

Olympic Opportunities in Europe Through SCGP

By Fred Giles

In 2004, Greece will welcome the world to the Summer Olympic games. And Europe offers Olympic opportunities to U.S. exports as well, thanks in part to the recent expansion of the Supplier Credit Guarantee Program (SCGP) for Western Europe.

For fiscal 2002, \$50 million has been earmarked for credit guarantees to this region, comprised of Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom (U.K.).

To ensure awareness and success of the program, FAS staff conducted outreach activities in the U.K., Sweden, France and Greece. In each location, the team found great enthusiasm for the prospect of assistance in obtaining U.S. agricultural products.



5275

In London, importers expressed an interest in purchasing citrus products and other grocery items.

In Stockholm, American micro-brewery beer seems to be the rage. One beer importer placed his 12-month purchase plan before the team to get pointers on taking advantage of the SCGP. Importers in

Sweden complained that strict credit terms with U.S. suppliers limit their purchasing power and therefore constrain their ability to meet demand for U.S. products.

In Paris, importers are interested in purchasing U.S. grocery items such as nuts, dried peas and beans under the program.

And as Athens gears up to full-throttle preparing for the Olympics, and its number of tourists swells from 12.5 million in 2001 to 25 million in the year of the Games, demand will soar for such U.S. products as nuts, dried beans, cereals and frozen foods such as seafood, potato fries, dough and vegetables.

All in all, the SCGP is proving to be very popular in Europe, and FAS staff anticipate that use will grow for the foreseeable future. ■

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60140