



**August 6, 2015**

**Notice to the Trade: 2015 Annual Industry Meeting  
for USDA Foods Contractors and Suppliers**

The Commodity Procurement Staff of the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) invites you, our industry partners, to join us for our 2015 Annual Industry Meeting to discuss commodity purchase programs and USDA Foods.

We look forward to seeing many familiar faces again this year, and we're also excited to be welcoming USDA contractors and suppliers of dairy, grains, oils, and other products formerly purchased by the Farm Service Agency (FSA) to the meeting! With the recent consolidation of domestic USDA food purchasing activities into one Agency, we know this year's event will be particularly valuable for everyone. The collaboration with our suppliers and contractors stemming from these annual meetings has already brought improvements to these purchase programs, and we want to continue to build on that progress.

The meeting will include two half-day official sessions with the first half-day session covering general program topics such as the Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) effort, the consolidation with FSA and overarching contracting issues. The second half-day session will be dedicated to industry break-out groups (i.e. Fruits/Vegetables, Dairy, Grain, Livestock/Poultry, etc.) providing the opportunity to meet with Managers, Contracting Officers, Specialists, and Technical Staff to separately discuss commodity-specific topics and concerns related to each industry. The agenda will include such items as processing, labeling, and inspection.

A special session will occur the morning of Day One. This session will focus on identifying differences between AMS meat and poultry specifications and those used by commercial buyers. More details about this session will be provided in a subsequent Notice to the Trade.

Also, back by popular demand, is the informal networking session held on the morning of Day One, before the general session begins. The session provided a valuable opportunity for USDA staff to meet one-on-one with vendors and for vendors to network among themselves!



United States Department of Agriculture

The dates and location of the meeting are:

When: **Tuesday, October 27<sup>th</sup>**

- Special Session: Harmonizing AMS Meat and Poultry Purchase Specifications with Commercial Best Practices: 8:00 – 11:00 am
- Networking Session: 10:00 am – 1:00 pm
- General Session: 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm

**Wednesday, October 28<sup>th</sup>**

- Break-out Sessions: 8:00 am – 12:00 pm

Where: DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Washington DC-Crystal City  
300 Army Navy Drive, Arlington, Virginia 22202

A block of rooms has been reserved at the rate of \$222 (single) and \$242 (double) per room under the event name: **AMS Annual Industry Meeting – Fall 2015**. Please note, should the per diem rate change for Fiscal Year 2016 (beginning October 1<sup>st</sup>), the prevailing per diem will apply. Participants must make their own lodging arrangements using the link provided below or by calling the DoubleTree Hotel (1-800-222-TREE) using the group code **AMS**, with reservations available on a first come–first served basis. This hotel rate will be available only until **October 6, 2015**, or until the group block is sold out.

[https://resweb.passkey.com/Resweb.do?mode=welcome\\_ei\\_new&eventID=13842874](https://resweb.passkey.com/Resweb.do?mode=welcome_ei_new&eventID=13842874)

Online pre-registration for the meeting is required by **October 16, 2015**. Please use the link below to submit your registration. In the spirit of collaboration, AMS would like our industry partners, contractors, and suppliers to assist in developing the agenda for this event. We encourage you to submit questions, comments, and suggestions via the registration link or to [CPDConference@ams.usda.gov](mailto:CPDConference@ams.usda.gov) at any time leading up to the event.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2015-annual-industry-meeting-for-usda-foods-contractors-and-suppliers-registration-17833710107>

We highly value your participation and look forward to seeing you at the meeting!

David Tuckwiller  
Director  
Commodity Procurement Staff

*Together We're Making a Difference: American Agriculture for the American People.*

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