

United States Department of Agriculture
Foreign Agricultural Service
Fiscal Year 2011

COCHRAN FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

OVERVIEW

Since 1984, the U.S. Congress has made funds available to the Cochran Fellowship Program for training agriculturalists from middle-income countries and emerging market countries. Training opportunities are for senior and mid-level specialists and administrators working in agricultural trade and policy, agribusiness development, management, animal, plant, and food sciences, extension services, agricultural marketing, and many other areas. Individuals selected for Cochran trainings come from both the public and private sectors. All training occurs in the United States. Training programs are designed and organized in conjunction with U.S. universities, USDA and other government agencies, agribusinesses, and consultants. The Cochran Fellowship Program is part of the United States Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service, Office of Capacity Building and Development, Trade and Scientific Exchanges Division (USDA/FAS/OCBD/TSE). Since its start in 1984, the Cochran Fellowship Program has provided U.S.-based training for over 14,300 international participants from 123 countries worldwide.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Program objectives are to provide high-quality training resulting in knowledge and skills that will:

- (1) Assist eligible countries to develop agricultural systems necessary to meet the food and fiber needs of their domestic populations; and
- (2) Strengthen and enhance trade linkages between eligible countries and agricultural interests in the United States.

CRITERIA FOR COUNTRY ELIGIBILITY

Countries that meet the following requirements are eligible to participate in the program:

- A. The country's principal agricultural exports do not compete significantly with U.S. agricultural commodities and products in international trade.
- B. A middle-income country that has developed economically to a point where it no longer qualifies for bilateral foreign assistance from the United States because its per capita income level exceeds the eligibility requirement of such assistance programs.
- C. A middle-income country that has never qualified for bilateral foreign aid assistance from the United States, but with respect to which an ongoing relationship with the United States, including technical assistance and training, would provide mutual benefits to such country and the United States.
- D. A country that has recently begun the transformation of its system of government from a non-representative type to a representative democracy and that is encouraging democratic institution building and cultural values.
- E. Any country that (1) is taking steps toward a market-oriented economy through the food, agriculture, or rural business sectors of the economy of the country; and (2) has the potential to provide a viable and significant market for United States commodities or products of United States agricultural commodities.
- F. The country has economic ties with the United States.

COUNTRIES ACTIVELY PARTICIPATING IN 2011

Africa & Middle East: *Afghanistan, Algeria, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda.*

Asia: *China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam.*

Eastern Europe & Eurasia: *Albania, Armenia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan*

Latin America & Caribbean: *Argentina, Brazil, Caribbean Islands, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Venezuela*

[Other countries participating in regional programs in 2011 include: *Angola, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Liberia, Mali, Mauritius, Rwanda, Swaziland, Yemen, Syria, Zambia*]

TRAINING FOCUS

The Cochran Fellowship Program (CFP) offers short-term training opportunities, most ranging from 2 to 3 weeks in length, depending on the objectives of the program. During training programs participants meet with professionals in their fields, participate in field observations and industry visits, experience on-the-job training, attend university courses and seminars, attend agricultural expos or conventions, or participate in a combination of the above. No training, however, will be approved which directly enhances a country's ability to export goods in competition with the United States. CFP works closely with the Foreign Agricultural Service's overseas offices, U.S. agricultural trade and market development associations, and U.S. embassies to identify potential areas of training for countries participating in the Cochran Fellowship Program. Every effort is made to match U.S. agricultural interests with those of the recipient countries.

PROGRAM DESIGN

Each training program reflects a philosophy that training should provide participants with sound technical knowledge and the opportunity to test and practice new skills and knowledge in practical situations. Therefore, most programs offer a mixture of technical instruction, practical field observations, and "hands-on" experience. Programs are specially designed in accordance with the training objectives discussed during interviews with candidates and the recommendations of the respective USDA/FAS Foreign Agricultural Affairs Officer.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

The Cochran Fellowship Program is open to the staff of agribusinesses, government departments, universities, and other agricultural organizations. In their own countries, applicants may be managers, technicians, scientists, specialists, professors, administrators, and/or policy makers.

All participants must be in good physical and mental health, and the Cochran Fellowship Program requires a thorough physical exam by a licensed doctor prior to traveling to the United States. Participants proficient in the oral and written usage of the English language are preferred.

SELECTION PROCEDURE

- 1) Program Announcement -- After receiving a program announcement e-mail from USDA/FAS/OCBD/TSED, the FAS Foreign Agricultural Affairs Officer in active Cochran countries will notify the appropriate parties in order to solicit nominations.
- 2) Applications -- Applications, complete and in English (preferably typed), should be submitted to the FAS Officer who will conduct an initial screening of applications to determine the appropriateness of the proposed study programs and the fulfillment of program requirements. The application must include a detailed description of the training request.
- 3) Interviews -- A final pool of applicants will be selected as candidates for the 2011 program by the FAS Officer (or designated U.S. government official in countries with no FAS presence) and will be interviewed during country visits or by telephone by Cochran Fellowship Program staff.
- 4) Committee Selection -- Final approval of candidates will be made by a USDA committee, chaired by the

Cochran Fellowship Program Director, on the basis of the candidates' qualifications, FAS Officer recommendations, interviews, and country-specific training needs.

- 5) Award Announcement -- The Program Director of the Cochran Fellowship Program will notify the FAS Officer of the award recipients by e-mail or by cable. The FAS Officer will notify individual recipients.

TRAINING SCHEDULE

Training will take place as soon as the appropriate training program can be arranged. The Cochran Fellowship Program Officer selects training sites on the basis of (1) seasonal variances and growing seasons; (2) trainer availability; and (3) schedules at training sites.

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

The Cochran Fellowship Program does not fund international travel to and from the participating country, except in the following countries: Afghanistan, Armenia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Haiti, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

EVALUATION

Program participants submit written evaluations at the end of each training. These evaluations are used to measure training impact and to provide feedback on the quality of training programs.

FOLLOW-UP

Each year, the Cochran Fellowship Program objectives are successfully met as a result of sustained contact and correspondence between hosts and participants after the training program is completed. The Cochran Fellowship Program strongly encourages this type of relationship in order to extend the training benefits to all involved.

ONLINE COCHRAN COMMUNITY

An online community and forum for Cochran alumni is currently available at the following website: <<https://alumni.state.gov>>. Cochran Fellows (and training providers) can sign up and become members of the USDA Exchanges Community and network with other Cochran Fellows from around the world. The website also provides valuable information on current training programs available worldwide and provides a calendar of upcoming events and activities in every region of the globe. Other tools available include grant opportunity listings, free academic journals, a global newspaper database, and live online discussions. Most importantly, the community allows Cochran Fellows to share their photos and stories with other Cochran Fellows as well as participants from other U.S. exchange programs.

PHOTOS AND STORIES

As part of our ongoing goal to document the results of successful Cochran trainings, we are asking Cochran alumni and training providers to send in pictures and personal stories from their training programs to Cochran Fellowship staff. Pictures and personal stories can be sent to the Cochran Program Training Assistant Jessica Harkness at Jessica.Harkness@fas.usda.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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