



## **U.S. Agribusiness Trade and Investment Mission to the North Africa**

**Casablanca/Meknes, Morocco  
April 21 – 25, 2008**

From April 21-25, 2008, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service (USDA/FAS) will conduct an Agribusiness Trade and Investment Mission to the North Africa Region. Participant countries include Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia. The Mission will be held in Casablanca, Morocco.

The main objective of this mission is to promote U.S.–Africa agribusiness cooperation, trade, and investment and to provide U.S. participants with first-hand market information, access to government decision makers, and one-on-one meetings with business contacts to position companies to enter or expand two-way trade and investment in the North African market. The North Africa region mission will focus on the following sectors: dry grocery products, food processing, dairy, seafood, livestock genetics, and production inputs. Twenty American companies have registered to participate in this mission.

In May 2003, President George W. Bush announced his initiative to create a Middle East Free Trade Area by 2013. The initiative is designed to deepen U.S. trade relationships with all countries in the region through steps tailored to each individual country's level of development. The initiative will strengthen bilateral trade ties as a step towards future free trade agreements (FTA) with qualified countries.

In March 2004, the United States and Morocco reached agreement on the first North Africa region FTA designed to reduce and eliminate barriers and facilitate trade and investment in both countries. The Agreement enhances access to the Moroccan market for U.S. agricultural products, while at the same time complementing Morocco's agricultural reform efforts and preserving economic and social stability in the agricultural sector of the Moroccan economy that employs almost half the population.

Two-way agricultural trade between the United States and North Africa has seen significant growth from 2005 to 2007. During this period, U.S. total imports of agricultural products from North Africa increased by 70 percent, with U.S. exports to North Africa increasing by 105 percent. The Trade and Investment Mission is timed to help to bolster and enhance this upward trend.

**Darrell A. Upshaw**  
**USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service**  
**Tel.: 202-690-1786**

**Email:** [Darrell.upshaw@fas.usda.gov](mailto:Darrell.upshaw@fas.usda.gov)