



NEWS RELEASE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE • FARM SERVICE AGENCY

USDA
Farm Service Agency

3001 Coolidge Rd, Suite 350
East Lansing, Mi. 48823

Contact: Kelly Losey
Phone: 517-324-5108

Training Program Aims to Keep Asparagus Growers Competitive

(EAST LANSING, MI), August 30, 2010 -- Christine White, State Executive Director for Michigan's Farm Service Agency is reminding asparagus growers that they can tap into federal resources designed to help them remain competitive globally. The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) for Farmers Program provides free technical training and cash benefits to producers of agricultural commodities who have been adversely affected by import competition. Applications must be received at local Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices by September 23, 2010.

"The goal of TAA for Farmers is at the end of the day to make sure producers are in a better position to compete," said White. "The training program will be tailored to the issues facing individual asparagus producers."

Participants must attend at least 12 hours of training and complete a brief business plan to be eligible to receive up to a \$4,000 cash payment to help implement changes to their business. Individual business planning consultants will be provided to participants to help them develop a complete business plan.

To qualify, the producers must have produced asparagus during 2009 and at least one of the three marketing years preceding 2009. Asparagus producers interested in applying for technical training and cash benefits must complete and submit a written application (form FSA-229-1) to their local FSA office.

Producers are encouraged to visit their local FSA county office before the deadline date. More information on about the TAA for Farmers Program can be found on the Foreign Agricultural Service Web site at www.fas.usda.gov/itp/taa.