

USDA ACCETING TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE PETITIONS

Agricultural commodity producers or fishermen in the United States, or their authorized representatives, have until January 31, 2007 if they wish to file a petition to USDA's Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS) for benefits under the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program (TAA). Under the program, USDA helps farmers and fishermen adjust to competition from imports.

Benefits under this program include cash payments and various educational benefits that can include occupational training. In prior years, TAA benefits have been provided to producers of Concord grapes and to fishermen of salmon in Washington state.

The petition for benefits must be received by the TAA office by close of business January 31, 2007. The TAA office address is Foreign Agricultural Service, ITP/IPPD, MS-1021, Washington, DC 20250-1021, or facsimile number is (202) 720-0876, or by e-mail to trade.adjustment@fas.usda.gov. Use of fax or email is recommended.

Once a petition has been accepted, a determination will be made to verify that the most recent marketing year price for the commodity produced by the group is less than 80 percent of the average of the national average prices for the 5 marketing years preceding the most recent marketing year and that increases in imports of a like or directly competitive product contributed importantly to the decline in price. If these conditions are met, the Administrator of FAS will certify the group as eligible for trade adjustment assistance.

Once a petition has been certified, eligible producers and qualified fishermen will have 90 days to contact their local Farm Service Agency service center to apply for assistance.

For further information or assistance in completing form Fas-930, contact: Jean-Louis Pajot, Coordinator, Trade Adjustment Assistance for Farmers, FAS, USDA, (202) 720-2916, email: trade.adjustment@fas.usda.gov. Additional program information can be obtained at the TAA website. The URL is <http://www.fas.usda.gov/itp/taa/taaindex.htm>

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