

## **2007 BRANDED PROGRAM YEAR LAUNCHES**

*Funding Assistance Helps Illinois Suppliers Market Products Overseas*

Food Export Association of the Midwest USA (Food Export – Midwest) and Illinois announce the launch of the 2007 Branded Program year. Made possible through funds from the USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service, this cost-share service assists small Illinois suppliers promote their brand name food and agricultural products in foreign markets. Once approved, participants receive a 50% cost reimbursement on certain eligible marketing and promotional endeavors such as attending international and some approved domestic tradeshow, advertising, public relations, in-store promos, product demonstrations, product literature, freight cost for samples, package and label modification, and more.

The Branded Program enables Illinois suppliers to stretch their international marketing dollars twice as far and grow their exporting business! Midwest participants collectively receive close to 5 million dollars annually in reimbursements. Food Export – Midwest provides important funding assistance to help grow the demand for U.S. food and agricultural products across the globe.

Questions about Branded Program qualifications, marketing plans, eligible reimbursements, and the application process can be directed to Sarah Potter at the Illinois Dept. of Agriculture at 217.782.2581 or Food Export – Midwest at 312.334.9200. Additional information on the Branded Program and the pre-qualification worksheet are available at [www.brandedprogram.org](http://www.brandedprogram.org). The Branded Program, which runs from January 1 through December 31, increases exporting opportunities for small food and agricultural U.S. suppliers...and 2007 funds are still available.

Food Export Association of the Midwest USA is a private, non-profit association of Midwestern state agricultural promotion agencies that use federal, state, and industry resources to promote the export of Midwestern food and agricultural products.