



White House Rural Council

Made in Rural America Regional Forum

August 8th, 2014

Cornell College in Mount Vernon, IA

On behalf of the White House Rural Council's Made in Rural America export and investment initiative, we are pleased to invite you to participate in a regional forum on expanding international market opportunities. This forum will help rural firms understand ways to grow their business by finding new customers overseas or selling more to their existing international customers. Hosted by the National Association of Counties, USDA Rural Development and the Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance, the half day forum will take place starting at 1:30pm on August 8th at Cornell College in Mount Vernon, Iowa. A detailed agenda will follow.

The regional forum in Mount Vernon is the third of five across the country that highlight federal, state, and local resources to help rural businesses and community leaders take advantage of export opportunities and access new customers and markets abroad. More information on the Made in Rural America initiative is available on the [White House website](#).

The forum will highlight the role exports can play in helping rural businesses access new markets and opportunities while adding jobs in rural communities to ensure long-term sustainable growth. Attendees will hear from experienced local exporters and from local, state, and federal organizations about resources and opportunities to help rural companies meet their export objectives. U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman and Doug McKalip, Senior Policy Advisor for Rural Affairs for the White House Domestic Policy Council are invited to speak.

We hope you will be able to join us at the Made in Rural America forum. The event is free but registration is required. Please complete the [online registration form](#) to register for the forum or visit <http://www.cedarrapids.org/events/event-detail.aspx?eventid=2645> for more information. If you have any questions, please contact Darin Leach or Heather Honkomp at 515-284-4663. We look forward to seeing you.

Sincerely,

Rural Affairs Team

White House Domestic Policy Council

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Agenda

12:30pm **Registration**

1:30pm **Welcome and Introduction**

- **Hon. Linda Langston**, Supervisor, Linn County, Iowa, and Immediate Past President, National Association of Counties
- **Dennis Jordan**, Vice President of Economic Development, Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance
- **Doug Elliott**, Executive Director, East Central Iowa Council of Governments

1:45pm **Positioning Rural America for Success in the 21st Century**

- **Hon. Michael Froman**, U.S. Trade Representative

2:30pm **Breaking Down Barriers: A Toolbox for Export Success**

Hear from a panel of federal, state, and regional export service providers as they discuss various resources and technical assistance available for rural businesses.

Moderator: Hon. Linda Langston, Supervisor, Linn County, Iowa, and Immediate Past President, National Association of Counties

- **Patricia Cook**, Director of US Commercial Service, International Trade Administration, US Department of Commerce
- **Jan Blaho**, Regional Director, Export-Import Bank of the United States
- **Joe Folsom**, District Director, US Small Business Administration
- **Kathy Hill**, Manager, International Trade Office, Iowa Economic Development Authority
- **Dennis Jordan**, Vice President of Economic Development, Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance
- **John Belmont**, Communications Manager, Food Export Association (Midwest)

3:30pm **Networking Break**

3:45pm

Exporting in Action: Showcasing Rural Exports

Discover the numerous resources available for current and potential exporting opportunities as this panel of local business leaders' showcases successful relationships with key federal, state, regional, and local resources.

4:30pm

Made in Rural America: Opening a Powerful New World of Opportunity

- **Doug McKalip**, Senior Policy Advisor for Rural Affairs, White House Domestic Policy Council

5:00pm

Moving Forward Together, Closing Remarks

- **Hon. Linda Langston**, Supervisor, Linn County, Iowa, and Immediate Past President, National Association of Counties

5:15pm

Networking Reception