



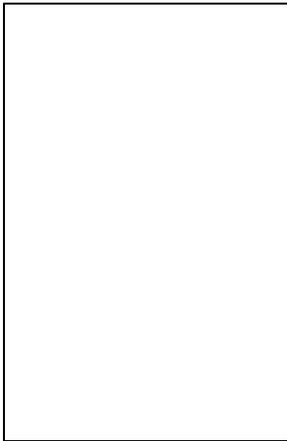
# GIPSA News

*A newsletter for the employees of the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration*

*February 2001*

## Transition

*Dave Shipman*



*Dave Shipman*

GIPSA said farewell in January to Jim Baker, a dedicated leader of the Agency, who during his 6-year tenure, worked to make GIPSA a better, more effective agency. We wish Jim and his family well and will long remember him as a leader, friend, supporter, and advocate of American agriculture.

I had the opportunity to meet with the new Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman and her current transition team on January 23 as the Acting Administrator of GIPSA. She asked for the support of all USDA manag-

ers and employees to ensure that the American public continues to receive the highest quality of service from USDA during the transition. She also asked for our patience as she assembles her management team over the next few months.

The transition will undoubtedly bring change to USDA, and will most certainly bring a new administrator to GIPSA. I will make every effort to keep you posted on the changes as they occur. Based on past experiences, the appointment of a new administrator may not occur for several months.

In the interim, I ask for your support to ensure we continue to carry out the mission of GIPSA in an effective and efficient manner. The markets we serve will continue to look to us for the services and programs they rely on to ensure integrity and fairness in the marketplace. And, whatever changes the transition brings, we'll be here, working for American agriculture.

## GIPSA Verifies StarLink Test Kit Performance

GIPSA performed evaluations of two rapid test kits used to determine StarLink corn -- the Envirologix Inc. QuickStix kit and Strategic Diagnostics Inc. Trait Bt9 kit. GIPSA concluded that the performance of both kits meets the manufacturer's claims of identification of 1 StarLink corn kernel in 800 corn kernels.

GIPSA's verification of tests is performed on grain only as opposed to processed foods.

GIPSA began offering official testing service for StarLink on November 15, 2000, after the grain markets expressed the need for government backed testing and to ensure that corn export markets to Japan were supplied with corn free of StarLink. StarLink is a variety of corn developed by Aventis Crop Science that incorporates biotechnical modification to control insect damage. StarLink is approved for animal feed and industrial use only and is no longer available as seed for production.

GIPSA's evaluation of rapid test kits helps grain markets make more informed decisions about the grain being bought and sold.

# Names in the News

## PERSONNEL

GIPSA bid farewell last month to administrator **Jim Baker** and confidential assistants **Martin Rookard** and **Chris Kenngott**. We thank them for their service and wish them well in the future.

## CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to **Evelyn Payne Thomas**, Technical Services Division, who was married to **Jim Thomas** on January 15, 2001, in Las Vegas!

**Margaret Cummings**, Des Moines, and her husband **Jeff** welcomed new daughter **Ruth Marie Cummings** on January 12, 2001.

**Angela Marine**, New Orleans, welcomed daughter **Adonyah** on October 28, 2000. **Angela** wishes to

thank all who donated leave to her while she was out on maternity leave.

## AWARDS

**Cary Brown**, Field Management Division, Chicago, IL, earned a travel gainsharing award for saving GIPSA money while on official travel.

**Tess Butler**, Washington, DC, received an extra effort award for outstanding support of the Administrator and Deputy Administrator in coordinating all activities affiliated with GIPSA's Grain Inspection Advisory Committee.

**Amos Dienne** and **Karen Johnson**, auditors, Atlanta, and **Cindy Bertoli**, resident agent, Syracuse, NY, received time off awards for their outstanding job in assisting in the MB Consultant investigation that avoided a poultry trust and obtained payment compliance.

**Donna Hillard**, program clerk, Toledo, received a performance award for her outstanding performance contributing to the increased effectiveness and efficiency of the Toledo Field Office and GIPSA.

**Deirdre Holder**, regulatory analyst, Washington, DC, received a spot award for her continued persistence and dedication in expediting the promulgation of the series of regulations intended to improve competition in the market place.

**Donald Kendall**, **Eurvin Williams**, **David Funk**, and **Wilmer Brandt**, Technical Services Division, received extra effort awards for highly effective and sustained leadership, cooperation, planning, and commitment contributing to successful renovation of TSD laboratories and the

implementation of the GIPSA biotechnology reference laboratory.

**Vicki Kottke**, office support assistant, Moscow, received an extra effort award for performing duties outside recognized OSA responsibilities to increase the efficiency of the Moscow Field Office and provide service to our customers.

**Rosemary Mayne**, Washington, DC, received a performance award for outstanding performance and continued excellent support of the Office of the Deputy Administrator, FGIS.

**Donna Melton**, program analyst, Washington, DC, received a spot award for providing outstanding customer service above and beyond the call of duty during the relocation of the Packers and Stockyards Headquarters Staff.

**Robert Merritt**, resident agent, Mankato, MN, and **Jerry Garner**, resident agent, Columbus, OH, received spot awards for sustained dedication, effort, and professional attitude in handling complaints and conducting investigations, and for sharing their experiences with other employees.

**Shane Minden**, agricultural commodity technician, Moscow, received an extra effort award for performing duties outside recognized ACT responsibilities to increase the efficiency of the Moscow Field Office and volunteering for details to help out APHIS and AMS, resulting in savings to the Agency.

**Joe Moore**, marketing specialist, Atlanta, received a time off award for his assistance with several financial issues during the financial supervisor's absence.

*Continued, see Names on page 3.*

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**Names**, from page 2.

**Robbie Obiekwe**, auditor, Atlanta, received a time off award for his superior performance when handling multiple difficult projects as acting financial unit supervisor.

**Robert Petersen**, agricultural commodity grader, Moscow, received an extra effort award for outstanding contributions in carrying out protein coordinator, equipment specialist, and ADP functions and performing duties outside recognized ACG responsibilities to increase the efficiency of the Moscow Field Office and FGIS.

**Marianne Plaus**, Washington, DC, received a performance award for outstanding performance and continued excellent support of the Office of the Deputy Administrator, FGIS.

**Larry Poss**, resident agent, Lancaster, PA, received a time off award for exceeding the normal job requirements to assist the agency in completing difficult investigations while assisting another resident agent who was recovering from surgery.

**George Pulwicz**, auditor, Des Moines, received a spot award for his contributions of sustained dedication, commitment, and leadership in training new Financial Unit employees in the conduct of investigations and the preparation of investigation reports.

**Lynette Scalise**, agricultural commodity technician, Moscow, received an extra effort award for outstanding contributions to the field office through conscientious efforts to improve the safety program and performing duties outside recognize ACT responsibilities to increase the efficiency of the Moscow Field Office.

**John Shropshire**, Field Office Manager, New Orleans, received a performance award for exceptional leadership in managing the New Or-

leans Field Office, thus contributing greatly to the increased effectiveness and efficiency of GIPSA's mission and the New Orleans Field Office.

**Melba Twitty**, auditor, Atlanta, received a time off award in recognition of the informal compliance obtained in the Little Joe Meats Bond Claim that avoided embarrassment to the Agency.

**James Whalen**, agricultural commodity grader, Kansas City, MO, received a performance award for outstanding performance of duties, thus contributing to the increased ef-

fectiveness and efficiency of GIPSA's mission and the Kansas City Field Office.

**25-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS**

Alan Houchin, Lexington, KY  
Kim Jorae, Madison, WI

**20-YEAR SERVICE AWARD**

Steve Warrilow, Birmingham, AL

Letter received by Amy Van Skiver, manager, Atlanta Regional Office.

...By raising \$3 million, this year's Combined Federal Campaign has shown each of us, and the Atlanta community at large, that federal employees have truly found 2000 Ways to Share! Congratulations on exceeding your agency's goal!

The exemplary efforts exhibited by Ms. **Krimy Almodovar** in the organization and delivery of the Campaign to the employees of the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration is to be openly recognized and commended. **Ms. Almodovar's** desire to help others, her commitment to achieving higher goals, and the personal feelings that supported her efforts and will inspire others to follow the marked path of leadership, are to be lauded.

[A]ll who will benefit from **Ms. Aldmodovar's** enthusiasm thank you for your support of the CFC.

Sincerely,

Crayton Lankford  
Deputy Regional Administrator  
Food and Nutrition Service

# FMD Facelift

*Dave Orr, Washinton, DC*

On January 28, 2001, the Field Management Division implemented an organizational structure change, both in headquarters and the field. The Division was reorganized into three branches in headquarters—Policies and Procedures Branch, Data and Information Analysis Branch, and Market Analysis and Standards Branch. At the same time, the Division realigned the Moscow, ID, Field Office as a suboffice under the Portland, OR, Field Office.

The Policies and Procedures Branch assumed the responsibilities of the Weighing and Equipment Branch and the Standards and Procedures Branch, with the exception of the standards development functions. The branch will primarily carry out the day-to-day activities of the technical inspection and weighing policies and procedures activities.

The Data and Information Analysis Branch was formed to assess the Division's performance in meeting the Agency's objectives for headquarters and field activities, including official agencies, by developing and monitoring a wide range of performance and process data and information.

The Market Analysis and Standards Branch was formed to monitor market conditions and activities, and to develop grain grading standards and inspection procedures directly related to grain standards.

At the same time, we implemented a change in the field, converting the Moscow Field Office to a suboffice under the Portland Field Office. This action consolidates the management of the states of Idaho, Montana, Utah, Hawaii, and Oregon under one manager, and improves our efforts in maintaining consistent grading practices for grain flowing through the Pacific Northwest market.

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH



**FEBRUARY 2001**

### Travel Bits & Pieces

*Peggy Smith, Washington, DC*

#### **Privately Owned Vehicle Mileage Reimbursement Increase.**

Federal Travel Regulation Amendment 95 increased the mileage allowance for advantageous use of a privately owned automobile from 32.5 to 34.5 cents per mile, a privately owned airplane from 88 to 96.5 cents per mile, and a privately owned motorcycle from 26 to 27.5 cents per mile. This increase was effective January 22, 2001 and was published in the Federal Register on January 22, 2001.

The Federal Register erroneously omitted that there is also an increase in the privately owned vehicle (POV) rate for use of a POV instead of a Government furnished vehicle from 23.5 to 28.5 cents per mile. The partial reimbursement rate of 10.5 cents per mile was not changed. This change was also effective January 22, 2001.

**Are EEO/CR issues or concerns  
affecting your employment with GIPSA?**

**Do you have questions?**

**Need help?**

**Then let your voice be heard.**

Call the EEO Advisory Committee at...

**1-800-639-5167**

Civil Rights Hotline





## GIPSA Idea Hotline Update

*Norma Phelps, Washington, DC*

Here are the ideas received on the GIPSA Idea Hotline during January. If you have questions about any ideas or the Hotline, please call me at 202-720-1017.

*Suggestor*

*Suggestion*

Milton B. Hansen, Denver, CO

Obtain U.S. Map Magnets With P&S Office Locations

Joycelyn Ballard, New Orleans, LA

Give More Awards Out In the Field

James Ledoux, Portland, OR

Do Away With Recording Moisture on Worksheets Then Transferring to Pan Ticket

Charles Williams, New Orleans, LA

GIPSA Should Do Testing to Determine Any After-effects of Starlink

December's tee-shirt winner: **Lynette Scalise**, Moscow!  
January's tee-shirt winner: **Milton B. Hansen**, Denver!

### **GIPSA Hotline Ideas Accepted and Approved for Implementation During January 2001**

This list does not necessarily indicate that the idea was implemented as suggested or that it is currently in place (it could be in the development/implementation stage). To avoid the chance of misinterpretation, please call the Hotline if you have any concerns or questions regarding the following list of ideas.



Broaden Area of Consideration When Announcing BAR and Other Vacancies

Keep those ideas coming in! Send your ideas to the GIPSA Idea Hotline via e-mail: [gipsa-ideas@gipsadc.usda.gov](mailto:gipsa-ideas@gipsadc.usda.gov); FAX to 202-720-1015; or telephone 800-455-3447 or 202-720-1013.

**We encourage you to send ideas via fax or e-mail to reduce the possibility of transcription errors; however, ideas will be accepted regardless of the method you choose to use.**

## **Metheny and Godfrey Complete NIST Course**

*Byron School, Washington, DC*

**Sandra Metheny**, Stuttgart, and **John Godfrey**, Toledo, recently completed a one-week course entitled "Basic Mass Metrology" at the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Gaithersburg, MD. This is the same course that is given to State Weights and Measures metrology personnel.

The course is required of all GIPSA industrial specialists to provide them with a basic knowledge of test weight calibration principles and procedures. The practical application of this knowledge is calibrating hopper scale test weights in a grain elevator or performing a field calibration of a railroad track scale test car. **Sandra** and **John** were the final two GIPSA industrial specialists who needed to receive the training.

We congratulate them on completing the course. Anyone who has taken it can attest that it is an intense course crammed into a five day period with homework every evening and practical hands on experience to ensure understanding of the concepts.

# Training Opportunities Taken

*Rosemary Mayne and Dennis Murray, Washington, DC*

Seven GIPSA employees applied for and were selected to participate in leadership development programs at the Graduate School, USDA.

Both the Aspiring Leader Program and the New Leader Program provide practice in team skills that are central to modern management. The 6-month programs address basic competencies for leadership, include three 5-day residential sessions, and require the preparation of a Leadership Development Plan.

The Aspiring Leader Program begins in February for these employees:

**Christian Celino**, New Orleans, began his government career with 4 years of Air Force duty. For the past 14 years, he has worked for the FGIS New Orleans Field Office. When not working, Chris volunteers as a mentor at a local school.

**Carolyn Cooper**, Beaumont, is an agricultural commodity technician. She has worked for GIPSA for 15 years, beginning as a secretary before moving into her current series.

**Viola Nathan**, Denver, has worked for the government for 17 years and has been working with computers for most of that time. She received an English degree from Metropolitan State College (MSC) in Denver, CO. She recently returned to MSC to study Computer Information Systems as her major. **Viola** is GIPSA's Special Emphasis Co-Manager for African-Americans.

**Sharon Williams**, Washington, DC, earned her AA degree from Strayer Business College and is currently the secretary for the Regulatory Branch, Compliance Division.

She has 17 years of government service and is currently the GIPSA Special Emphasis Program Manager for African Americans.

The New Leader Program will also begin in February. The following will participate:

**Jacques Meadows**, Atlanta, started early with Federal government by interning USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, during 1989. He also spent 8 months in a co-op program with NRCS in Bismarck, ND. After completing his tour with USDA-NRCS, **Jacques** returned home and finished his college career. He graduated from Florida A&M University with a degree in Agriculture Business in 1992. In 1999, **Jacques** transferred from P&S' South St. Paul, MN, office to the Atlanta regional office.

**Roy Shepherd**, New Orleans, holds a BS degree from Prairie View A&M University in Texas. Initially employed by AMS in Florida, he also worked in Texas before moving to New Orleans where he is a shift supervisor.

**Jack Stevens**, Jonesboro, is a rice grader in the Jonesboro Suboffice. Jack has over 20 years of government service. He earned his BS degree in Vocational Agriculture Education from Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, AR.

Congratulations to all! Past participants attest to the quality of these leadership programs and we wish these employees the best of luck with the learning and challenges ahead.

# New Advisory Committee Members

*Marianne Plaus, Washington, DC*

Before departing office, Secretary Dan Glickman appointed 5 new members and 6 new alternate members to GIPSA's Grain Inspection Advisory Committee. They are:

Members:

- Dennis Strayer, self-employed consultant, Iowa
- Rod Bradshaw, farmer and rancher, Kansas
- Mark Scholl, ExSeed Genetics, LLC
- Timothy Paurus, Cenex Harvest States
- Tim Adams, Memphis Grain Inspection Service

Alternate Members:

- Joseph Magliola, Farmers' Rice Cooperative
- David Ayers, Champaign Danville Grain Inspection Departments, Inc.
- Charles Hurburgh, Iowa State University
- Curtis Engel, The Scoular Company
- Douglas Allred, Louis Dreyfus Corporation
- Wilbur Benroth, farmer, Ohio

The new memberships' breadth of knowledge and experience will be of great benefit to the committee and to GIPSA.

## Searching for a New Job?

*Rosemary Mayne,  
Washington, DC*

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has a new job search tool: USAJOBS by Email. This service is designed to assist in your search by notifying you by email of new job listings in your selected search areas. You select the criteria for up to three searches.

On the Internet, go to [www.opm.gov](http://www.opm.gov) and select USAJOBS. Then select USAJOBS by eMail and register to create a profile. Complete the form. You can select job search criteria (series, location, salary, etc.) for three job categories.

You will receive email notification if a job is added in the vacancy announcement system that meets your search criteria. You can add new job searches to a maximum of three or change and update your searches at any time. Follow the information request screens to complete and save your searches.

### Help when you need it...

For confidential assistance,  
call your Employee  
Assistance Program

Washington, DC personnel, call...  
301-570-3900  
or 1-800-222-0364

Field personnel, call...  
1-800-222-0364

## Why Information Systems Security Awareness Training?

*Carol Remmers, Washington, DC*

Many people have asked me why we have to attend Information Systems Security (ISS) Awareness Training. There are several reasons—most importantly, it's the law. The Computer Security Act Of 1987 states: "Each Federal agency shall provide for the mandatory periodic training in computer security awareness and accepted computer security practice of all employees who are involved with the management, use, or operation of each Federal computer system within or under the supervision of that agency."

Put in simpler terms, if you use a government computer and government resources, then you must be made aware of how to protect the information those resources contain.

In the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-130, Management of Federal Information Resources, Appendix III, Security of Federal Automated Information Resources, it stresses: Management controls rather than technical controls such as:

- 1) Individual Responsibility
- 2) Security Awareness Training
- 3) Accountability for One's Actions

USDA Departmental Regulation 3140-001 states: "The USDA and Agencies ISSPM's shall ensure that information systems security requirements, procedures, and practices are included in computer security training materials. New employees will re-

ceive an orientation outlining their security responsibilities. Thereafter, the program managers shall ensure training is provided to their employees on a regular basis. All USDA agencies must make security awareness and training mandatory for all employees that use, operate, supervise, or manage computer systems or use output from computer systems. Each USDA employee that uses computers or output from computers must be:

- 1) Provided awareness of their security responsibilities;
- 2) Provided periodic security training (minimum once a year) in how to fulfil the responsibilities of security; and
- 3) Informed of requirements as stated in OMB Circular A-130 relating to awareness and training."

ISS awareness training is also a good opportunity to explain other potential threats to GIPSA employees they are not aware exist. Over the next few months, I would like to take the opportunity to explain some of those threats and how they relate to GIPSA employees.

If any GIPSA employee has questions about security or security training, please contact your local Security Representative or contact me directly (I love to discuss Security!). I can be reached at (202) 690-0044 or e-mail at: [cremmers@gipsadc.usda.gov](mailto:cremmers@gipsadc.usda.gov).

# For Your Health

Mavis Rogers, Washington, DC

**Preventing Carbon Monoxide Poisoning.** An estimated 1,000 Americans die each year from accidental carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. The gas is colorless, odorless and tasteless. Installing carbon monoxide detectors outside sleeping areas and near fuel-burning appliances is a small expense that could save your life. New units, which cost from \$30 to \$100, should meet the UL 2034 or IAS 696 standard. Experts also recommend having fuel-burning appliances inspected once a year. If you suspect CO poisoning, get some fresh air quickly and call 911 from a neighbor's house or an outside telephone.

**Stomach Ache? Eat some pineapple!** Some people swear by pineapple as a home remedy for indigestion, and there appears to be some science behind the old wives' tale. Research has shown that fresh pineapple contains bromelain, an enzyme that helps break down proteins during digestion. Our bodies produce less stomach acid as we age causing more stomach woes. A few slices of fresh pineapple after a meal might just throw the balance back in your favor. Keep in mind that canned pineapple probably won't do the trick. The heat used in canning may have destroyed the stomach soothing bromelain.

**Weight Loss.** Most of us know that better exercise and eating behaviors are the keys to losing weight. But there is a third ingredient that is just as important. That is your readiness to change. How can you tell if you're ready to lose weight? One way is to take an inventory of your attitudes.

- **Lose Weight for You.** To change your lifestyle, you need to be motivated from within.
- **Identify Your Fears.** For instance, will you feel emotionally or physically vulnerable if you lose weight? Fears such as these are common. Discover your fears so that you can get help and work through them.
- **Boost Your Commitment.** If you are wavering, make a list of the benefits of weight loss. Decide on a single action and pick a start date. Tell family and friends what you are doing. Counter negative thoughts, such as "I'll never be a regular exerciser," with positive thoughts, such as "I can take this one step at a time. I'll exercise at least once a week for the next month.
- **Visualize Success.** Top athletes use their imagination to help them perform. You can too. Visualize yourself as someone who enjoys exercising and healthy eating. Imagine yourself with a fit, trim body. Relaxation techniques, such as yoga and meditation, can help too. They reduce stress.
- **Know Thyself.** Self-awareness is critical to change. Keeping a food diary is the best way to learn about yourself. For a few days, write down what, when, and how much you eat. Also note how you feel at the time.

Taking these steps of change can help you get ready to win....at losing.

# New on the GIPSA Web Site

✦ New information on biotechnology test kit performance evaluation and laboratory accreditation services:

<http://www.usda.gov/gipsa/biotech/evalaccredit.htm>

✦ An updated version of the complete GIPSA directory:

<http://www.usda.gov/gipsa/aboutus/directry.htm>

✦ A new library of educational brochures on grain inspection:

<http://www.usda.gov/gipsa/reference-library/brochures/edbchures.htm>

*GIPSA News* is the employee newsletter of the USDA Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration. Send your news, ideas, suggestions, comments, questions, or thoughts for the next issue to:

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**by February 25, 2001!**

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR  
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AND STOCKYARDS ADMINISTRATION  
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