

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Caribbean Basin

Post: Miami ATO

Trade Lead System Gets Its Feet Wet in the Caribbean

Report Categories:

Export Accomplishments - Trade Leads

Market Development Reports

EXPORT PROMOTION PROGRAMS

ATO ACTIVITIES reports

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Report Highlights:

The Caribbean Basin Agricultural Trade Office (CBATO) in Miami recently registered its first success using the FAS Trade Lead System. Although the export sale was minute (a mere 20 lbs. of sweet corn seed worth \$300), it proved that the new system can be an effective export assistance tool, it helped establish a buyer-seller relationship that could lead to greater U.S. exports in the future, and it helped to cement with the buyer and the seller the CBATO's reputation as a valuable service provider.

General Information:

The Caribbean Basin Agricultural Trade Office (CBATO) in Miami recently registered its first success using the FAS Trade Lead System. A private buyer in Trinidad and Tobago contacted the CBATO via e-mail requesting a list of U.S. suppliers for sweet corn seed. The buyer, who owns land in Guyana, was seeking to plant 20 acres with sweet corn. The buyer's plan is to experiment with a small amount of production of a crop in demand in the Caribbean, and then to expand into production of vegetables and root crops for potential sale in nearby Caribbean islands.

We offered the buyer the opportunity of utilizing the trade lead system. After receiving the basic trade lead information from the buyer and processing it accordingly through the system, we were able to provide the buyer with a list of 17 U.S. suppliers from nine different States. One of the U.S. suppliers, Corona Seeds Inc. (590-F Constitution Avenue, Camarillo, CA 93012), contacted the CBATO with specific questions about the buyer's needs and advice on the amount of seed required. This interest and feedback from Corona Seeds Inc. eventually led them to fill the buyer's order. Although the export sale was minute (a mere 20 lbs. of seed worth \$300), it is an important one for the CBATO in more ways than one.

1) First of all, it showed us that the system can and actually does work. Admittedly, we thought that the trade lead process might be a bit slow for our buyers, especially in today's fast-paced world where everyone looks for immediate results. However, the buyer was patient enough to wait for the trade lead system to generate his desired list of suppliers. While some buyers may prefer other options for contacting U.S. suppliers, the trade lead system can be an effective alternative within our export assistance toolbox. It is worth noting that New Media Solutions, Inc. was very helpful in guiding us through the trade lead process and answering all our questions.

2) Despite the small size of the transaction, the trade lead system helped establish a relationship between the two parties that may lead to further and greater sales in the future.

3) The fact that the buyer got what he was looking for through our trade lead system and was very satisfied with our service led us to believe that he would be more inclined to reach out to us for assistance again in the future. In fact, this was actually the case. The buyer recently requested our help in sourcing small-scale vegetable oil extraction and refining equipment from the United States. We put him in touch with our colleagues at the Caribbean Regional Office of the U.S. Commercial Service in Santo Domingo. They quickly offered to assist the buyer with their own trade lead system. That trade lead is currently in progress.