United States Department of Agriculture

Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration

Stop 3614
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250-3601

March 29, 2012

Notice ODA-2012-3

TO: FGIS Headquarters and NGC Employees

FROM: Randall D. Jones
Deputy Administrator

SUBJECT: Mentoring Program

1. PURPOSE

FGIS is committed to being an employer of choice and develop the business acumen of its workforce as an essential part of providing quality services that facilitate the marketing of U.S. grain and grain related products. FGIS has identified the need to implement a mentoring program in order to support knowledge transfer throughout its workforce. A mentoring program will offer all employees access to an informal learning channel that will assist them with their individual developmental needs.

2. BACKGROUND

Mentoring is a professional relationship in which an experienced person (the mentor) assists another (the mentee) by sharing knowledge both formally and informally to develop specific skills and knowledge that may strengthen the less experienced person's professional and career development. Employees who have been involved with mentoring programs as part of a formal development program, such as the Leadership Development Program, have consistently reported that mentoring was one of the best aspects of their programs. Consequently, FGIS is expanding access to mentoring to all interested employees.

3. PROGRAM DETAILS

Prospective mentors must have at least three years of service and a fully successful rating. There is no minimum length of service for prospective mentees, but they must obtain approval from their supervisor to participate. Mentors will be from outside the mentee's chain of command. The number of mentor/mentee pairings will depend on the number, availability and location of prospective mentors. The mentoring program will use electronic communication for dialogue between mentors and mentees, so no travel is anticipated for the program. Both prospective mentors and mentees will provide a brief summary of their experience and interest in mentoring.

Mentor/mentee pairings will be based on a review of these summaries by a panel that will include a representative from FGIS's training staff; the Civil Rights Office; management, and the union. Both mentors and mentees will receive training.

4. CONTACT

FGIS will be issuing detailed program guidance on program requirements, training, and application procedures. If, after reviewing this material, you have further questions please contact: Caroline Thorpe, FGIS Training Officer at 202-690-2332 or e-mail, caroline.c.thorpe@usda.gov and/or Mary Coffey Alonzo, Director, Technology and Science Division, at (816) 891-0463 or e-mail, mary.c.alonzo@usda.gov.