



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

JUL 24 2012

The Honorable Jeff Sessions
Ranking Member
Committee on the Budget
United States Senate
624 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-6100

Dear Senator Sessions:

Thank you for your letter of July 18, 2012, requesting information on the partnership established in 2004 between the Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Mexican Embassy and its consulates in the United States to raise awareness of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program among those eligible for its benefits.

Under this agreement, USDA personnel meet periodically with embassy officials to discuss a variety of issues important for nutrition assistance and education. The embassy and consulates may use information made available online by USDA to the public.

Your request requires a review of records dating back over 8 years. Some of the requested information is not readily available, but we are in the process of compiling the most comprehensive response possible. We will provide this information as soon as we are able. In the meantime, enclosed are two of the items you requested:

- 1) A copy of the Partnership for Nutrition Assistance signed by Secretary Veneman and Minister Derbez Bautista on July 22, 2004.
- 2) The standard informational packet of outreach materials regarding nutrition assistance programs shared with Mexican consulates. The information in this packet was not developed specifically for the consulates, but includes brochures and materials that are readily available to any organization interested in reaching out to eligible low-income people.

Given the significant economic dislocation of recent years, SNAP remains a critical tool to help many families put food on the table until they get back on their feet. SNAP and the other nutrition assistance programs have never been more urgently needed than they are now. We are committed to making nutrition benefits available to all those who need them and are legally eligible to receive them.

The Honorable Jeff Sessions

Page 2

The remainder of the information you requested will be provided as soon as possible. In the meantime, please feel free to contact Brian Baenig, Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations, at (202) 720-7095, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom J. Vilsack". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "T".

Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary

Enclosures