



International Travel Guidelines and Requirements

Preparation for Travel

Travel expenses will be covered as long as they are related to marketing activities approved by the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS). Travel is funded by the USDA FAS Foreign Market Development (FMD), Market Access Programs (MAP), and Regional Agricultural Promotion Program (RAPP). There are specific requirements for reimbursement under these programs.

Travel Request – To request a spot for an event, you must complete an International Event Request Form in [the SFPA member portal](#) at least 45 days in advance of the first authorized travel day of a selected event.

Travel Guidance – Once a Request Form is submitted, staff will confirm receipt via email and send the International Guidelines and Requirements, Conduct Guide, and Post-Trip Reporting requirements. Travelers are expected to review these guidelines prior to their mission and contact staff with any questions.

One Traveler Limit – Due to high demand, event attendance is limited to only one representative per company. A second company rep may be wait-listed and be approved later if circumstances permit. No more than two representatives per company are allowed by FAS rules.

Book Air Travel Early – Once your Request Form is submitted and your participation is confirmed, you may book your airline reservations. Air travel must be booked at least 45 days before the mission to secure your spot. Booking early often results in lower fares, maximizing travel resources. Failure to book within this time frame will result in your registration being forfeited and offered to a wait-listed traveler.

NEW: Air Travel Documents – You **must** purchase your airline ticket through Travel & Cruise Desk.

Please call Jennifer Montoya at 503-754-2907 (direct), 503-636-5684 (office), or email jennifer@travelcruisedesk.com, who is familiar with the FAS travel requirement guidelines. Once your flight is booked, Jennifer will provide SFPA the required documentation. Even if you plan to go off-mission, you must book your flight through Travel & Cruise Desk to ensure proper comparisons are provided for reimbursement.

IMPORTANT: E-tickets purchased from online discount websites (e.g. Orbitz, Expedia, Travelocity, etc.) are **not allowed and non-reimbursable**.

Cancellation – Notify SFPA immediately if your travel plans are canceled or changed. Staff are required to submit an official travel notification to the USDA FAS office in the destination country before each event,

including an accurate manifest of mission personnel and travel dates. Travelers are responsible for promptly notifying and confirming any changes to their participation in the event. If you are still receiving emails about the event, it means SFPA has not been informed of your cancellation.

Lodging – Always book directly through the hotel website or through SFPA staff. Do not book with third-party hotel discounters or purchase agency travel packages (e.g. Orbitz, Expedia, Travelocity, American Express Travel Service, etc.). Because these services may not always provide the detailed hotel folio required by USDA FAS regulations for reimbursement (see Hotel Folio definition below), the entire lodging cost will not be reimbursed.

Hotels must be below federal per diem rates unless prior approval is obtained from SFPA. It is the traveler's responsibility to verify the per diem rates. [Check lodging per diem rates.](#)

No Meal Receipts – Meals are covered under a daily per diem rate set for each event city, so you do not need to submit receipts. [Check meal per diem rates.](#)

Other Information:

Use Approved Air Carriers – U.S. flag air carriers must be used when traveling between the U.S. and a foreign country or when available outside the U.S. Code share flights must be purchased through the U.S. carrier and show the U.S. carrier flight number. This requirement is not influenced by factors of cost, convenience, or personal travel preference.

Check Visa Requirements – Countries such as China, India, and others require a visa for U.S. travelers. Visa issuance may take considerable time, so check the destination country for visa requirements well in advance of travel. [Find visa services.](#)

Documents Required for Reimbursement

No later than 30 days following participation in a trade show, sales mission, or trade mission, the traveler must provide SFPA with the following:

1. **Air Travel** – Since a copy of your airline ticket is required before you travel, we will already have this information on file from the travel agent. However, if you modified your itinerary or flights, you must let us know when it occurs. Change fees are not reimbursable. If your original itinerary has been altered (cancelled flights, delays and rebookings), it is the traveler's responsibility to provide supportive documentation of the new itinerary to SFPA.
2. **Hotel Folio** – The hotel folio breaks down each day's expenses accrued at the hotel. A credit card statement or hotel reservation is not acceptable. Most hotels issue a folio at checkout, but if not provided, it is the traveler's responsibility to request one at departure. The actual hotel room charge will be reimbursed, up to the per diem amount. [Check lodging per diem rates.](#)

3. **Ground Transportation** – This includes mission-related taxis, shuttles, trains, subways, and the like. Location of origin and final destination must be written on each receipt. Rental vehicles are not reimbursable.
4. **Cell phone charges** – Up to \$15 per day is reimbursable.
5. **Miscellaneous** – Document personal vehicle mileage to/from home airport with a Google maps printout. Submit the original airport parking receipt.
6. **Post-Trip Reports** – After each event, each traveler will be provided a travel template and the Event Evaluation and Matching Funds forms that must be completed and returned to finalize the reimbursement paperwork. ALL expenses and post-trip reporting must be received no later than 30 days following the eligible travel dates. Reports received after 60 days are not guaranteed to be reimbursed.
7. All expenses are subject to an after-the-fact audit by FAS compliance auditors. Please retain all original receipts for 7 years (unless originals are mailed to SFPA), in the event an FAS auditor requests them. Expenses may be disallowed after the fact if they do not adhere to guidelines and regulations. Any traveler whose expenses are disallowed by the FAS audit will be liable for the amount that is not allowed.

Contact us with any questions:

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[FAS Non-Discrimination Policy](#) [FAS Accessibility Statement](#)