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## **NARA Praises Congress, USDA for Investing in Export Market Development** ***Renderers Awarded \$3.3 Million to Diversify Export Markets***

**ALEXANDRIA, VA, May 21, 2024** - The North American Renderers Association (NARA) is one of 66 U.S. agricultural export organizations to receive funding under the new Regional Agricultural Promotion Program (RAPP) to build demand for American food and farm exports in high-potential markets around the globe. Agricultural Secretary Tom Vilsack [announced](#) that NARA would receive \$3.3 million in RAPP funds out of a total \$300 million in awards made today.

RAPP was launched in October 2023 after Senators Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and John Boozman (R-AR) urged the U.S. Department of Agriculture to allocate funding from the Commodity Credit Corporation to invest in market development activities to boost exports of food, feed, fuel, forestry products and functional ingredients produced in the United States. Secretary Vilsack set aside a total of \$1.2 billion for the five-year RAPP program, with \$300 million distributed today in this first tranche of funding awards.

“NARA has been participating in USDA export promotion programs since the 1950s and has a long track record of increasing exports and market share of U.S. rendered and repurposed products overseas,” NARA President and CEO Kent Swisher continued, “I think the award of \$3.3 million in RAPP funds to NARA shows that USDA has a lot of confidence in our approach to diversifying markets and boosting exports.”

RAPP is unique in its approach to export market development because the eligibility requirements prioritize activities in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, and South/Southeast Asia. NARA’s Senior Vice President of International Programs Dana Johnson Downing said, “Having a diverse mix of markets helps boost the value of our products and offers a hedge against potential market disruptions due to disease outbreaks or other trade irritants. We will use RAPP funding to implement new strategies and innovative programs that we otherwise would not have been able to conduct under the traditional market development programs such as the Market Access Program and Foreign Market Development program.”

NARA believes RAPP is an excellent way to fund longer term market development, capacity building, and sustainability initiatives that create a preference for U.S. origin products. NARA requested funding for activities in pre-commercial, early stage, and strategic markets in the regions receiving special emphasis in the RAPP funding program requirements. Because RAPP excludes activities in China, Canada, the European Union, and Mexico, NARA will reserve its MAP and FMD funds for work in these more mature markets. NARA will soon publish requests for proposals to begin implementing its RAPP activities beginning June 1, 2024.

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### **About the North American Renderers Association**

The North American Renderers Association (NARA) represents the interests of the North American rendering industry to regulatory and other governmental agencies, promotes the greater use of animal byproducts, and fosters the opening and expansion of trade between foreign buyers and North American exporters. In addition to its U.S.-based headquarters, the association maintains offices in Mexico and Hong Kong, and has

market consultants in strategic locations around the world. NARA publishes a bi-monthly trade magazine, *Render*. For more information, visit [www.nara.org](http://www.nara.org).