

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

USDA Food Commodity Contracting Opportunities for Rural America Southeast Regional Small Business Conference Albany State University - Albany, Georgia November 9, 2009

SPONSORED BY: The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization, 202-720-7117, www.da.usda.gov/osdbu

HOSTED BY: Albany State University, Albany, Georgia

WHEN: November 9, 2009 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

WHERE: Albany State University, Albany, Georgia
ACAD Auditorium

PURPOSE: USDA is conducting a series of small business conferences to facilitate rural economic growth and increase small business contracting participation by enhancing the competitive posture of small farmer-owned cooperatives and small rural businesses to compete successfully for government and commercial contracts, both prime and subcontracts.

BACKGROUND: Annually, USDA purchases more than \$5 billion dollars in goods and services essential to meeting the needs of our customers and the various missions of the agency. Approximately 60 percent of these dollars are spent on food commodities.

EXPECTED OUTCOME: Small farmer-owned cooperatives and small rural businesses will:

- become aware of necessary capabilities and certifications to participate in Federal food commodity procurements;
- learn about USDA resources for business development and technical assistance;
- establish relationships with key USDA personnel who purchase food products and who set and establish policy and standards; and
- learn how to and begin to increase and meet demand for their products and services within local food systems, USDA, and other Federal agencies.

REGISTRATION: Registration is free. Attendees are asked to pre-register for the conference. Space is limited, so please email or fax your name, company name, full address, telephone number(s), and email address by November 2.

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You may also contact Justin Wilkes at 202-720-7380

This initiative supports Secretary Tom Vilsack's "Rural Tour – Renewing America's Promise," a program designed to engage in a more robust dialog with folks living in rural America and to help share innovative ideas as we build a foundation for success and prosperity for the new 21st century economy.