

**MAP and FMD Funding**

**The Issue**

The American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) receives support from both the Market Access Program (MAP) and Foreign Market Development (FMD) program, using the funds to provide vital services to the hardwood industry. MAP forms a partnership between non-profit U.S. agricultural trade associations, farmer cooperatives, non-profit state-regional trade groups, small businesses, and USDA to share the costs of overseas marketing and promotional activities such as consumer promotions, market research, trade shows, and trade servicing. The FMD program helps create, expand and maintain long-term export markets for U.S. agricultural products. AHEC is the leading international trade association for the American hardwood industry, representing companies and trade associations engaged in exporting the full range of U.S. hardwood products, including lumber, veneer, plywood, flooring, moulding, and dimension materials. AHEC provides the global hardwood industry – importers, specifiers and end-users – with promotional assistance, technical information and sources of supply for American hardwoods.

Losing full funding will seriously compromise critical day-to-day export market development and promotion activities, thereby putting American farmers and workers at a substantial competitive disadvantage in the international marketplace. To continue to be competitive internationally, American agriculture, including the hardwood sector, needs these programs to be at full strength.

Exports are a vital part of the U.S. economic engine, and agricultural exports continue to be its strongest component. Since its creation in 1985, MAP has proven to be highly successful in helping boost U.S. agricultural exports, protecting and creating American jobs, and increasing farm income. Over this period, U.S. agricultural exports have increased by over 400 percent, and today over 1.1 million Americans have jobs that depend on these exports. According to USDA, each $1 billion in agricultural exports supports approximately 8,400 U.S. jobs. Thousands of small to medium size enterprises throughout the country, including family farms, depend on MAP for export markets.

**Background**

Both the Senate and House Appropriations Committees have approved FY 17 Agriculture Appropriations bills that include full funding of $200 million for (MAP) and $34.5 million for the Foreign Market Development Program (FMD), as authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill.  Further consideration in the House and Senate is expected this fall, either as part of the appropriations process or as part of a year-end omnibus spending package.

**Hardwood Federation Position**

The Hardwood Federation strongly supports full funding for MAP and FMD as authorized in the 2014 Farm Bill. These programs provide essential resources to support development of foreign markets for U.S. hardwood and hardwood products. We oppose any efforts to reduce funding for these critical programs.