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Port Officials Training Program in Washington DC-Activity Evaluation

Report Categories:

CSSF Activity Evaluation

CSSF Activity Report

SP2 - Prevent or Resolve Barriers to Trade that Hinder

U.S. Food and Agricultural Exports

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Report Highlights:

FAS Berlin utilized Country Strategy Support Funds to send one German port official to Washington D.C. to meet with USG regulatory officials to discuss simplification of certificates and try to resolve persistent certification issues. This individual official was part of a larger group of port officials, supported by FAS/USEU, organized with the goal to reduce certification questions, and shipment delays and rejections. Several USG agencies supported the two-day program, meeting with officials, and providing presentations, and exchanging expertise.

Executive Summary:

FAS Berlin utilized Country Strategy Support Funds (CSSF) to send one German port official to Washington to meet with USG regulatory officials to discuss simplification of certificates and try to resolve persistent certification issues. This individual official was part of a larger group of port officials, supported by FAS/USEU, organized with the goal to reduce certification questions, and shipment delays and rejections. FAS/USEU, OASA (PPTRD and IRSD) and FAS Berlin organized the two-day program in Washington D.C. where USG regulatory officials aimed to improve communication, clarify differing perspectives from the EU Border Inspection Post (BIP) officials, and explain concerns regarding divergent implementation of certificate requirements.

The activity focused on common certification errors, replacements and declarations, military shipments and composite products (products that contain multiple dairy and animal ingredients) that often require multiple certificates. FAS, FSIS, AMS, NOAA, and DOC took part in the two-day program by providing presentations as well as exchange views with the participating port officials.

For this activity, FAS Berlin supported Dr. Ute Gramm from Hamburg Port to participate in the two-day program. German port officials have generally been willing to show flexibility, are open to new ideas and have a pragmatic attitude. Dr. Gramm is a strong contact for our office and it is anticipated that our support of his participation in the program will facilitate future communication and trade. Hamburg is Germany's largest port and is nicknamed the country's "Gateway to the World." It is the second biggest port Europe after Rotterdam.

CSSF funds were used for covering travel expenses to the U.S. for the Hamburg Port official and included flight, hotel, M&IE and misc. expenses.

General Information:

CSSF Performance Measures:

1. **Description and purpose of the activity:** FAS Berlin, FAS/USEU, and OASA (PPTRD and IRSD) organized a two-day program to bring port officials to Washington to meet with USG regulatory officials to try to resolve persistent certification issues. The activity focused on common certification errors, replacements and declarations, military shipments and especially on composite products (products that contain multiple dairy and animal ingredients) as the certification for these products has become increasingly problematic. The presentations and the discussions highlighted the organizational aspects of the certifying agencies and of the border inspection controls in the port officials' countries which explain why the implementation of the very rigid EU certification requirements is so problematic.
2. **Expected Results and Desired Outcome:** The long-term goal of these meeting was to bring the number of detained shipments down. The intention was to provide a better understanding of what EU port officials are looking for and to provide a better understanding of the U.S. certification landscape, allowing for a more pragmatic approach as certification requirements are implemented. The presentations from the different EU port officials are attached.
3. **Actual Results and Outcomes:** The U.S. FSIS export library was updated following some clarifications provided by the EU port officials. EU BIP officials made useful contacts through

the discussions with the USG agencies.

4. **Recommendations/Follow-up Evaluations:** The extensive discussions on the difference between composite products and processed animal products made clear that the product composition as well as the treatments applied to the product could lead to the determination in the BIP on which certification was needed. This effectively means that the certification for many processed – often multi-ingredient- products has to be tailored to the specific product and company. This was considered to be an essential piece of information for the on-going discussions between the different regulatory agencies on the certification of composite products. In addition, the conversations with the border inspectors also made clear that a number of questions with respect to composite products and food supplements had to be addressed at the policy level with DG SANTE, rather than in the border inspection post. This way the results of the meeting could not only help to bring the number of detained shipments down but also help define a way forward for the certification of certain composite products (including supplements) that can currently not obtain the necessary EU certification.