This estimate is based on 495 hours of labor, valued at \$25.62 per hour. See Form and Tables attached for additional information.

Based on data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics for Sales and Related Occupations, a reasonable estimate of \$25.62 (which includes benefits of 25%) per hour has been used as the average cost for respondents' program participation. The total annual estimated burden in dollars is \$12,681.90. These mean hourly rates were obtained from the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2023 National Industry-Specific Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates ([https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_stru.htm](https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_stru.htm))

**13. Provide estimates of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information, (do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in items 12 and 14). The cost estimates should be split into two components: (a) a total capital and start-up cost component annualized over its expected useful life; and (b) a total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component.**

There is no capital or start-up costs associated with this collection package.

**14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Provide a description of the method used to estimate cost and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.**

The annual estimated cost to the Federal Government for this collection and is \$2879.91. The Agency will review all responses at 10 minutes per response for a total 50 hours of labor, valued at \$58.18 per hour. This mean hourly wage is based on a mean salary of \$121, 014 for five GS-13, Step 1 specialists, one GS 12, Step 1 administrative support specialist, one GS 9, Step 1 administrative support specialist, two GS 14, Step 1 teams lead and supervisor, and one GS 15 director. The hourly cost used in the estimate includes fringe benefits. Federal employee pay rates are based on the General Schedule of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for 2024.

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

This is a revision of an existing information collection. The number of respondents increased from 1,530 to 1,980 resulting in an increase in total burden hours from 444 to 495.

**16. For collections of information whose results are planned to be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication.**

Information obtained from these surveys and applications are not published or available to public.

**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.**

FAS will display the information collection information and expiration date.

**18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19 “Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act.”**

There are no exceptions.

**B. COLLECTION OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS**

2024 USDA Trade Missions and Shows Programs Supporting Statement

## **B.1 Respondent Universe and Sampling Methods**

**Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g., establishments, State and local government units, households, or persons) in the universe covered by the collection and in the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form for the universe as a whole and for each of the strata in the proposed sample. Indicate expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection had been conducted previously, include the actual response rate achieved during the last collection.**

The application is open to the public on the FAS website to any organization (usually U.S. companies, agricultural advocacy groups, or state departments of agriculture) that wish to participate in a Trade Mission or Virtual Trade Event. TMS expects that over 1150 applications to Trade Missions or Virtual Trade Events to be received annually, and about 80% of those to be invited to attend the event. The post-event survey is deployed after the Trade Mission, Trade Show, or Virtual Trade Event is over to gauge satisfaction with the event and to gather Key Performance Indicator (KPI) data. TMS has deployed this type of survey before and expects 70% of the participants that attend these events to respond to the survey. To increase the response rate, TMS will follow up with all participants at least twice after the event is concluded about completing the post-event survey.

The information obtained from post-event surveys are used to tabulate official KPI that are mostly used for internal purposes. KPI consists of 12-month projected sales, onsite sales, and number of business-to-business meetings reported by trade event participants. This is calculated by adding up the entries submitted by participants, after removing duplicate responses. Since TMS projects that only 70% of trade event participants will respond to the survey, official read outs of the KPI after an event is concluded will include the percentage of participants that reported it.

## **B.2 Procedures for the Collection of Information**

**Describe the procedures for the collection of information including:**

- **Statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection,**
- **Estimation procedure,**
- **Degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification,**
- **Unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures, and**
- **Any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.**

All applications and surveys are available through a link to a Microsoft Forms survey. The application to Trade Missions is available to the public on the FAS website, and TMS ensures that proper outreach about the Trade Mission or Virtual Trade Event is conducted so they receive good applications. The survey link is made available to all trade event participants through email or QR code after the event is over.

### **B.3 Methods to Maximize the Response Rates and to Deal with Nonresponse**

**Describe methods to maximize response rates and to deal with issues of non-response. The accuracy and reliability of information collected must be shown to be adequate for intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided for any collection that will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.**

All applications and surveys TMS administer are voluntary.

### **B.4 Test of Procedures or Methods to be Undertaken**

**Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Testing is encouraged as an effective means of refining collections of information to minimize burden and improve utility. Tests must be approved if they call for answers to identical questions from 10 or more respondents. A proposed test or set of tests may be submitted for approval separately or in combination with the main collection of information.**






No testing of information-collection procedures is planned.

### **B.5 Individuals Consulted on Statistical Aspects & Individuals Collecting and/or Analyzing Data**

**Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.**

Lindsay Drunasky, 202-215-7793, Branch Chief, Methodology Division, National Agricultural Statistics Service U.S. Department of Agriculture

## **Attachment # 1: Links to Surveys and Application used for Information Collection**

Title	Link
Agribusiness Trade Mission (ATM) Application	 Agribusiness Trade Mission (ATM) Applic:
U.S.- [Country] Virtual Trade Event (VTE) Survey	 U.S.- [Country] Virtual Trade Event (V
Virtual Trade Event (VTE) Application	 Virtual Trade Event (VTE) Application.pdf
U.S. Exhibitor Survey Form for Trade Shows	 U.S. Exhibitor Survey Form for Trade Show:
U.S.- [Country] Agribusiness Trade Mission (ATM) Survey	 U.S.- [Country] Agribusines Trade Mi:

**Attachment #2: Trade Missions and Shows Program Annual Reporting Burden Hours**

### Annual Reporting Burden Hours

								USG Administrative Hours Used to Manage Information Collection	
				Average	Total	Average Estimate	Total	Average Estimate	Total
			Number of	Number of	Annual	of Manhours	Annual	of Manhours	Annual
Forms (one form)	Information Collected	Affected Public	Respondents	Applications	Responses	per Response	Manhours	per Response	Manhours
U.S.- [COUNTRY] ATM Survey	Survey	Representatives of U.S. Companies, USDA Cooperators, State Departments of Agriculture, and Agricultural Advocacy Groups	130	2.00	260.00	0.25	65.00	0.10	6.50
Agribusiness Trade Mission (ATM) Application Form	Application	Representatives of U.S. Companies, USDA Cooperators, State Departments of Agriculture, and Agricultural Advocacy Groups	500	1.00	500.00	0.25	125.00	0.10	12.50
Exhibitor Survey Form	Survey	Representatives of U.S. Companies, USDA Cooperators, State Departments of Agriculture	1,000	1.00	1000.00	0.25	250.00	0.10	25.00

		e, and Agricultural Advocacy Groups							
Virtual Trade Event (VTE) Application Form	Application	Representatives of U.S. Companies	100	1.00	100.00	0.25	25.00	0.10	2.50
U.S.-[COUNTRY] VTE Survey	Application	Representatives of U.S. Companies	60	2.00	120.00	0.25	30.00	0.10	3.00
	<b>Totals:</b>		<b>1,790.00</b>		<b>1,980.00</b>		<b>495</b>		<b>50</b>
	<b>Total Burden Public &amp; USG administrative support</b>								<b>545</b>

**Cost Estimate**

	<b>Total Annual Manhours</b>	<b>Mean hourly wage</b>
Public	495	\$25.62
USG	50	\$58.18

<b>Total cost to Public</b>
\$12,681.90
<b>Total cost to USG</b>
\$2,879.91
<b>Total cost to Public &amp; USG</b>
\$15,561.81

<b>Public</b>			
Occupation code	Occupation Title	Mean hourly wage	Annual mean wage
41-9099	Sales and Related Occupations	\$25.62	\$53,290
<b>USG</b>			
Occupation	Occupation Title	Mean hourly wage	Annual mean wage

code			
	2 Administrative Support Workers, 2 Supervisors, and 6 Program Specialists	\$58.18	\$121,014

Most Current Bureau of Labor Salary Estimates can be found at:

[https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_stru.htm](https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_stru.htm)

Most Current OPM GS Schedule can be found at: <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/salary-tables/24Tables/html/DCB.aspx>