



United States
Department of
Agriculture

August 14, 2008

National
Agricultural
Statistics
Service

TO: Nancy Hirschhorn
Chief
Grant Management Branch
Foreign Agricultural Service

1400 Independence
Avenue, SW
Washington, DC
20250-2000

FROM: Larry Sivers
Director
International Programs Office

SUBJECT: Proposed Emerging Markets Program FY 2009 Funding of NASS
International Statistical Cooperation Projects, MOLDOVA.

GENERAL:

The following proposal requests Emerging Markets Program (EMP) funding for a new one-year project between the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) and the Department for Statistics of the Republic of Moldova. The project objective is to provide assistance to the Department for Statistics of Moldova to develop accurate and timely statistics for Moldova.

BACKGROUND:

During attendance at the International Conference on Agricultural Statistics in October 2007 in Beijing, the Deputy Director General of the Department for Statistics of the Republic of Moldova approached the USDA-NASS delegation regarding technical assistance. Moldova requested NASS assistance in providing consultation and training on how to improve the system and methods of agricultural data in Moldova. The representative from Moldova was very interested in working with NASS, since NASS has experience working in other eastern European countries and other former Soviet republics, and since Moldova is now facing problems in agricultural statistics, similar to other countries in the region.

The project is oriented toward the development of an emerging market-based economy by improving the availability of statistics on agriculture production and economic activity. Such statistics are necessary to allow a market economy to function efficiently and properly.

AGRICULTURE INFORMATION SYSTEM TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING PROJECT IN MOLDOVA.

Proposal Date: August 14, 2008

The project is proposed by:

National Agricultural Statistics Service,
United States Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250

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I. PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION.

Moldova Agricultural Statistics Improvement Project (FY2009): This project would develop and implement an approach to improve the capability of Moldova's government to develop accurate and timely statistics for Moldova agriculture.

II. RATIONALE.

While there has always been a need for reliable data on which to base decisions, this need is much stronger today in Moldova with the profound changes to its economic and political systems. With increased importance of the private household sector, disintegration of large agricultural enterprises and establishment of private farming, the agricultural statistics system of Moldova faces many demands. Government policy makers must rely on efficient information for better decision-making and policy formulation. Accurate, reliable and timely information is needed by both the public and private sector for developing production strategies, allocating resources, and the expansion and growth of markets.

The Department for Statistics of Moldova needs training and consultation to successfully improve methodology for their agricultural and rural surveys.

III. PROJECT PARTICIPANT IDENTIFICATION.

This project would work extensively with the Department for Statistics of Moldova which has responsibility for agricultural statistics in Moldova.

Institutional Capability:

As the statistical agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) has as its mission “to provide timely, accurate and useful statistics in service to U.S. agriculture.” NASS has also been helping to establish and improve agricultural statistics programs in countries around the world for nearly 60 years.

NASS specialists provide technical assistance and training on a reimbursable basis in all aspects of statistical surveys, censuses and data systems. The institutional relationships established between NASS and counterpart organizations, which generally continue long after projects are completed, have been mutually beneficial for understanding and addressing improvement issues.

With a total staff of more than 1300 employees, a large portion of which are professionals experienced in various aspects of census and survey work, NASS can draw from a large and diverse set of skills to support international projects. NASS is the United States’ only source of a large permanent staff experienced in the practical application of the technology and latest operational developments in the field of agricultural statistics.

IV. RESOURCES REQUIRED.

The amount of resources identified in this proposal to assist in improvement of the agricultural statistics systems is for training and technical assistance. This support will be for NASS experts’ travel to Moldova to work with counterparts, with costs reimbursed at US Government travel allowance rates and salary for NASS staff involved at actual daily rate/individual plus 19.9% benefit and 20.9% leave factor rates. This will be done with the equivalent of six TDYs (10 days each) to Moldova by NASS staff.

BUDGET NEEDS:

ITEM	Amount FY 2009 Amount (\$000)
Salaries	54
Travel	31
Total	85

In addition to the resources provided from the U.S. side for technical assistance, significant resources in the way of National staff, regional staff, and local staff, travel expenses, data collection and processing cost will be provided by the Department for Statistics of Moldova.

V. IMPLEMENTATION.

An inventory of the current system of agricultural statistics and a plan of action for improvement would be developed by a team of NASS consultants during travel to the country. A plan to improve the agricultural statistics program would be developed, and specific type of assistance and training would be identified. This work plan would include type of methodology recommended, an estimate of the costs involved, and requirements from the local government in staff and other resources, and an implementation time schedule.

After the initial work is completed and local government concurrence to the plan is given, plans for a program of statistical improvement would be developed and implementation begun. The proposal includes budgeting to carry-out the first year of activities to improve agricultural statistics for Moldova.

In addition to technical assistance to the collaborative institution in the country, training seminars in-country on various aspects of the statistics system would be undertaken.

VI. KEY CONTACTS.

USDA/NASS management of the project will be under the guidance of Larry Sivers, Director, International Programs. In country contact is Oleg Cara, Deputy Director General, Department for Statistics, Republic of Moldova.