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## U.S. TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**MEDIA INQUIRIES:**

Donna Thiessen  
(703) 875-4357

### **USTDA AWARDS GRANT FOR AIR CARGO FACILITY AT TOCUMEN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IN PANAMA**

PANAMA CITY, PANAMA (September 16, 2009) – USTDA awarded a grant to Gulf Coast International Cargo Panama, S.A., a private cargo and distribution firm, to increase Panama’s trade capacity and strengthen its food security distribution system. The grant reflects USTDA’s strategy of focusing on projects in Panama that will create export opportunities for U.S. goods and services by funding a feasibility study on the construction of an air cargo facility with cold storage capability at Tocumen International Airport.

USTDA Acting Director Leocadia I. Zak and Gulf Coast Panama President Alfredo Mejía-Aoun signed an agreement to confer the \$258,000 grant award.

“Trade is an essential catalyst for growth,” said USTDA Acting Director Leocadia I. Zak. “USTDA is pleased to be a partner in this effort to develop the necessary air cargo facilities for perishable and non-perishable products that need to be shipped on an expedited basis.”

At present, few air cargo facilities in Latin America and the Caribbean have cold storage capacity, which hampers the region’s ability to develop international markets for its perishable products and contributes to the region’s food insecurity. To help address this need, Gulf Coast Panama proposed the construction of a 2,330 square meter air cargo facility at Tocumen International Airport that would include refrigerated storage area for perishable goods.

The USTDA grant will support this effort by funding an assessment of the proposed facility. The study will provide Gulf Coast Panama with a market analysis, an assessment of facility requirements, a financial plan, and both developmental and environmental impact analyses, all of which are needed in order to move to project implementation.

The opportunity to provide the USTDA-funded assistance to Gulf Coast Panama will be competed on the Federal Business Opportunities (FBO) website at [www.fbo.gov](http://www.fbo.gov). A link to the FBO posting will be posted on USTDA's website at [www.ustda.gov](http://www.ustda.gov). Interested U.S. firms should submit proposals according to the instructions in the FBO announcement. Gulf Coast Panama will select the U.S. contractor that will carry out the assistance.

(MORE)

The U.S. Trade and Development Agency advances economic development and U.S. commercial interests in developing and middle-income countries. The agency funds various forms of technical assistance, feasibility studies, training, orientation visits and business workshops that support the development of a modern infrastructure and a fair and open trading environment. USTDA's strategic use of foreign assistance funds to support sound investment policy and decision-making in host countries creates an enabling environment for trade, investment and sustainable economic development. In carrying out its mission, USTDA gives emphasis to economic sectors that may benefit from U.S. exports of goods and services.

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