

11-17-23-Taylor-RAPP

SPEAKERS

Alexis Taylor, John Herath

John Herath 00:00

USDA has announced plans to utilize \$1.3 billion from the Commodity Credit Corporation to fund a new export market development program called the Regional Agricultural Promotion Program or RAPP. USDA Under Secretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs. Alexis Taylor, recently spoke to the U.S. Meat Export Federation Strategic Planning Conference and explained why USDA is making the investment.

Alexis Taylor 00:23

We are facing some strong headwinds in the United States. Last year was a record year of food and ag exports, I think \$196 billion. But we are seeing the strength of the U.S. dollar, strong competition, particularly from South America and Brazil come online. And we need to make sure we continue to position ourselves as a leader in many markets around the world. And having resources to fund those activities I think is really important. At the same time, the agriculture Trade Promotion Program, ATP is running out next year. And so we were hearing more and more concern from our stakeholders about how some of their activities in these key markets were going to have to be rolled back in markets like Africa or Southeast Asia, and we wanted to be able to support our industry competing in those markets.

John Herath 01:11

She said USDA continues to see a strong return on funds used for export market development.

Alexis Taylor 01:17

What we have found, and this has been highly studied, is for every \$1 we invest, we see a \$24 return on increased food and ag exports. These dollars are highly leveraged with industry dollars, with an over \$1 to \$1 match. And so we see a lot of benefit for these dollars. We also see the industry investing their own dollars to maximize that footprint. And so from the data we see, these are great programs, they're a great investment of federal dollars of taxpayer dollars, and we take that part quite seriously at USDA as well.

John Herath 01:49

Some details of the RAPP program were published November 17, and are subject to a 30 day comment period. For more please visit USMEF.org For the U.S. Meat Export Federation, I'm John Herath.