



National
Industrial
Hemp Council
of America

In Historic Move NIHC Designated as a Cooperator in the

USDA FAS Market Access Program

Awarded 2024 Market Access Program Funding

WASHINGTON, Jan. 26, 2024—The National Industrial Hemp Council (NIHC) is pleased to announce it has achieved cooperator status in the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) Market Access Program (MAP), Hemp now joins over +75 commodities and specialty crops as a named partner of the program. This puts hemp on par with cotton, wheat, grain and tree fruits to name a few of the participants in the program.

“Since the 2018 Farm Bill re-legalized hemp cultivation in the U.S., the industry has experienced remarkable overall growth globally,” said NIHC President & CEO Patrick Atagi. “We thank the USDA FAS for designating NIHC as a cooperator, which reflects NIHC’s commitment to promoting U.S. hemp and the important economic impact that it contributes to the U.S. economy and agricultural communities around the world.”

The MAP initiative helps create, expand and maintain long-term export markets for U.S. agricultural products. Under the program, FAS partners with U.S. non-profit commodity or trade associations (cooperators) to promote U.S. agricultural products overseas. Preference is given to organizations that represent an entire industry or are nationwide in membership and scope and have the infrastructure to run the program.

NIHC has been awarded over \$200,000 to help further build global recognition of U.S. industrial hemp and downstream products in 2024. This marks the fourth continuous year of funding from the USDA MAP and the first as a full cooperator. As a direct cooperator, NIHC can now optimally use government funding and private sector contributions to promote the sustainable growth of the industry internationally. It also opens the doors for other government funding opportunities.

“Over the years we have seen the tremendous impact both MAP and FMD (Foreign Market Development) have on expanding U.S. exports to markets across the globe,” said FAS Administrator Daniel B. Whitley in the USDA announcement. “For each \$1 invested in export market development, U.S. agricultural exports have increased by more than \$24. These programs provide a significant boost to the U.S. agricultural industry, which in turn helps strengthen the economy not just in rural communities, but across the entire United States.”

Atagi explained that in 2023, NIHC aggressively promoted U.S. industrial hemp at international government-level meetings, global trade shows and media events such as the 2023 Global Asian Hemp Expo.

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NIHC is a global advocate for the sustainable and long-term growth and profitability of industrial hemp. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., NIHC membership includes growers, sellers and laboratories. NIHC conducts advocacy, international development and consumer programs, including the exclusive NIHC Verify program that supports NIHC's mission to promote testing transparency, standards requirements, consumer confidence, and ultimately product safety. NIHC Verify requires products to be tested in a lab that has passed a Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) certification audit. To learn more visit www.NIHCoa.com