

Trade Notes...

FAS public affairs specialist
Donald Washington is at (202) 720-3101;

Veneman Meets with African Ministers on U.S. Cotton Tour

In July, agriculture and commerce ministers from Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali toured U.S. cotton production, processing, marketing and research facilities. The team traveled to North Carolina, Tennessee and Texas to explore ways in which West Africa's cotton industry can modernize its operations. While on the tour, the West African ministers and their Washington, DC-based ambassadors met with representatives of various industry associations, companies and land grant universities. They received an overview of the entire U.S. cotton industry from research, development and genetics to ginning, grading, marketing and exporting. In Washington, DC, the group met with U.S. cotton industry representatives to discuss investment needs and opportunities, and with U.S. government officials to discuss technical assistance and capacity building programs. The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss the priorities identified at the Science and Technology Ministerial Conference in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso in June. At that conference, participants highlighted Africa's urgent need for technical assistance and training to help develop transparent and predictable regulatory systems that encourage investment and the formation of public-private partnerships. These systems enable higher agricultural productivity, leading to improved food security, more jobs and increased trade and economic growth.

USDA To Promote Exports at Organic Food Show in Germany

FAS invites companies to exhibit organic food products in the USA Pavilion at BioFach 2005 in Nuremberg, Germany, Feb. 24-27, 2005. Held annually, BioFach is the world's leading international organic trade exhibition. In 2004, the show welcomed 1,900 exhibitors and nearly 30,000 trade visitors from 67 countries. Visitors come from a wide spectrum of businesses and include wholesalers, retailers, producers, importers and exporters. The USA Pavilion at BioFach 2005 offers a variety of participation alternatives designed to meet the objectives of all prospective exhibitors—complete booth, work station, pavilion space only, new-to-market showcase and service package.

For more information on exhibiting products in the USA Pavilion at BioFach 2005, or for information on other USDA-supported shows, contact Sharon Cook at: Tel.: (202) 720-3425; E-mail: Sharon.Cook@usda.gov

A Drop in Hungarian Wine Tariffs Opens Market to U.S. Wine Exporters

Wine imports to Hungary are increasing as a result of a dramatic drop in the country's wine import tariffs from 62 to 8 percent. This provides a unique opportunity for U.S. wine exporters to position their products in the rapidly expanding market of this new member of the European Union. Disposable per capita income is growing, and Hungarians are ready to spend extra money on quality wines. U.S. wine exporters interested in the Hungarian market should act now before other producers seize the initiative in this market.