



United States
Department of
Agriculture

February 22, 2008

Marketing and
Regulatory
Programs

Agricultural
Marketing
Service

Washington, DC
20250

NOTICE TO THE TRADE

ANNUAL INDUSTRY CONFERENCE FOR CONTRACTORS AND SUPPLIERS IN USDA'S FRUIT AND VEGETABLE PROGRAMS

The Fruit and Vegetable Programs of the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), invites interested contractors and fruit & vegetable suppliers to participate in our annual industry conference to discuss AMS commodity purchase and distribution programs.

Topics of discussion will include:

Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) Audits
Food Defense and Food Safety
Changes to Contracting Requirements
Fresh Cut Fruit Test Purchase
Commodity Complaints

Changes to USDA Labels
Purchase Schedules
The Farm Bill
WBSCM (New Computer System)
And more...

We highly recommend company representatives attend the conference and be prepared to openly discuss these issues. Your input and open discussion will greatly assist us in making thoughtful, informed decisions. In order to facilitate the discussion, we will have representatives from the Food and Nutrition Service and AMS Inspection Branches in attendance, along with Commodity Procurement Branch personnel.

The date and location of the conference is as follows:

When: Monday, April 21, 2008
Start: 8:00 a.m.
End: 5:00 p.m.

Where: Embassy Suites Hotel, O'Hare - Rosemont
5500 North River Road
Rosemont, IL 60018
Phone: **1-800-Embassy (362-2779)**

The hotel offers a complimentary shuttle from O'Hare International Airport. A block of rooms for the conference has been reserved at the government rate of \$149.00 per night under the event name: *US Department of Agriculture*. Participants must make their own lodging arrangements, with reservations available on a first come - first

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serve basis, prior to March 25. For those in attendance at last year's conference, please be assured that the issues regarding the temperature of the meeting room have been resolved.

The conference will be business casual dress. The hotel also plans to offer a convenient lunch option which we will make available to you in the morning prior to the beginning of the conference.

At this time, we are asking that all participants pre-register for the conference. Please register by returning the attached form, via fax (202-720-2782) or email to Michelle Warren at MichelleE.Warren@usda.gov, by April 11, 2008. Pre-registration assures we have sufficient informational packets and nametags for all in attendance. There is no registration fee.

We strongly suggest and invite you to submit agenda topics, questions and comments in advance so time can be allocated for discussion. Please submit these items, or any other inquiries you may have, to Michelle Warren via email at MichelleE.Warren@usda.gov.

We highly value your participation and hope you will attend this informative event.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Tuckwiller', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dave Tuckwiller, Chief
Commodity Procurement Branch
Fruit and Vegetable Programs

REGISTRATION FORM

Fruit and Vegetable Commodity Procurement Industry Meeting 2008

Company Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Number Attending: _____

Please list attendee names if known:

NAME

EMAIL ADDRESS

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Suggested Topics for Discussion:

Forms may be e-mailed to MichelleE.Warren@usda.gov or faxed to 202-720-2782.